

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

waterTUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR104
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Name of Service:	Beechwood Childcare
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Address of Service:	305 Beechwood Court, Stillorgan Road, Stillorgan, Dublin 18
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Eircode:	A94 FH60
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Foy, Loraine Cahill, Lynn Ruddle
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	31/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	58	PM	56
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland and R Duff
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of service

Beechwood Childcare is a privately owned service located in a residential area in Dublin 18. It provides full day care for children aged 1 to 6 years, operating Monday to Friday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. The service is situated

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

on the ground floor of a purpose-built facility within an apartment complex and consists of five care rooms: Junior and Senior wobbler room which is divided into two spaces, Wobblers, Toddlers, Pre Montessori and Montessori. Children are assigned to rooms based on their age and stage of development. Two separate sleep rooms are provided, along with a fully enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There are currently 16 staff employed in the service, including the person in charge. On the day of the inspection there were 16 adults present, including, 13 adults working directly with the children, the person in charge, the operations manager and a student on a work placement educational programme. The registered providers do not work in the service.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, records and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 Record in relation to pre-school service, Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child and Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Junior Pre Wobbler, Wobblers, Toddler and Montessori rooms.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, the operations manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,*
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and

(d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) A review of the staff roster demonstrated that a designated person was on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place within the service and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities. The service had a person in charge, an adult to deputise and each care room had a room leader in place.
- (2) Following a discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that seven adults commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 23 June 2025. Documentation required under Regulation 9 (2), (3) and (4) were reviewed in respect of the seven adults as detailed below. In addition, the file of a student present on an educational work placement programme and Garda vetting for one staff member whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal were requested for review.
- (a) Fourteen written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Two written and verified references were available from sources other than past employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for nine adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available in respect of eight adults who had lived outside of the State for a period longer than six months as an adult.
- (4) Documentation was available to show that the seven adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE). One adult did not require a qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(3) Documentation reviewed showed that one adult commenced work in the service prior to receipt of Police vetting. The adult commenced work in the service on 1 December 2025 and Police vetting was obtained on 12 December 2025. While it is acknowledged that a risk assessment was completed during the waiting period, no adult should commence working directly with children until vetting has been received to ensure they are suitable to undertake such work.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(3) A strict policy has been reinforced across the service that no staff member may commence work in any capacity involving access to children until Garda/Police Vetting has been fully received and verified and management have been retrained on the regulatory requirement. A pre-employment compliance policy has been implemented, the recruitment process has been revised and a monthly audit of staff files has been implemented to ensure ongoing compliance and early identification of any gaps.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (3) has been adequately addressed.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

- (1) The inspectors observed that an adequate number of adults were present and engaged in direct work with the children on the day of the inspection.
- (2) The minimum adult-to-child ratio was maintained for the duration of the inspection. There were 13 adults working directly with 58 children in the morning, and 13 adults working directly with 56 children in the afternoon. The person in charge was available to provide relief cover when required.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (k) The inspectors found that written records of accidents and incidents that occurred in the service were maintained. A sample of 22 records reviewed demonstrated that the necessary information was recorded.

Part V – Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 – Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

Compliance Information

The inspectors found through observation of practice and conversation with staff that the registered providers ensured that children's learning, development and wellbeing was facilitated within the service.

Mealtimes were observed to be a social occasion and children enjoyed their meals in an unhurried manner. Staff reported that children bring a morning and afternoon snack from home and the service provides breakfast and a

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

hot meal. On the day of the inspection the children were served a hot meal consisting of turkey, vegetables and potatoes. Drinking water was freely available in the care rooms and offered to the children with their meals. Transitions were well organised and children were given advanced verbal indications that a change in activity was approaching. Children requiring sleep were provided with the opportunity to do so at a designated time after lunch, and staff explained that children could sleep outside of these times if required. Each of the care rooms had a designated rest area to allow children to sit, read or take a break during the day. The areas consisted of soft matting, books and child size chairs. Staff were observed to support children's transition to sleep and remained present with them, providing comfort and reassurance. Children's nappies were changed on a schedule and as required. During this time staff were observed to support children to feel safe and secure, interacting attentively and using warm, gentle tones. Older children were observed to use the toilet independently and staff were attentive and supportive.

The inspectors observed that children's voices were heard, respected and acted upon. For example, children were supported to make choices, including opting for alternative activities instead of group activities and choosing not to wear bibs at mealtimes. Children were observed to demonstrate enjoyment in their learning, this was observed during activities such as story time, flash cards and a variety of seasonal activities. Staff used these experiences as teaching moments, supporting learning such as identifying animals and their sounds, colours and counting. Staff explained that the service communicates with parents/guardians on a daily basis at drop off and collection and through an online application. Information is shared on key aspects of the children's day such as mealtimes, activities, nappy changing and sleep.

Toys and equipment were stored on low level open shelving and organised to promote autonomy. For example, children in the Junior Pre Wobbler room had access to small world materials, construction, musical instruments, books and sensory materials. While the Montessori room had a home corner with props, construction materials, a mark making area, a library and specialist Montessori equipment. The care rooms were print rich with displays such as family walls, birthday walls, labelled storage and photographs of children engaged in activities. The outdoor area had a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment available to the children such as, slides, balls, construction materials, playhouses and transport materials. Children were observed to use the space to jump, run and engage in socio dramatic play.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering and to ensure children could not exit unsupervised.
- Detailed care plans were in place for children with medical conditions.
- The storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- Electrical flexes were in good condition and kept out of children's reach.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- Effective hand washing was observed to control the spread of infection. For example, children were supported to wash their hands after using the toilet, before lunch and following nappy changing.
- The care rooms were visibly clean and well maintained. Cleaning schedules were available for review outlining cleaning tasks.
- Children's soothers were labelled and stored in individual containers and sterilised daily and as required.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff adequately detailed the services procedure for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and documentation was available for review.
- Practice included securing written consent from parents/guardians, ensuring a second staff member was present to witness the administration, and completing records to be provided to parents/guardians at collection.

Safe Sleep:

- Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's age and developmental needs.
- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes.
- A sleep log was available for review, detailing the room temperature, breathing pattern, colour and position of the child.

Fire Safety:

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire.
- Emergency doors were kept clear to allow for timely evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. There was no pedal-operated bin available in the outdoor area. The bin available for disposal of waste was open top, requiring direct hand contact when managing waste posing a risk of the spread of infection.
2. Vinyl seating and a cushion in the children's rest area in the Montessori room were observed to be torn exposing the inner foam. The foam material is porous and cannot be effectively cleaned, posing a risk of the spread of infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. A new pedal operated bin has been purchased and is now in place in the outdoor area and all staff have been reminded of infection control procedures, including proper waste management and hand hygiene practices.
2. The damaged vinyl seating and cushion in the Montessori rest area have been removed and replaced with fully intact, wipeable, non-porous materials that can be effectively cleaned and disinfected in line with infection control standards.

A regular environment and equipment inspection schedule has been implemented to identify and address wear and tear promptly.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Photographic evidence submitted
2. Evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-*
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on 10 March 2026.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises were up to date. Fire extinguishers were serviced on 12 September 2025 and the smoke alarms were serviced on 16 February 2026.
- (2)
- (c) The registered provider ensured that the required records were readily available and open to inspection by the inspectors.
- (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in the care rooms.