

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS080
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Name of Service:	StartBright Deansrath
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Address of Service:	St. Cuthberts Road, Deansrath, Clondalkin, Dublin 22
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Eircode:	D22 C5H9
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Name of Registered Provider:	Elaine McQuillan
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	27	PM	14
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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
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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).

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Description of service

StartBright Deansrath is one of seven not-for-profit early years services operated by StartBright Early Learning Centres. The service operates from two rooms in a prefabricated building located in Deansrath, Clondalkin, South West Dublin. Part time and sessional care and education are provided to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service is registered to open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm and operates a school age service in the afternoon. A large outdoor area is available to the side and rear of the building.

Staffing

There are currently 10 adults employed in the service including the person in charge, an education leader and a cleaner. On the day of the inspection there were 12 adults present including 7 staff working directly with the children, 3 of which are employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), the person in charge, the education leader, the cleaner and 2 adults on a Community Employment (C.E.) scheme. The registered provider does 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, safety and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26, 27 and 28, however, on inspection an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 16-(1) (a) Record in relation to pre-school service. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, 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,*
- (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) The designated person in charge and the named person appointed to deputise were present when the inspector arrived unannounced at the service.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Following a discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that four adults commenced work in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 5 June 2024. The files for the four adults were requested for review, along with Garda vetting for one staff member whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal.
- (a) Four written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Four written and verified references were available from sources other than past employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for five 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 one adult who had lived outside of the State for a period longer than six months as an adult.

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(3) Documentation reviewed showed that the procedures specified above under Regulation 9(2) had been carried out before the four adults commenced work in the service.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the staff member employed to work 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 Framework of Qualifications. Three adults did not require a qualification.

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..

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of the inspection, there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children to meet their care needs.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum adult to child ratio was maintained on the day of inspection. There were 27 children present in the service, supervised by 7 adults.

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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:

(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The registered provider did not ensure a record of employment history was available for two adults, one of which was working directly with the children on the day of the inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The missing documents were obtained and placed in the personnel file. The recruitment and personnel file checklist was reviewed and strengthened to ensure all required documents are verified before files are signed off as complete. Staff responsible for maintaining personnel records were reminded of the documentation requirements and the importance of regular file audits to prevent recurrence

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence submitted

Recruitment policy

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 16 (a) has been adequately addressed.

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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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

There were appropriate and suitable care practices observed in the service as follows:

Staff reported that the service provides breakfast, a morning snack and lunch. On the day of the inspection the children were served a variety of fresh salads, chicken, fruit and wraps for their lunch. This was laid out in a buffet style and children were observed to independently fill their plate with their preferred food. There was plenty of food available to accommodate children requesting a second portion. Drinking water was available and water and milk were offered to children with their meal. Staff sat and ate the meal with the children in a family style setting and engaged in playful conversations, supporting the development of children's communication skills.

Children were given the opportunity to be helpers at mealtime by handing out placemats to their peers. Following the meal, they tidied away their own plate and some children helped the staff to clean the tables and sweep the floor. They demonstrated a sense of responsibility and pride while completing the task and staff took the time to recognise children's sense of achievement. Staff were attentive to children's personal care, gently washing their faces and encouraging and supporting them to wash their hands before their meal and after using the toilet.

The routine was flexible and staff were observed to adapt their planned schedule to align with the children's needs. Children appeared to be confident and competent learners actively choosing their learning materials and were observed to move freely around the care rooms. They played independently and in small groups and staff were observed to join in when invited by the children. Staff responded promptly to children when they were upset, providing comfort and support. Areas with sofas were available in both rooms and children were observed to use the space to rest or take a break from activities. Some of the children were observed engaging in outdoor play and were appropriately dressed for the weather. Staff stated that parents/guardians have the opportunity to discuss key aspects of their child's day at drop off and collection and an online application is used to share curriculum information. Additionally, staff reported that parent/guardian teacher meetings are held on an annual basis.

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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.
- The storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- The windows were secured and positioned out of children's reach.
- Documented risk assessments were available for the indoor and outdoor area.

Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were in use in the children's bathrooms and the care rooms to support the safe disposal of waste.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- The care rooms were visibly clean and well maintained. Cleaning schedules were displayed in each room outlining cleaning tasks.

Administration of Medication:

- Care plans were available for children requiring medication on an ongoing basis.
- Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take to ensure medication is given safely if needed, including obtaining written parental/guardian consent and having a witness present.
- Administration of medication forms were available for use if required.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly marked and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.
- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire.

Outing:

- The service had an outings policy and staff reported that they visit an indoor hall located in a service across the road. The service is also operated by the registered provider.
- Risk assessments carried out for each of the outings were provided to the inspector for review.

Non-Compliance Information

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General Safety:

1. Medication was not stored safely out of reach of children in Room 2. Medication brought into the service daily for one child was found to be stored in the child's school bag which was observed to be hanging on a low-level hook at children's level. This practice poses a risk to children's safety. It is acknowledged that the medication was moved to a safer location during the inspection.

Administration of Medication:

2. Medication held onsite in Room 1 for two children was not stored in its original container with the child's name and clear directions for administration. This practice is at variance with the services administration of medication policy and poses a risk to children's safety.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider stated the following corrective and preventive actions:

1. The medication was removed immediately and placed in the designated secure medication storage area. Staff were reminded of the medication administration and storage policy, including requirements for secure, supervised storage at all times. Management will conduct periodic spot checks to monitor adherence to procedures and address any issues immediately

Administration of Medication:

2. Parents were contacted and requested to supply the medication in the original pharmacy packaging with the child's name, prescribed dosage, and clear administration instructions. All medication will be checked on arrival to ensure it is in the original labelled container with the child's name and clear administration instructions before being accepted into the service. Clear guidance will be communicated to parents regarding medication requirements before medication is brought into the setting.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Evidence of safe storage of medication

Medication policy

Administration of Medication:

Evidence of labelled medication

Summary Comment

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The actions have been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliances. The effectiveness of the actions will be assessed on the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) There was evidence to show that two adults hold certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training, and both were observed to be immediately available to the children on the day of the inspection.

(2)

(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and stored safely in easily accessible and prominent positions in the care rooms and the office.

(b) The first aid boxes were observed to be readily accessible to the staff caring for the children attending the service.

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Part VI - Safety

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 in 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 19 June 2025 and smoke alarms were serviced 29 September 2025.
- (2)
- (c) Written records referred to in paragraph (1) were kept onsite and made available to the inspector upon request.
- (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in each of the care rooms.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Throughout the inspection, the inspector observed that staff maintained appropriate supervision of children. This included during mealtimes, toileting routines, activities, outdoor play, and transitions between activities.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service is adequately insured for the type of service provided and the number of children in attendance. The service is covered to provide care for 40 children on a part time basis and the insurance is valid until 27 March 2027.