

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS081
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Startbright Balgaddy
-------------------------	----------------------

Address of Service:	Méile an Rí Road, Balgaddy, Lucan, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	K78 X5D2
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Elaine McQuillan
-------------------------------------	------------------

Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	----------------------

Date(s) of Inspection:	25/11/2024
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	Fiona Carty
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

TÚSLA An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency	Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2015DS081	1 of 10
--	--	----------------

Startbright Balgaddy is a not-for-profit part time and sessional service located in an urban setting in South West Dublin. It is one of seven services operated by the registered provider. A service is provided to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.30pm which also included a sessional service from 9.00am to 12.00pm for 38 weeks of the year. The premises is located in a purpose built facility and comprises of two care rooms, an office and an outdoor area to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There were nine adults working in the service directly with the children including the manager. All staff held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications. A student on work placement was also present in the service working with the children.

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, information and records, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 –Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11 - Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15 – Record of a preschool child.

Regulation 16 – Information and records.

Regulation 23 – Safety

Regulation 25 – First Aid

Regulation 26 – Fire Records

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16, information and records.

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

(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

(2)
Documentation was assessed under Regulation 9(2)(4) for all ten adults currently employed to work in the service and one student. Regulation 9(3) was assessed for six adults who had commenced employment in the service following the last date of inspection on the 19th May 2021. The following records were available:

(a)(b)

Of the twenty two references that were required, sixteen were available from a past employer and five were available from a reputable source.

(c)
Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for eleven adults.

(d)
International Police vetting was available for three adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)
(a)(b)
One reference for one adult was not accepted as it was not from a past employer or reputable source.

(d)
International Police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months.

(3)
The registered provider did not ensure that the procedures specified under Regulation 9(2) had been carried out prior to staff members commencing employment in the service as follows:

- A garda vetting disclosure was not obtained prior to one staff member commencing work in the service.
- One reference for one staff member was not verified prior to the adult commencing work in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)
(a)(b)
A reference from a past employer has been acquired for the staff member, checked and on file.

(d)
Full police vetting is now on file for the staff member. Management will ensure going forward that all staff who have resided outside Ireland for longer than 6 months will have full police vetting from the relevant country. A staff file checklist will be carried out for all new staff going forward.

(3)
Management will ensure going forward that references received for all adults are from a past employee or a reputable source. A staff file checklist will be carried out for all new staff going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b)
A copy of the reference was submitted.

(d)

A copy of updated Police vetting was submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 9.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working with the children at all times. There were nine adults working directly with twenty one children.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times.

(8)(a) There were nine adults on the premises during the inspection and staff reported there are a minimum of two adults present at all times.

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(h) A written record was available in each care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.

(i) A staffing roster was available in the service detailing hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection.

(k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample of six records were reviewed.

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

(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

(1)(a)(b)

The inspector observed children moving freely within their care rooms. The rooms had clearly defined interest areas such as home corner, construction area, art area and book corner, with soft mats and cushions. Materials and equipment were stored on low level shelves and had jigsaws, puzzles, small world toys, vehicles and dinosaurs.

Children's artwork was displayed on the walls together with educational posters.

The room has child sized tables and chairs for children to sit at for mealtimes and table top activities. On the morning of the inspection children were engaged in various activities of their choosing including water play, small world play and a staff member was reading stories. One to one support was given to those who required it.

A large outdoor area to the rear of the service was available. The area had multiple surfacing including grass and paving. A covered area was available for table top imaginative play together with a mud kitchen. Ride on toys were available for gross motor development.

Children were comforted in a timely manner and their feelings were acknowledged when situations arose. Staff made themselves available to the children to scaffold and extend learning as well as be available should a child require support. Adults demonstrated patience, warmth and clear communication addressing children's requests, verbal or nonverbal. Teamwork was evident with transitions happening seamlessly.

Children were supported to be independent with their personal care. Staff reminded them to wash their hands at appropriate times. The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. The children were observed to use the toilet independently when they needed. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision when required whilst also supporting the children's independence.

Children brought food from home and the service had a policy in place where there was no designated snack time but children could access their snack whenever they wished.

The service communicated with the parents at drop off and collection.

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

Measures had been taken to safeguard the children as outlined in the examples below:

General Safety:

The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor and outdoor play environments were safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

The pre-school rooms and adjoining sanitary facilities were in a clean condition.. Staff members were observed mopping the floors and cleaning the tables after meals and messy play. The wash hand basins were equipped with liquid soap and warm water to support effective handwashing. Disposable hand towels were available to dry hands.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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)

A person with current first aid training was available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous position.

(b) The first aid box was always available for use.

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.

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 had taken place on the 21st October 2024.

(b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced during October 2024, and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had also taken place during November 2023.