

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL008
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Anchor Childcare Centre CLG
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Racecourse Shopping Centre, Grange Rd, Baldoyle, Dublin 13.
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D13 T9V0
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jean Melia
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	05/03/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	37	PM	17
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, D08 X01F
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	JA. McKimm and E. Griffin
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Anchor Childcare Centre CLG is a community service and offers sessional, part time and full day care to children aged 0 to 6 years old. The service operates from 8:00am to 6:00pm five days a week. It is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 100 children. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and operates this from 9am to 12pm and operates a registered school aged service during the afternoons.

Anchor Childcare Centre CLG is located on a converted first floor premises of a shopping centre There are 5 care rooms in the service with two nappy changing areas, a kitchen, a reception/administration office and a manager's office. There is sanitary accommodation for children and staff and in addition there is an indoor and outdoor play area.

On the day of inspection, the following rooms were in operation:

- Playschool (2-3 years)
- Montessori (3 – 5 years)
- Montessori Sessional (3 - 5 years)

The Nurse room and the Waddler room were not in operation on the day of inspection.

### Staffing

The registered provider works in the service daily in a supernumerary capacity. There are fifteen members of staff employed in the service including the person in charge who works in a supernumerary capacity, three deputy persons in charge, a chef, an administrator and a housekeeper and eight early years practitioners one of whom is employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM). In addition, there was one student on college work placement providing support in a supernumerary capacity in one of the care rooms.

### 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 and safety and premises. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following regulations:

- Regulation 16(1)(j)(k) Record in Relation to Pre-School Service,
- Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.

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.

### Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider in relation to a significant concern identified under Regulation 23, Safeguarding the Health, Welfare and Development of Child. A response which adequately mitigated the concern was received on the 6 March 2026. Further details are available under administration of medication section under Regulation 23.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
  - (b) The person in charge was present during the inspection.
  - (c) Staff were clear around their roles and responsibilities and reporting structures within the service.
- (2) The file of the registered provider, fifteen adults and one student were reviewed as part of the inspection and the following checks were completed.
- (a) There were twenty-eight written and validated references available from a past employer
  - (b) There were six written and validated references available from reputable source
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the registered provider and sixteen 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 for two adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to sixteen adults before employment commenced.
- (4) The registered provider and fifteen adults held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality.

### 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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children throughout the inspection. There were nine adults caring for thirty-seven children in the morning and five staff members caring for seventeen children in the afternoon on the day of inspection. The management team reported they are available to provide cover where required.
- (2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children.

### 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:*

*(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

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

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (j) The registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for medication administration. A sample of 10 records were reviewed and were observed to be complete. All the required information was completed.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (k) The registered provider did not ensure a full record in writing for was maintained accidents and incidents. A sample of 10 records were reviewed. The form did not include a space for the date of accident and incident beside the staff and parent/guardian signature. It is important to include a date to show that the form was completed by staff on the day and seen and signed by parents/guardians of the child on the day of the accident/incident so they can appropriately monitor their child.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

Accident and incident form was amended to include date.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of updated form submitted

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the corrective and preventive actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 16 has been addressed.

## 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

- (a) The following activities, interactions, materials and equipment was observed to support children's learning and development

#### Basic Needs

- Children's needs were met in a warm caring responsive manner, as a result children were observed to be confident in their environment for example, they showed the inspector their artwork and were keen to talk about their day.
- On the day of inspection, the children had access to a range of sensory and messy activities and play. They played with water and sand.

- The presence of a visual daily routine on display provided the children with a sense of stability, security, and predictability. In addition, staff were observed to give children verbal reminders in advance of moving from one activity to the next activity. The transition from activity time to snack time was smooth and the children appeared familiar with this routine.
- A health promoting ethos in relation to supporting the children’s emotional well-being was implemented. Staff discussed how the children showed an interest in talking about emotions two weeks previously. Staff showed the inspector an ‘Emotion Wall’ which included the children’s own emotion plates which were used to help support children’s understanding of their emotions.
- There were cosy areas with a soft mat, cushions, cuddly toys and books available. This provided the children with a place to rest and relax throughout the morning. This area was observed to be used by the children during the inspection. In addition, the outdoor play area also provided a place for children to sit and relax during outdoor play time.
- The children were observed to play outdoors during the inspection. This supported their social, cognitive, and gross and fine motor development. In addition, one section of the outdoor play area was sheltered. This provided children with shelter and protected them from harsh weather conditions such as rain and direct sunlight.
- Children were provided with regular meals and snacks, the food served was reflected in the service menu. This included two hot meals prepared and cooked onsite. On the morning of the inspection children in the care rooms were served a snack of fruit and cheese. A hot lunch of chicken stew and mash was served with a hot alternative meal available for children who did not eat the meal offered. An afternoon snack of spaghetti bolognese was served. Drinks of water and milk were offered at all mealtimes to children.

### Supporting relationships

- The children were supported to follow their own interests, explore their environment and given freedom of choice, while being offered support during activities and transitions. Decision making was encouraged by staff members who were observed to actively supervise and guide the children throughout the day.
- Staff were observed to speak to each other in respectful and warm manner.
- Children’s artwork, photographs, family walls and birthday charts were displayed throughout the playrooms and service, supporting the children’s sense of identity and links between home and the service. In addition, children had their own individually labelled coat hooks.

- Language used by staff was observed to be kind and supportive. For example, a staff member was observed to speak in a reassuring and friendly manner to the child while changing the child's nappy.
- Children were observed to have the freedom to move freely in their care room and independently choose their activities and play experiences.
- Staff were observed to interact continuously with the children. For example, activity times and mealtimes were observed to be a sociable event and staff chatted amicably with the children.
- Children's language development was supported through conversations, activity times, circle time, singing songs and storytelling activities which were observed during the inspection.
- Children's autonomy and independence was promoted. For example, children were encouraged to engage in various jobs for example cleaning up after snack times and tidy away toys before mealtimes. There was a visual job chart on the wall staff discussed how the children loved to be given helper jobs and each child was given a turn.
- Staff discussed how they support children to transition to school. For example, staff talked about a 'Transition to School' book which includes colourful photographs of school uniform, school bag and what is inside the classrooms. Staff spoke about the benefits of using this visual aid as a tool to help children to become familiar with their new school environment.
- Staff discussed how parents are welcomed into the service. The inspector observed staff to chat with parents at collection time.

### Physical and material environment

- The furniture provided in each care room was low level and appropriate for children attending, with toys, equipment and play materials easily accessible and visible to the children on low-level units which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- There was a range of equipment available throughout the service which was in line with the developmental age of the children in each care room, this included, mark making equipment, home corners with associated props to facilitate imaginative play experiences, stacking, building, connecting and threading toys to facilitate creative play, and books to facilitate language and early literacy, and indoor play equipment for younger children, which promotes reciprocity and gross motor skills.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children, providing a comfortable area to eat snacks and take part in tabletop activities.

- Toys and materials were stored on low and accessible shelves and were visible and easily accessible enabling the children to independently access their choice of activity.
- The rooms were well laid out with designated areas of interest to provide for distinct types of play and learning. For example, the Montessori room included a library, arts and crafts area, practical life corner, a sensorial area, mathematics, language area, and cultural studies, keeping in line with the Montessori curriculum ethos. Each area was well equipped with equipment and materials that promoted fine motor skills, mathematical conceptual understanding, and language development.
- An outdoor play area which was divided into two sections was available for the children with a soft ground surface. Equipment and toys available included an outdoor play kitchen with props. There was ride on equipment for example balance bikes and scooters. There was push along equipment such as dolls prams and mini supermarket shopping trollies. In addition, there were boxes with various outdoor materials and equipment available.

### 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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured with keypad access to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- Internal doors were secured with high handles ensuring children could not exit the rooms unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Medication was observed to be stored safely out of the reach to the children.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to children throughout the inspection.

##### Infection Control:

- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, and hand drying facilities. Both staff and children were observed to show familiarity with routine handwashing after nappy changing, before mealtimes and outdoor play.

- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition. There were cleaning schedules on the display and updated in the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- Foot operated pedal bins were in use for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities. These were observed to be in good working order.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in the care rooms, and the windows were open to allow fresh circulation of air.

### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was observed to be stored safely out of the reach to the children.

### Safe Sleep:

- Staff were noted to be aware of safe sleep practices and children were observed to be monitored while sleeping every 10 minutes. Staff discussed how they checked the breathing, position, and colour of each child.
- Outer clothing was removed from the children before sleep time.
- Children under two years of aged were provided with a cot for sleeping.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained for sleeping children over one years of age.

### Fire Safety:

- Emergency and fire exits were signposted and unobstructed and staff were aware of the evacuation procedures and location of the assembly point. The children's attendance book was monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present in the care room and during outdoor play. This ensured a safe evacuation of the children in the event of an emergency evacuation.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. There was a trailing flex observed to be accessible to the children in the Montessori room. This posed a risk to safety.

### Infection Control:

2. The covering on the sofa in the Montessori room was ripped with foam exposed which did not allow for adequate cleaning and posed a risk of infection.

### Administration of Medication:

3. The service did not ensure the safe administration of prescribed emergency medication for three children. Evidenced by the following:

- A comprehensive care plan for one child outlining the procedures for the administration of three prescribed medications was not available. It is acknowledged a care plan was available however this plan did not clearly detail the steps to follow in the event of a medical emergency.
- The prescribed emergency medication for two children was not kept in its original box stating the child's name and dosage required.

This posed a significant risk of safety. Prescribed emergency medication must be stored in its original box together with a care plan outlining the steps to follow when administering prescribed medication. An immediate action notice as issued on 5 March 2026 and a response which adequately mitigated this risk was received by the registered provider on 6 March 2026.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. Safety officer has made the flex safe.

##### Infection Control:

2. The covering on sofa has been repaired.

##### Administration of Medication:

3. The medication management policy was reviewed and amended to make it more robust. The care plan and medicine forms were also reviewed and amended to make them more detailed.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

1. Services room evaluation sheets have been updated to include this item in checklist.

##### Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence submitted.

##### Administration of Medication:

3. Copies of the policies, care and medical plans were submitted.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the corrective and preventive actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 23 has been addressed.

### 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 documentary evidence to show that thirteen adults held certification in First Aid Response training and that one adult was rostered to be available at all times to the children attending the preschool.
- (2)
- (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, and unobstructed if needed to access quickly.
  - (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available at all times to the adults caring for children attending the service.

### 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.*
- (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) The records available demonstrated that fire drills are held monthly within the service and the service conducted a fire drill on 19 February 2026.
  - (b) Records demonstrate that the firefighting equipment including smoke alarms had been serviced annually, with the last service taking place on the 6 February 2026.

- (4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

### Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

#### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
  - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
  - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured the following:
- There was a complaints policy maintained which outlined the following:
- (a) The procedures to be followed when making a complaint.
  - (b) The way complaints would be dealt with.
  - (c) The procedures for keeping the complainant informed on how the complaint is being dealt with.
- (2) The registered provider ensured a mechanism was in place to maintain a record of any complaints received. A sample review of records maintained since May 2023 demonstrated complaints were managed in line with service policy.
- (3) A review of records referred to in (2)(a):
- (a) Detailed the nature of a complaint and how it was handled.
  - (b) The record was made available on the day of the inspection.