

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL018
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Balbriggan Community Childcare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Tankardville House, Brecan Close, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	K32 WY80
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jean Fay Brady
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	13/05/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	27	PM	18
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Taaffe and AM Coyle
<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

Balbriggan Community Childcare is a not-for-profit early years' service which has been in operation since 2009. The service is conducted from a single storey restored thatched cottage which was constructed in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and is located in a cul de sac in Balbriggan town. Pre-school children from 1 to 6 years are accommodated in the service on a full day care, part-time and sessional basis and childcare services are also provided to school aged children up to 12 years of age. The service operates for 51 weeks each year and is registered to operate from 7.30am to 6.00pm each weekday, catering for a maximum of 54 pre-school children. Eligible pre-school children are facilitated to avail of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.00am to 12.00midday daily for 38 weeks per year. There are 5 care rooms in operation, namely the Farm Room, the Flower Room, the Under the Sea Room, the Jungle Room and the Sunshine Room. An enclosed outdoor play area is located to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the chairperson of the Board of Management of a local community group and is present in the service on a regular basis carrying out administrative duties while not working directly with the children. Twelve core staff members are employed to work directly with the children in the service, with 1 of these 12 core staff members employed as the service manager and 1 core staff member currently on long term statutory leave. Two of the 12 core staff members are employed in posts which are funded or part-funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme. In addition, 1 further staff member is employed to carry out cooking and cleaning duties.

Two additional adults are employed as caretakers while participating in a community work placement scheme. Additionally, a volunteer is facilitated to be present in the service in a supernumerary capacity on a part-time basis, observing care practices and staff responsibilities in advance of commencing a childcare training course.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations 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.

### Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to excessively hot water at wash hand basins accessed by pre-school children in attendance. Within 24 hours the registered provider provided written assurances that the risk to children had been appropriately addressed.

Following the registered provider's submission of their CAPA on 18/06/2024, the Inspectorate requested further information and evidence to be submitted on 21/06/2024 to confirm that the non-compliances under Regulation 22 (food and drink) had been adequately addressed in the service. The registered provider submitted additional evidence on 24/06/2024, within the required timeframe, providing assurances that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food is provided to the children attending the service.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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*

*(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.*

*(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 manager was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise as required.

(b) The person named to deputise in the absence of the service manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced at 9.05am on the morning of the inspection. The service manager returned to the service shortly thereafter, following a school run, and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

All staff files were reviewed which consisted of a total of 17 files maintained for the registered provider, the 12 core staff members, the staff member employed to engage in cooking and cleaning duties, the 2 caretakers, and a volunteer who attends the service.

(2)(a)(b) There were 2 written references available for the registered provider and 2 written, validated references available for the remaining 16 adults in the service.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 17 adults in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for 6 adults who had resided in 1 country outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults and for 1 adult who had resided in 3 countries outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All 12 staff members who worked directly with the pre-school children in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or a qualification deemed by the Minister to meet this regulatory requirement.

### 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

(11) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced on the day of inspection and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed when the highest numbers of children were present in each care room during the inspection:

- In the Farm Room there were 3 children aged 1 year 4 months to 1 year 11 months being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In the Flower Room there were 4 children aged 2 years 1 month to 2 years 11 months being cared for by 1 staff member. A volunteer was also present in a supernumerary capacity in this care room for 3 hours daily including on the day of inspection, observing care practices and staff responsibilities in advance of commencing a childcare training course.
- In the Sunshine Room there were 5 children aged 3 years 8 months to 5 years being cared for by 2 staff members, one of whom was employed for 3 hours each day to reduce the adult to child ratio, and to work directly with children with additional needs, when necessary, in a post funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.

- In the Under the Sea Room there were 7 children aged 3 years 1 month to 3 years 10 months being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In the Jungle Room there were 8 children aged 3 years 2 months to 5 years 4 months being cared for by 2 staff members, one of whom was employed for 3 hours each day to reduce the adult to child ratio, and to work directly with children with additional needs when necessary, in a post funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.

The service manager was available to provide relief for staff breaks and support to the care rooms when required.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times, verified by staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained at the service.

### 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

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

#### Basic needs:

- The staff members in each care room were observed to care for the children in a kind manner, giving the children as much individual time and attention as they required.
- Snack time and mealtimes were observed to be relaxed and sociable occasions as evidenced in staff members sitting and chatting with the children at mealtimes, with plenty of time allowed for the children to eat without rushing. In each care room children who were able were encouraged to feed themselves while assistance and encouragement was provided by staff members as required.

- The staff members were observed to be sensitive and responsive to the children’s cues to use the toilet, with prompting, supervision and assistance provided when necessary. Nappies were changed in a timely manner with the staff members heard chatting warmly with the children during these procedures.
- The staff member in the Farm Room informed the inspector that the sleep needs of the children in this room were generally met in line with their home routine but that these children would be facilitated to sleep when they showed signs of tiredness outside of their normal routine, if required. The children in this room were observed being placed to sleep after dinner when they first showed signs of tiredness, in standard cots set up in the care room, with the children observed to promptly and easily settle to sleep. The children in the Flower Room were placed to sleep for a scheduled period of rest after dinner, on sleep mats set up in the care room.
- The staff members supported the children’s behaviour in a positive manner, promptly re-directing and distracting the children at the earliest signs of conflict whilst showing respect for the children involved. This prevented any escalation or upset on the children’s part. For children who required additional supports, the inspectors found there were suitable up-dated care plans in place to facilitate their meaningful participation in the service, acknowledging the children’s interests and preferences.
- Outdoor play was not facilitated during the inspection due to very heavy rainy conditions that persisted all day.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- The inspectors observed supportive interactions taking place between the staff members and children throughout the inspection as evidenced in the staff members’ use of positive language and using children’s individual names, making eye-contact and positioning themselves at the children’s level. The children seemed comfortable and relaxed with the staff members. For example, during the inspection children in the Farm Room and in the Jungle Room were observed reaching out and hugging staff members unprompted with the staff members observed instantly responding physically and verbally in a warm and affectionate manner.
- The staff members were observed displaying anticipation and appropriate calm responsiveness when children experienced challenges within the environment and when children chose to change or opt out of activities.
- Staff members communicated with parents and guardians on a daily basis, both informally during drop off and collection, and through update in real time using an application provided on mobile tablet devices

regarding each individual child's snacks and meals, nappy changes and sleep times if relevant, and activities. Parents could remotely access this information online throughout the day, in relation to their own particular child and could message the staff members working in the care rooms if required

### Physical and material environment:

- The children in each care room were provided with suitable low-level tables and chairs.
- Interest areas were somewhat defined with home and kitchen corners, construction areas, arts and crafts zones, rest spaces and library corners provided. These areas were adequately resourced, apart from the non-compliances detailed below.
- Play materials were suitable for the age and stage of development of the children in attendance.
- An adult chair was provided in the Farm Room and Flower Room to allow staff members to sit and feed, cradle or comfort the children.
- There were suitable rest areas provided in the care rooms for children to take a break from activities and rest if required.
- The outdoor play area to the rear of the premises had wooden and metal fencing in place providing four separate spaces for designated groups of children. Each section contained outdoor play equipment suitable for the age and stage of development of the children accessing that particular space. Surfacing included artificial grass, natural grass and hard-surfaced paths. The outdoor play equipment provided included ride on toys, plastic playhouses, slides, sand tables, wall-mounted blackboards, a pipe tunnel, balls and children's picnic benches.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. In all 5 care rooms there was a lack of sensorial materials such as sand, water, dried rice or pasta available as routine play equipment which limited the opportunity for the children to extend their exploratory and sensory play experiences at times of their own choosing. It is acknowledged that once the inspector highlighted this with the service manager when both were present in the Flower Room at 12.15pm, the manager brought a tray of dried lentils, peas and barley, cones and acorns and a tray of dry pasta into the room and made them available to the children. The children immediately showed great interest in these play materials, enthusiastically filling and pouring from bowls and pots, and hiding animals in the tray contents while sharing moments of laughter and chatting happily with each other.

2. The access, availability and condition of books in the Flower Room was inadequate as the 7 books provided were stored out of the children's direct view and some were tattered and torn. This reduced the fun and enjoyment of reading and looking at an entire book for the children, and limited the opportunity for reading to be used by staff members as a means of supporting the children's language development. It is acknowledged that once the inspector highlighted this with the service manager after the children had eaten dinner the manager brought a suitable range of further books to the care room and made them accessible to the children.
3. The family photographs which were on display in most care rooms in the service were positioned high on the walls, at or above adult head height and out of the children's line of vision, making them difficult to see from a distance. The positioning of the photographs did not easily enable the children to use the photographs as a means of maintaining links and bridging the gap between the service and home.
4. The dress-up outfits available in the Flower Room were stacked randomly in a bundle in an open-top box which reduced the opportunity for children to see what was available and select a costume of their choosing.
5. In the Jungle Room a shelving unit with an array of tabletop materials was turned away from the children preventing them from accessing the materials and play resources. It is acknowledged that when the inspector discussed the unavailability of the play materials with the staff member the shelf was turned around and made available to the children who were then observed to play with the materials with enthusiasm.

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

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been undertaken:

#### Corrective Action

1. (a) All five classrooms have been stocked with sensory materials such as water, dried pasta or rice, shredded paper, and more natural materials.
- (b) The maintenance men made switch board or busy boards for each classroom. The manager with help from the children made sensory squares for the Wobbler Room and the Toddler Room.
- (c) There is a sensory table in the Flower Room that has been provided with various sensory materials.
2. New books have been added to the Flower Room. There are books of different sizes and various themes. The books are lower for the children to reach.

3. All care rooms have a family wall or family tree, and they are positioned lower on the wall or back of door for children to see more easily.
4. The shelving hook for the dress-up clothes was put back up on the wall with the dress up clothes hanging on it for easier access for the children.
5. All shelving units are turned the correct way with access to all materials.

### **Preventive Action**

1. Ensure that all care rooms have adequate access to sensory materials and are re-stocked on a regular basis.
2. Ensure there are always a range and variety of books in all classrooms, and they are accessible to children at all times throughout the day.
3. Ensure family trees remain at eye level for all the children.
4. Ensure the dress up clothes are always hung up and accessible to children.
5. Always ensure shelving units with all materials are turned around for children to access at all times. Remove all materials that staff feel are a risk to children.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

- A range of photographs showing revised room layouts with sensory materials in tray-top tables in a number of rooms, additional books in the care rooms and dress-up costumes hanging on hooks.

### **Summary Comment**

The corrective actions implemented by the registered provider, as evidenced in the submitted photographs, have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 19(1)(a). The assurances provided by the registered provider that these corrective actions will be sustained on an on-going basis is accepted by the Inspectorate and this will be reviewed on the next inspection.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service followed a 4-week menu plan which was displayed in the premises. A selection of cereals was available for the children to have for breakfast in the service up until 9.00am daily, if required. Snacks and drinks were provided from home for morning snack by the parents of children who were accommodated in the Jungle Room and the Under the Sea Room and 3 children attending the Sunshine room. Morning snack was provided by the service for children accommodated in the Farm Room and the Flower Room and for 2 children attending the Sunshine room with apple slices and shop-bought mini-muffins provided to these children at 10.00am on the day of inspection. Dinners and tea were cooked on site in the service kitchen on a daily basis. Water was available to the children from their own water bottles or in plastic beakers, positioned at the children's level, allowing the children have a drink should they feel thirsty at any stage.

#### Non-Compliance Information

The 4-week menu on display in the service and the food served on the day of inspection demonstrated that the daily nutritional requirements were not always adequately met for children attending the service on a part-time or full day care basis, as evidenced in the following findings:

- The dinner provided on the day of inspection consisted of mashed potato, tinned baked beans and half a boiled egg for each child. This was listed on the service menu as a dinner provided to the children. However, a number of children in the Flower Room were heard to request more egg but was informed by the service manager that none were available. One child who subsequently began to cry when requesting more food when their meal was finished was provided with mashed potato and a small spoonful of beans and other children in this care room were then informed that the food was "all gone". The portions of food provided in the service on the day of inspection and the lack of additional food was insufficient to meet the nutritional requirements and preferences of all children in attendance.
- The menu on display demonstrated that a number of meals contained food of low nutritional value and high in saturated fat and salt content, rather than containing food from all 4 food groups (protein, carbohydrate, dairy and fruit or vegetables). For example, soup was provided for dinner and potato

waffles and chicken nuggets provided for tea on a particular day while, on another day, nachos/tacos were provided for dinner and chips and chicken nuggets provided for tea. Furthermore, roasted vegetables, potato and hummus was provided for dinner and hot dogs provided for tea on another day. This showed that a greater than acceptable usage of processed foods and simple carbohydrates which are deficient in the nutrients that children require for healthy growth and development were provided at mealtimes on some days in the service.

- The mini muffins provided for morning snack on the day of inspection were high in sugar and did not make an appropriate nutritional contribution to the children's diet.

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

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been undertaken:

#### Corrective Action

1. A new menu has been put in place.
2. The food displayed on the menu is homemade.
3. The menus demonstrate the daily nutritional requirements for children attending the service.
4. Portions are a little bigger to satisfy more hungry children.

#### Preventive Action

1. Ensure all menus meet the nutritional requirement for children attending the service at all times.
2. Always ensuring the food is homemade.
3. Always ensuring there is extra food if a child may require more.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- A copy of an up-dated 3 week menu showing healthy snacks, dinners and teas.
- Copies of 6 supermarket receipts for food shopping purchased on a weekly basis between 20/05/2024 and 24/06/2024 showing a range of food items including meat and meat products, fruit, vegetables, potatoes, pasta and cereal.
- Photograph of a food delivery in the service showing a display of the items listed above.
- Photographs of a meat-based Bolognese dish being cooked in the service.

### Summary Comment

The corrective actions and preventive actions and the evidence submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed.

The registered provider has given assurances and a commitment to provide sufficient, suitable, nutritious and varied food to the children in the service and that there will be less reliance on processed food products served to the children.

These assurances given by the registered provider that the corrective actions will be sustained on an on-going basis in order to ensure that the food served in the service meets the children's daily nutritional requirements is accepted by the Inspectorate. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

### 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 premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises, with the entrance doors leading into the premises and the gates leading into the outdoor play area fitted with latches and locks positioned out of the reach of pre-school children.
- Cleaning agents were safely stored on high shelving out of the reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children during the inspection.
- The outdoor sand tables were covered with fitted lids which prevented contamination by animals and birds.

##### Infection Control:

- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet, after nappy changing and following messy play.
- Suitable disposable gloves and aprons were available and used for nappy changing. The service's nappy changing policy was adhered to during nappy changes observed on the day of inspection.
- Soothers were stored in personalised containers when not in use.

- In the Farm Room, in discussion with the inspector, the staff member described appropriate preparation of the sterilising fluid provided for the management of mouthed toys in the service.
- Up to date documented cleaning schedules were on display in the service.

### Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored safely out of the reach of children. No child attending the service was observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

### Safe Sleep:

- Ten-minute sleep checks including the children's colour, position and breathing were conducted on all sleeping children in the service and recorded electronically on tablet devices in the Farm Room and the Flower Room where children slept during the inspection.
- Adequate space of at least 50cm was left between the individual cots set up in the Farm Room and the sleep mats set up in the Flower Room, when children were sleeping.
- All children aged less than 2 years slept in a standard cot on the day of inspection. Based on an examination of the children's attendance records maintained in the service, all children under 2 years of age had access to a standard cot on a daily basis.

### Fire Safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

### Outing:

- The service manager stated that the service occasionally conducted outings. An outing did not occur on the day of inspection. An appropriate outings policy was available in the service. There were records available in the service in relation to an outing having taken place in the form of a walk in the local vicinity. These records indicated that the outing was conducted in keeping with the service's outings policy and included a completed risk assessment.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The hot water supply provided at the wash hand basin in the nappy changing room and at the 3 wash hand basins in the children's sanitary accommodation adjoining the Sunshine Room exceeded the maximum safe water temperature of 43°C for a period of time during the inspection which presented as a significant scalding risk for children in attendance. The inspector informed the service manager of this scalding risk and she ensured that the children were denied access to hot water from these taps, with cold

water or hand sanitiser used instead for hand hygiene as a temporary measure until the warm water was found not to exceed 43°C.

See table 1.1 below for sample water temperatures recorded on the day of inspection.

Location	Warm water temperature	Time recorded
Nappy changing room	74.1°C	10.40am
	70.1°C	11.35am
	34.7°C (satisfactory)	2.00pm
Sanitary accommodation adjoining the Sunshine Room	49.3 – 51.7°C	10.45am
	39.2 – 40.5°C (satisfactory)	11.35am

**Table 1.1 Water temperatures recorded on 13/05/2024**

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection in respect of the hot water at the wash hand basin in the nappy changing room and at the 3 wash hand basins in the children’s sanitary accommodation adjoining the Sunshine Room which exceeded the maximum safe water temperature of 43°C for a period of time during the inspection, presenting as a significant scalding risk for children in attendance. Within 24 hours the registered provider provided written assurances that the risk to children had been appropriately addressed through temporary measures while awaiting the installation of thermostatic controls to the hot water supply as a permanent solution.

### Infection Control:

- Soother management practice was inadequate; staff reported that contaminated soothers were dipped briefly into the sterilising solution, which was prepared daily in the Farm Room, then rinsed under the tap before re-use by a child, to avoid denying the child access to the soother for protracted periods, mainly at sleep time. However, in order to appropriately sterilise soothers, these are required to be fully submerged in the sterilising solution provided for a minimum of 15 minutes or alternatively to be sterilised by steam or in boiling water for the required period of time.
- Children’s snacks provided by the parents, some of which contained meat and dairy produce, were stored in the children’s school bags at room temperature on the day of inspection. This increased the risk of bacteria multiplying in the perishable food items.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been undertaken:

#### Corrective Action

##### General Safety:

1. The plumber has fixed the hot water issue, and a thermostatic control has been applied to the taps in the sanitary area beside the Sunshine Room and to the one beside the Flower Room. The taps are now reaching 43°C or just slightly under at 41°C.

##### Infection Control:

2. Two new soother sterilisers were purchased, one for the Wobbler Room and one for the Toddler Room.
3. A fridge has been provided in the Senior ECCE Room for the lunches in the three classrooms. All perishable items are labelled and put in the fridge each morning.

#### Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. Ensuring that water is maintained at 43°C or slightly less.

##### Infection Control:

2. Ensuring that the soother sterilisers are used when sterilising soothers in both the Wobbler Room and Toddler Room.
3. Ensuring that the fridge is used for perishable items in the ECCE rooms. Ensure that all food is labelled and stored properly.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- Written confirmation that the risk to children from excessively hot water had been appropriately addressed through the adjustment of the hot water temperature settings as a temporary measure within 24 hours of the inspection.
- Further documentary evidence confirming that thermostatic controls had been fitted to the hot water supply ensuring the temperature does not exceed 43°C on an on-going basis.
- A receipt for 2 steam sterilisers.
- Photograph of a fridge in a care room in the service.

### Summary Comment

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to excessively hot water at wash hand basins accessed by pre-school children in attendance. Within 24 hours the registered provider provided written assurances that the risk to children had been appropriately addressed, initially through temporary measures until thermostatic controls were fitted, work which was subsequently completed in the service.

The inspector reviewed the corrective actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider after the inspection. The registered provider demonstrated that the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The service maintained accurate details of all children in attendance during the inspection. The children were entered as present in electronic tablet devices provided in each care room, noting each child's arrival and departure time on a daily basis.

(3)(a)(b) A system was in place to ensure that no person other than the children and their parents or guardians, employees, approved students or authorised visitors could enter the service. A visitor's book was maintained and on arrival to the service on the day of inspection the inspectors were requested to record their attendance on the premises and the purpose of their visit.

### 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) Three staff members held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training. Based on a review of the staff members' training records and the service's staff roster, it was evident that the registered provider ensured that a person with FAR training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions on the premises, out of the reach of children.

### 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) A record was maintained of fire drills which had been completed in the service. Based on the records maintained and as reported by staff members, fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 12/04/2024.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Fire extinguishers were certified as having been serviced on 27/08/2023 and the smoke detection system on 08/04/2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the care rooms and communal spaces in the premises.