

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL026
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Name of Service:	Beverton Pre School
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Address of Service:	31 Beverton Drive, Turvey, Donabate, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K36 WP74
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nickola Cullen
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	21/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.
Inspection undertaken by:	S Taaffe
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
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Description of service

Beverton Pre School is one of 4 early years services owned and operated by the registered provider, all located in the coastal town of Donabate in north Co. Dublin. This sessional service is registered to accommodate a maximum of 26 pre-school children aged 2 – 6 years, with eligible children facilitated to participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.00am to 12.00midday each weekday for 38 weeks each year. School aged children are not accommodated in the service. Beverton Pre School is conducted on the ground floor of a semi-detached 2-storey former private dwelling located in a residential area on the outskirts of Donabate. There are 3 care rooms in operation, with the Construction Room and the adjoining Creative Space on the left hand side of the entrance hallway and the Cosy Play Area on the right hand side of the entrance hallway. A kitchen is also provided on the ground floor while the service’s office and further ancillary accommodation are provided on the first floor of the premises. Outdoor play is facilitated on the grounds to both the front and the rear of the premises.

Staffing

Four core staff members, including one staff member in the role as service manager, work directly with the children in the service on a daily basis. The registered provider is not based in this service but is available to provide relief cover in this service if required.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 – Record of pre-school 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes 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

(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 person in charge and two named persons were designated to deputise in her absence when required.

(b) The service manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection. The registered provider was present in the service for the closing meeting at the conclusion of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b) There were 2 written, validated references available for the registered provider and for the 4 staff members employed in the service.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and the 4 staff members. These records 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 2 staff members who had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) The registered provider and the 4 staff members all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) The adult to child ratio was correct in the service for the duration of the inspection with 4 staff members working directly with the 19 pre-school children aged 3 years 4 months to 4 years 10 months who were present during the morning session. Two and at times 3 staff members worked directly with the children who attended the afternoon session on the day of inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sampling process was used in relation to the children’s records. Each of the 12 registration forms reviewed by the inspector were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

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 examples demonstrate how the children’s learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs of the Children:

- The staff members were observed working co-operatively and collaboratively which created a child-centred, caring and supportive atmosphere in the service. This was evidenced in the regular informative interactions heard taking place between the staff members when updating each other on the children's needs and progress, and when coordinating the implementation of activities.
- The service promoted healthy eating and children brought their own healthy packed lunches and drinks to the service. The children were supported by the service to develop knowledge in relation to nutritious food choices, as evidenced by the discussions heard taking place between the children and staff members during the inspection. The staff members sat with the children whilst they ate, chatting in a relaxed and sociable manner while providing assistance to the children when required. The children were not rushed and were given as much time as they needed to eat their snack. The children's water bottles were available to the children throughout the day, stored on low level shelving and these were placed on the children's tables to drink with their snacks.
- All children attending the service were toilet-trained and were observed to use the toilet independently, with prompting, supervision and assistance provided by staff members when necessary.
- There were comfortable areas set up with soft matting, cushions and seating in each room to allow a child to take a break from activities and rest if required.
- The children were afforded opportunities for a change of environment during the inspection, moving between the different rooms in the service. All children engaged in outdoor play on the day of inspection and a number of children who opted to return indoors ahead of their peers were readily facilitated to do so with the staff members observed supporting the children in their chosen play activities in both spaces.

Supporting Relationships around Children:

- The staff members demonstrated that they knew the children well, recognising and valuing their individual preferences, interests and needs. The staff members initiated conversations with the children, responded meaningfully to their verbal and non-verbal cues and provided regular praise and encouragement using gentle tones of voice. The children were supported in their choice of activities and the staff members were observed acting as play partners with the children, providing space and opportunity for children to lead and direct play while readily supporting children when they chose to change or opt out of activities.

- Many children demonstrated a sense of pride in their success during the session and were observed calling on the staff members to share their achievements. The staff members readily acknowledged and encouraged the children's efforts and accomplishments, focusing on children's actions, interactions and play activities.
- Staff members were heard encouraging the children to express how they were feeling and to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which supported the children to recognise their emotions and also promoted an ethos of collaboration and friendship between the children.
- A welcoming atmosphere in the service was evidenced by the staff members warmly greeting children and parents and guardians by name in a friendly manner on their arrival to the service. Parents and guardians were provided with the opportunity to exchange information about their children with the staff members at drop-off and collection.

Physical and material environment:

- The service was very well resourced with an extensive range and quantity of equipment, toys and materials to support the children's independent thinking and extend their learning and natural curiosity. The layout of the rooms supported the children's independence in making choices and provided lots of opportunity for the children to initiate and take the lead in activities. The children appeared confident and content in their environment.
- An appreciation of sustainability and the environment was evidenced in the service through the provision of a wealth of recycled real and natural materials and equipment. For example the Cosy Play Area was richly resourced with a focus on supporting imaginative play with a hot chocolate kiosk provided and a spacious wooden kitchen equipped with delph crockery, real cutlery, brass and stainless steel tea pots and jugs, table cloths, weighing scales, dress-up costumes, a child-sized bed with bed linen, rugs, cushions, potted plants, framed pictures, table lamps, a push-button standard telephone and a wide range of play food and packaging from household food. A full-sized sofa was also provided at an open fireplace in this room, enhancing the cosy atmosphere in this space. The Construction Room and the Creative Space was equally well resourced with an extensive range of materials and equipment to support the children's activities, play and learning.
- There was a broad range of books available in the service to support the children's language development. Additionally relevant themed books were laid out in the individual interest areas to support the children's interest and engagement in the topics. The wall displays in the service were

carefully considered by the staff members to be relevant to the interest area they surrounded. It was evident from this level of detail that the staff members were working to ensure children were actively engaged in their learning environment.

- There was an emphasis on outdoor play and learning in the service and suitable waterproof clothing was worn by the children as they engaged with water and messy play activities in the outdoor play area throughout the session. The outdoor play area provided a range of natural sensory experiences with children observed engaging with open-ended materials such as water, twigs, wood, sand, mud, blocks, wood bark and stones. A wooden playhouse, a large sand pit, a mud kitchen, a tray top table with ice cubes, a water table, playdough, logs, balance beams, tyres, a domed metal climbing frame, cones, a tyre swing, logs and lengths of timber were also included in the materials provided in the outdoor play area to facilitate children's play and learning. A covered open-fronted area was equipped with a sofa, tables, matting and an art station which provided a sense of bringing the indoors out and provided the opportunity for children to be outdoors in all weather conditions.

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

The following observations are examples of the measures undertaken by the staff members to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service:

General Safety:

- The front door and the side gate were appropriately secured which prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised and prevented unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- The warm water temperature in the sanitary accommodation did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C which reduced the risk of scalding for the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely on high shelving out of reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to children on the day of inspection.

- Document risk assessments of both the indoor and outdoor play environments were carried out on a daily basis prior to children's arrival to the service. Records were maintained of the corrective actions and control measures put in place to reduce the likelihood of a child sustaining an injury as a consequence of the identified risks.

Infection Control:

- A refrigerator was available and used to store perishable items provided by the parents for the children's snacks. This reduced the risk of bacteria growth in these food items.
- The children were encouraged by the staff members to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and following outdoor and messy play.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided for handwashing in the sanitary accommodation.
- The service was clean and up-to-date documented cleaning schedules were maintained on the premises.
- The outdoor sand pit and water tables were fitted with secure lids to prevent contamination by animals and birds.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- A number of administration of medications forms maintained for children who had received medication in the service were reviewed and found to have been accurately completed, demonstrating safe practice. The forms included signed parental consent, evidence showing that a second staff member had checked and countersigned each dose of medication administered and also that signatures had been obtained from the children's parent or guardian to document that they were aware if medication was administered to their child over the course of the pre-school day and at what time.

Fire Safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

Outings:

- The service participates in outings. An outing took place on the day of inspection in the form of a nature walk in the local vicinity. The staff members demonstrated comprehensive knowledge of the relevant safety issues associated with the preparation and safe management of outings from the service. The associated documented risk assessment reviewed by the inspector outlined the measures to be implemented by the staff members to ensure the safety of the children would be maintained during the outing.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. A cloth towel was provided in the sanitary accommodation of the service and children were observed using this towel to dry their hands rather than using paper towel. This posed a risk of cross-infection for children attending the service.

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. To correct the non-compliance in relation to the use of a hand towel in the children's bathroom, the manager has ensured their tissue dispenser is full throughout the day and that no hand towel is present for use as an alternative in the bathroom.

Preventive Action

1. To ensure that each team member remains vigilant with this, the manager updated their toilet cleaning sheets to reflect the requirement for the paper towels to be filled as needed. This is to be checked throughout each session and signed by the team member.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photograph of a fully stocked paper towel dispenser.
- Up-dated cleaning record including the requirement to fill the paper towel dispenser after each session.

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the corrective actions and documentation submitted by the registered provider after the inspection. The non-compliance found on inspection under Regulation 23 has 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) Accurate details of all children in attendance were maintained during the inspection. The children were entered as present in attendance records provided in the service, noting each child's arrival and departure times.

(3)(a)(b) The service ensured that no person other than the children and their parents or guardians, employees, approved students or authorised visitors could enter the premises. A visitor's book was maintained and on arrival the inspector was requested to record her attendance in the service and the purpose of her 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

(2)(a)(b) The first aid box available in the service was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous location on the premises and was available for the children in attendance, in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) No staff member employed in the service held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training.

However, it is acknowledged that all 4 staff members employed in the service held in-date paediatric first aid training.

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) To correct the non-compliance in relation to the absence of a FAR trained team member manager, the has been in touch with a relevant training company to organise a training date for each of the current service team to complete their FAR training. In the interim two managers are FAR trained, both outside of ratio and available to the premises.

Preventive Action

(1) Ensuring that rosters adequately consider and action the need for a FAR trained person to always be on site as a priority. This will be achieved through training each team member as soon as possible as highlighted above.

Supporting documentation submitted

- A copy of an in-date FAR training certificate for a newly recruited staff member.

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the corrective actions and documentation submitted by the registered provider after the inspection. The non-compliance found on inspection under Regulation 25 has been adequately addressed.

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 firefighting 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 all fire drills which had been completed in the service. Fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis, or more frequently. The last recorded fire drill took place on 24/10/2024.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The firefighting equipment was certified as having been serviced most recently in September 2024 and the smoke alarms on 07/11/2024.

(4) The fire evacuation procedure was displayed in the pre-school rooms in the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for 26 pre-school children attending the service on a sessional basis. The in-date policy showed that the service was insured until 27/03/2025.