

# TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015GY033

**Name of Service:** Blath Beag Crèche

**Address of Service:** 21 Abhainn na Ri  
Oranbeg  
Oranmore  
Co. Galway

**Email Address:** blathbeagcreche@gmail.com  
odriscollaoife@yahoo.ie

**Name of Registered Service Provider:** Ms Aoife O'Driscoll

**Type of service registered:** Full Day Care ☒

**Date(s) of Inspection:** 3 1 0 7 2 0 2 0

**No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:** AM 12 PM 13

**Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:** Tusla – Child and Family Agency,  
Early Years Inspectorate,  
Quality Assurance Directorate,  
Clinical & Administration Building,  
Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor),  
Merlin Park,  
Galway,  
Co. Galway.

**Inspection undertaken by :** H. Heagney  
**Title:** Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health, Welfare and Development	Safety

**Authority to Inspect**  
The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

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Conditions If Applicable

Not applicable

<b>Description of Service</b>	<p>The service is located on the ground floor of a detached building in a housing development in Oranmore, Co. Galway. A full day care and part time care provision from 7:30hrs to 18:00hrs is offered. Additionally, both Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programmes and sessional care programmes from 9.15hrs to 12.15hrs are offered. The pre-school caters for a maximum number of 37 pre-school children at any one time. The service currently caters for children aged 3 to 5 years of age. This preschool service operates with 2 playrooms, namely the Senior Montessori (big room) and the Junior Montessori (small room). The service has its own kitchen where food is prepared, cooked and stored by a designated chef. Children's meals and snacks are pre-dominantly provided by the service. Stackable beds are available for children to sleep. Quiet rest areas are provided in each of the playrooms to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he/she chooses to. At the back of the premises, there is a secure all weather soft surface outdoor play area for children's play, exploration and fresh air. An emergent curriculum, which focuses on play that compliments the interests and needs of children, is provided.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>The registered provider and designated person in charge were on the premises on the day of the inspection. A total of 6 adults work in the premises with 5 adults holding at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework while 1 adult is designated to kitchen duties. The adults have documentary evidence of on-going training and education.</p>
<b>Methodology</b>	<p>Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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.</p> <p>The findings on inspection are based on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information obtained through examination of documentation</li> <li>• Direct observation</li> <li>• Discussion with relevant staff</li> </ul> <p>This inspection was announced and focused on areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service and advance notice had been given to the service of the planned inspection. This minimised disruption to service provision while services focus on re-opening and familiarising staff and children with new ways of working. The Inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including: clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.</p>

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	The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	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.

## GOVERNANCE

### Part III - Management and Staff

#### Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by—
- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
  - (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
  - (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
  - (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.
- (7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:
- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information:	<p>(2)</p> <p>2 staff files were presented for inspection; these staff had commenced employment in the preschool service since the last inspection.</p> <p>(a) &amp; (b)</p> <p>4 of the 4 written validated references on file in respect of these 2 adults were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.</p> <p>(c)</p> <p>Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 2 adults.</p> <p>(d)</p> <p>Police vetting was presented for 1 adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years.</p> <p>(7)</p> <p>(a)</p> <p>From observation and interview, staff were provided with appropriate information and training on the service policies and procedures, including those revised to address COVID-19 in relation to infection control, risk management, the incident plan and revised drop off and collection procedures in the service.</p>
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## Part III - Management and Staff

### Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

	Documentary evidence was available in relation to specific training the staff received in light of the COVID-19 pandemic on the correct procedures for hand washing, the revised procedures for drop off and collection of the children attending the care rooms and the revised procedures for cleaning the premises fixtures and fittings and infection control.
Non-Compliance Information:	2(d) Police vetting was not available for 1 adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for 6 months or more while over the age of 18 years. It is acknowledged the application process for this vetting had commenced.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	<p>On the 15/09/2020 the registered provider advised of the following;</p> <p><b><u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u></b> 2(d) The application process for police vetting for the one adult has commenced.</p> <p><b><u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u></b> 2 (d) All staff will be vetted prior to commencing in the service.</p> <p><b><u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u></b> 2 (d) The adult without police vetting no longer works in the service.</p>
Summary Comment:	The regulatory requirement for this part of the regulation has been met as Police vetting is no longer required as this adult no longer works in the service.

## Part III - Management and Staff

### Regulation 10 - Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-school Service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

Compliance Information:	<p>The inspection focused on the following policies and procedures: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk management policy</li> <li>• Drop off and collection procedures</li> <li>• Infection control policy</li> <li>• Correct procedures for hand washing</li> <li>• Procedures for cleaning and infection control</li> </ul> <p>These policies and procedures were reviewed and revised to respond to COVID-19. The said policies and procedures were communicated electronically to the parents/guardians and to the staff prior to the service re-opening on June 29<sup>th</sup> 2020. A hard copy of each of the policies and procedures was available on the premises in a designated folder.</p> <p>Parents/guardians and staff confirmed in writing that they had read and accepted the policies and procedures.</p>
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## 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 staff rosters and 'my pod' tracking logs reviewed indicated an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children. The adult / child ratio was correct and maintained on the inspection day.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the inspection. On the morning of the inspection, at 10.00hrs, there were 12 preschool children present with 3 adults working directly, caring for these children.

- 6 children were aged between 2 and 3 years,
- 6 children were aged between 3 and 5 years.

At 12.30hrs, there were 13 preschool children present, with 3 adults, working directly, caring and supervising them.

- 6 children were aged between 2 and 3 years,
- 7 children were aged between 3 and 5 years.

For the period of the inspection, the registered provider was supernumerary, assisted as childcare relief and with the administration part of the inspection and an adult designated to kitchen duties prepared, cooked and served the main meal and snacks.

## 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

Compliance Information:

#### SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- Prior to the service re-opening the parents/guardians of each child proposing to attend were issued electronically with a letter to parents regarding return to preschool, specific measures to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in the setting, details regarding public health measures, daily pod records and a COVID-19 return to service questionnaire. Additionally, parents/ guardians signed a parental agreement form and received copies of the updated policies, procedures, and response plans that included the risk management policy, the incident plan, and the revised drop off and collection procedures.
- On speaking with staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally and electronically (via childcare app) provided parents / guardians with daily information/ record sheets on their child's experiences in the preschool including food provision, toileting / nappy changing, the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. Child related communication was provided to parents / guardians at collection times whilst maintaining social distancing and via text messages, by phone calls, using social media app and by email. Additionally, the service has a social media page and system of communicating information via leaflets / newsletters.
- The adults were observed to be interested in the children, spoke in low tones, listened to them and responded to their requests. The adults interacted in a positive way with the children e.g. they sat at children's level, maintained good eye contact, showed empathy and a good understanding of each child and were observed to be caring and supportive in their interactions.
- Adults were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them and talking to children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling and commentating, extending a child's activities and initiating games and activities.
- The adults present on the day of the inspection were kind, caring, nurturing and comforting whilst caring for the children. They cared for children by being 'lifeguards' while children engaged in free play, role play, creative play and eating together.

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

### Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

#### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- On the day of inspection, 1 pod was operating from the Senior Montessori room. The play equipment and materials that were specific to the children attending the pod were freely available and accessible to these children.
- Clearly defined special interest areas were developed in the Senior Montessori (big room/ pod). Items included foam mats / steps, a house, tracks, paints, a variety of Montessori equipment (rods, pins, stairs, shape and textured materials), a construction table / utensils, books, potato heads, push and pull toys, household items, art and craft materials. There was age appropriate seating and tables for table-top activities.
- Displayed on the walls were visual aids / posters at a suitable low level for preschool children to see.
- Play equipment and materials provided in the outdoor area supported a range of physically energetic activities and play experiences.
- On the day of inspection, the children predominantly played in the outdoor play area. There was a purpose built all weather sheltered area in the outdoor area. There was a kitchen, sand in a large sand unit, boxes of toys, transport vehicles, a house, slide, push and pull toys, tyres, planting areas, saws and wall mounted decorations / bunting.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

*A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.*

#### Compliance Information:

#### GENERAL SAFETY:

- The entrance door into the pre-school was secure to prevent unauthorised access by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- The external outdoor play area was secured so that unauthorised persons could not access or enter the area.
- The doors into the kitchen, office, utility room, staff toilets and storage areas had a system of security.
- All cleaning agents and equipment were stored inaccessible and out of children's reach.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Fire doors were unobstructed.
- The service used a disinfectant foot mat in the lobby. Each staff member had designated hand sanitiser / disinfectant / own labelled boxes for storage of personal belongings.



## Part VI - Safety

- Attendance records were completed daily for the staff and for the children attending each pod. A record of visitors to the service was maintained and included a COVID-19 safety questionnaire / agreement.
- Staff in the service completed a daily checklist / risk assessment relating to COVID -19 transmission.
- The manager completed a daily risk assessment.
- The staff clearly identified to the inspector the drop off and collection procedures for children.

### INFECTION CONTROL:

- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels. Thermostatically controlled warm water was available for use by the children to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
- A supply of hand sanitiser was available at the main entrance gate to the building, at the entrance to the childcare centre and at 'stations' in the childcare rooms and the outdoor play areas.
- Visual aids / hand washing posters were available for parents and displayed on the walls in the sanitary accommodation.
- During the inspection, the children were assisted and encouraged to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting / nappy changing, after respiratory hygiene, after playing outdoors and on entry / exiting the preschool service.
- Staff were observed using the hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the pod / outdoor area.
- A supply of tissues was readily available indoors and in the outdoor play area.
- There was a designated nappy changing area and an airtight sealable bin for the disposal of nappies. The surfaces were observed to be clean and it was observed adults cleaned down the area prior to and after each child was changed. The mats were clean and intact.
- On the day of inspection, 3 children wore nappies.
- Adults involved in the serving of food and nappy changing used disposal aprons and gloves when nappy changing.
- The children's barrier creams were clearly individually labelled / stored units within the nappy changing area.
- Table-tops and work surfaces were cleaned with disposal paper towels and disinfectant spray.
- There was a daily and a weekly cleaning schedule.



## Part VI - Safety

- Waste disposal in the sanitary areas and playrooms were stored in foot pedalled lidded bins and thereby inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- Children had a spare set of clothes available that were kept in a wipe able sealable zip lock bag.
- The Senior Montessori room and sanitary area was well ventilated with a number of windows open. Ceiling vents in the sanitary area / nappy changing area were clean.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of the children within the childcare room, within the sanitary accommodation and within the nappy changing area.
- The person in charge informed the inspector that cleaning supplies / disinfectant / hand sanitizers are monitored and replenished when required.
- The play equipment, materials and furnishings observed at inspection were in a good state of repair and were clean. The inspector was shown the revised daily cleaning schedules to respond to COVID -19 that detailed the cleaning and sterilising of toys including mouthed toys, furniture, fixtures / fittings, linen and soft furnishings.
- The soft matting, seating, cushions, rugs, bunting and items hanging from the care room ceilings were clean and included in the daily cleaning schedules as were the mats situated inside the entrance door.
- On reviewing the staff roster for the week and through observation on inspection, the staff and children were allocated to a pod / care room in line with public health measures to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 infection.
- When questioned the staff displayed an understanding of the requirement relating to COVID-19 related symptoms and the associated risks (close contacts and international travel in accordance with public health advice), the requirement to self-isolate or quarantine and the appropriate use of personal protective equipment, correct hand and respiratory hygiene.

### SAFE SLEEP:

- There was child size soft seating where children could rest or relax in each of the playrooms.
- 12 stackable beds were available for older children requiring sleep.
- No child required sleep on the day of inspection.