

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY034
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Name of Service:	Bluebells and Buttercups Creche
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Address of Service:	Unit 2 & 4, Bluebell Woods, Maree Road, Oranmore, Co. Galway.
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Eircode:	H91ER20
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Name of Registered Provider:	Niamh Noonan
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	04/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	53	PM	46
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor St Mary's HQ, Castlebar, Co Mayo. F23HP58
Inspection undertaken by:	B Lavin, F Kelly
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

This privately operated creche and pre-school offers full day care and part time care provision from 8.00hrs to 17.30hrs, for children aged between 0 and 6 years of age. An Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme from 9.00hrs to 12.00hrs, is also offered from Monday to Friday. The service is situated in a housing development in Oranmore, Co Galway. There are 4 playrooms: preschool room 1, preschool room 2, playschool room and the nursery room. An additional room was under development as a designated sensory/play room. There are 2 designated sleep rooms, named Sleep room 1 with 4 cots and Sleep room 2 with 5 cots. There are stackable beds available for older children requiring sleep provision. Food for the main meals is prepared, cooked and stored on site in the service kitchen. The pre-school children have access to secure outdoor play areas to the rear of the premises for play activities and exploration.

Staffing

There are 12 staff including the registered provider employed in the service.

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

On inspection additional non-compliance which posed a was identified under Regulation 9, 16 and 23. 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.

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

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspection, the registered provider and the person in charge were on the premises and facilitated the inspection.
- (2) Following a review of the service files and discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that there were 12 members of staff employed in the service.
- (a) There were 20 written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer.
- (b) There were 3 written and appropriately validated reference available from a source other than recent employer for 1 adult working in the service.

- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all the staff working in the service. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Police Vetting disclosures were available for 4 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) There were 9 adults working directly with the children who had evidence of an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education or qualifications deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(9)(2)(a)

1. There was only 1 written and appropriately validated reference available from their most recent employer for 1 adult working in the service when 2 were required.
 2. There was 1 adult working in the service that had 2 references on file from a previous employer; however, the references were not appropriately validated.
 3. Police Vetting disclosures were not available for 2 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months. It was noted on the day that the vetting on file for 1 of these adults that was not valid as it was out of date from Feb 2023.
- (4) The registered provider did not provide evidence that 2 adults had acquired an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. It was acknowledged on the day of inspection, that an application to have 1 of the staff member's qualifications recognised was submitted to the DCEDIY.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

All references are validated and on file for all staff members.

We are awaiting one police vetting to be processed by the relevant bodies and we are awaiting police vetting for one adult to be translated.

A copy of the award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education was received from the staff member. The application to have

one of the staff member's qualifications recognised that was submitted to the DCEDIY has yet to be processed and returned.

We will conduct monthly audits on all staff files to ensure that each file contains all relevant information.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted evidence such a copy of validated references , copy of qualifications and police vetting to the Early Years inspectorate for review.

Summary Comment

Regulation 9 (2)(d and 9(4) remains non-compliant as the registered provider's response did not contain adequate corrective actions to address the findings at points 3 and 4. Police vetting remains outstanding for 2 adults and evidence that one person has acquired a qualification remains outstanding.

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) There were 10 adults working directly with children on the day of inspection.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the day of inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

- Nursery Room: 3 adults cared for 10 children aged 1 year.
- Playschool Room: 2 adults cared for 10 children aged 2 years of age.
- Preschool room 1: 2 adults cared for 12 children aged between 2 and 3 years of age.
- Preschool room 2: 3 adults cared for 21 children aged between 2 and 4 years of age.

The registered provider provided relief cover for breaks.

(8) (a) The registered provider demonstrated that a minimum of 2 adults were on the premises at all times when pre-school children were present.

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:

(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) A record in writing containing an accurate record of the name, position, qualifications and experience was not available for 7 adults working in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A written record has been updated for the name, position, qualifications of all employees and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence that the record pertaining to the staff members in relation to their position and qualification and experience were updated were submitted to the Early years inspectorate .

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted were reviewed and the noncompliance identified under Regulation 16 have been adequately 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

Basic Needs

- Drinking water was available to all children in individual beakers throughout the day.
- Children were supported during mealtimes with feeding when needed. Independence was encouraged with self-help skills.
- Children sat at table and chairs or highchairs which were appropriate for their height and or stage of development.
- The staff were observed sitting at the child's level and chatted in a respectful manner.
- Nappy changing was carried out regularly and promptly when required and handled in a positive and sensitive manner. Staff members were observed speaking to children during this time and using it as an opportunity for warm one to one interaction.
- The privacy and dignity of each child was respected during nappy changing and toileting.
- The individual sleep needs of younger children were met and this was observed on the day by children sleeping at various intervals. Older preschool children were facilitated with a scheduled rest period in the afternoon. For children who did not require a sleep, appropriate rest facilities were available in the care rooms and children were observed spending time in this area for short periods of rest throughout the day.
- Children in the nursery room were observed to be free to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up and learn to walk in a safe space. The nursery room had its own sheltered outdoor play area with play materials designed for gross motor and sensory play. The children from the nursery room spent time in this outdoor space exploring, climbing and playing.
- Children in the older care rooms had easy access to the outside area throughout the day and children moved freely between both indoors and outdoors.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions.

Supporting relationships

- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. The staff members helped the children choose activities and allowed choice over activities. The staff members helped the children set up play and offered assistance and encouragement using soft gentle tones.
- In the preschool room's staff supported children to engage positively with one another and the children were encouraged to engage in play activities that required turn taking and sharing. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together.
- The service provided parents and guardians with daily information, including significant events or activities involving their child, for example, verbal communication at drop of and collection times and through a bespoke childcare application.
- The service had a designated childcare application with interactive communication with parents and guardians. There was a section with photographs and a description of the child engaged in activities. Staff observations, a child's milestones and individual learning stories were captured. The childcare application showed details of sleep provisions, meals, nappy changing/toileting, special activities, each child's likes, needs and preferences, general observations and comments.
- There were several children in the transition to either new rooms within the service or coming into the service for the first time. The staff members created a warm and welcoming environment for the children. They showed patience, kindness and attentiveness helping the children feel safe and comfortable as they adjusted to their new surroundings. The staff members worked closely with the parents during this settling in stage.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for all 4 new staff members. However, 1 these vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous 3 years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'. It was noted on the day, that an application process was commenced for this outstanding Garda vetting.

Infection Control:

2. The 2 nappy disposal bins, which were used in the nappy changing areas, were not adequate or suitable. The were not sealable airtight or foot pedal controlled. The 2 bins present in the sanitary areas were flip top bins.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Application has been made through the Tulsa portal for garda vetting for the renewal of the garda vetting.

Infection Control:

The required nappy bins were purchased and are in use.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the garda vetting renewal was submitted for review. A copy of a receipt for the nappy bins were submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted to the early years inspectorate were reviewed the non-compliance identified under regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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

- There was a healthy eating policy. The person in charge advised that healthy eating was promoted within the service by visual aids and adherence to best practice guidelines.
- In the morning before 9.00hrs, the children had the opportunity to have a selection of cereals with milk.
- At 10.45hrs, the children had their snacks provided by parents and guardians which included raisins, cheese, meat slices, crackers, rice cakes, sandwiches, vegetables/fruit pieces and yogurt.
- At 12.00hrs, the children had their main meal. On the day of inspection, the main meal was lamb ragu, mashed potatoes and vegetables.
- At 15:00hrs the children had pitta bread and beans.
- At 16.30hrs the children had a snack of crackers and yogurt.
- Cutlery and plates were offered for children’s snack/mealtimes.
- Clean and safe drinking water at a low-level drinks’ tables were available and accessible to children in each playroom.
- There was a designated fridge for the safe storage of perishable foodstuffs from children’s lunch boxes for their snack times.

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) There was evidence to support that each child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by a relevant staff member. A record of each child's attendance is kept on a daily basis and was readily available and accessible to relevant staff.

(3) (a)(b) A daily check in and check out register was in place for people entering the service, other than the following:

- A child attending the service.
- A person dropping off or collecting a child.
- An employee and unpaid worker

On the day of inspection, the inspection team were asked to fill in a register outlining their name, their contact details and the reason for entry. The time of entry and exit were also recorded. This register was located at the front entrance door.

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) The requirement has been met. The registered provider had evidence that 3 staff had current paediatric First Aid Responder training completed.
- (2)(a) The registered provider had ensured that the service was equipped with first aid boxes.
- (b) The first aid boxes were available to children when required.

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 evidence in the form of a current certificate of insurance to state that the service had adequate insurance for the 75 children proposed to attend the service. The expiry date was noted as 27 March 2026.