

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY055
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Name of Service:	Le Chéile
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Address of Service:	Oghil More, Lawrencetown, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H53 F382
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Name of Registered Provider:	Brian Kenny
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	No.
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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.
Inspection undertaken by:	F Kelly.
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).

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Description of service

This pre-school service is a community based childcare service and is located in the village of Lawrencetown, Co. Galway. The service operates a sessional service from 9.30am to 12.30pm, from Monday to Friday. The service is registered for a maximum number of 44 pre-school children, for children aged 2 years to 6 years. The service consists of two playrooms, office, and sanitary areas. There was a large designated outdoor play area to the sides and rear of the pre-school.

Staffing

The registered provider is supernumerary and does not work in the service. There was a person in charge and deputy persons in charge. There are eight staff working in the service which included 6 staff that hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 to 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education. There are two staff working in the service that are part of a local community employment scheme.

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/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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

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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 wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the deputy persons 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.*

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(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 and there were two named persons who were able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the two deputy persons in charge were on the premises and facilitated the inspection.

Following a review of the service files and discussion with the deputy managers, it was confirmed that there were nine members of staff employed in the service, which included the registered provider which was supernumerary and does not work on the premises on a daily basis ,six staff with childcare qualifications and two staff members that were part of a community employment scheme. These staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) Of the required 18 written and appropriately validated references, 13 of these were from a previous employer.

(b) Of the required 18 written and appropriately validated references, 5 of these references available were from a reputable source other than a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the staff working in the service. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d) A police vetting disclosure was available for two adult working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over six months.

(4) Six the adults working directly with children had obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education ranging from level 5 to level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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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.*
- (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 period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.
- (3) The following care rooms was in operation.
- The Butterfly room, there were 4 adults caring for 15 pre-school children.
- The Caterpillar room, there were 3 adults caring for 14 preschool children.

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

Basic Needs:

- The service started each day with circle time with the children, the staff got an opportunity to speak and engage with the children in a positive manner.
- Children were independent with their toileting needs. However, on occasion some children needed a gentle reminder from staff, on the day children were playing for a long period of time in the outdoor play area and staff were heard reminding and asking children if they need to use the toilet. The staff were easily able to supervise the children as the playrooms had direct access to the outdoor areas and the

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sanitary areas were adjacent to the playrooms, on a few occasions during the session, the staff were able to accompany the children to the toilet.

- Children were observed washing their hands prior to lunchtime and after using the toilet. The children also had their outdoor gear and wellingtons to wear when playing in the outdoor play area. Children were encouraged to put on their outdoor coats on their own and staff offered help and assistance only when required.
- Lunchtime was observed to be a social event; the children ate their snacks in the outdoor area as a picnic as the weather was warm and sunny on the day of inspection. The staff put down outdoor mats and cushions for the children to sit on, the staff sat with the children and ate their own lunch, speaking and interacting in a positive manner with the children.
- On the day of inspection, the children were observed to be playing for the majority of the session in the outdoor play area, where they were able to explore and play in the well-equipped area. The two groups were able to play together in this space sibling, cousins and friends from the two playrooms were able to play together in the space.
- The staff were observed to use positive approaches for dealing with behavioural issues or minor disputes that arose over sharing of toys etc.

OUTDOOR PLAY AREA

- The outdoor play area has a large selection of areas to explore and use such as slides, climbing frames, timber house, mud kitchens and swings also have a range of toys and equipment that can be used in the outdoor area.
- There was also concrete path area that the children could for range of ride on toys that was available to them. The children also had an area where they sowed spring bulbs, flowers, herbs, vegetables and a poly tunnel that is used to grow vegetables. The children are actively involved in growing and taking care of the fruit, vegetable and plants that they grow.

INDOOR PLAY AREA

- The play area was divided into 2 separate playrooms offering different experiences for the children. The playrooms were bright and well laid out with a variety of distinct interest areas. Wall spaces were effectively used to display photographs of the children and their families, art works and posters relating to the current curricular plan.

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- The staff have placed a large emphasis in introducing natural and real-life props to play with in the kitchen areas.
- The service managed the transition to National School in a sensitive manner. The staff link with the National School junior teachers at the various schools that the preschool children will transition to. The staff have developed “the transition book” which details the various schools that the children would be moving to and photographs and pictures of various important aspects of each school which included the school crest, the classroom, a photograph of the teacher, the playground and various activities that the children will do when they move to the National School in September. These books were freely available to the children to look at any time throughout the session.

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 registered provider ensured that persons were trained in first aid and was immediately available to the preschool children attending the service. There were two adults trained in First Aid Responder available to the children
- (2)(a) There were two suitably equipped first aid box available to the children, the contents were checked on a regular basis
- (b) There were 2 first aid boxes were stored in the cupboard in the indoor playrooms.

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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) Arrangements were in place to record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated 03/04/26.
- (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on file.
- Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment, was March 2026.
- Records indicated that the last annual maintenance certificate for the smoke and fire detection system, was dated 28/01/26.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in each playroom and in the foyer.