

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015GY229			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Sli Burca Childcare CLG			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	19 Sli Burca, Ballymoneen Road, Knocknacarra, Co. Galway			
<b>Eircode:</b>	H91 DTN3			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Karen Sheridan			
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional			
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/03/2026			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	n/a
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A- (1st Floor-Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F. Nic Dhonnacha			
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector			
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>				
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			

### Description of service

This sessional service is in a purpose-built premises in a residential area on Ballymoneen road in the west side of Galway city. The preschool offers an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care programmes from 09.00 to 12.30, Monday to Friday. The service is registered for a school age programme of care. The service consists of two large playrooms (one for pre-school age children and one for afterschool service) with sanitary facilities, a kitchen and office area. There is a quiet rest area available for the children in the playroom. There is a designated outdoor play area with an all-weather sheltered area to the rear of the building. The preschool offers a child based preschool curriculum based on the childrens emerging interests.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the person in charge and works on the premises. There were four adults working on the day of inspection- the registered provider, two preschool childcare workers and an adult who provides support through the access and inclusion model of care. All four adults had a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of a Level 6 to Level 9 in Early Childhood Care and Education. The staff have documentary evidence of on-going training and education.

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

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 (1)(a) Record in Relation to Pre-School Service.

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* 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider was the designated person in charge. There was a named deputy person in charge who was available as required.

- (b) The designated person in charge was available throughout the inspection.
- (c) There was evidence of a clear management structure in the preschool service outlining the roles and responsibilities of each staff member.

Four staff files were available in respect of the registered provider, two childcare workers and an additional support person who was employed under the access and inclusion model (AIMS).

The findings included the following:

- (2)(a) Seven written references were sourced from past employers and validated.
  - (b) Where past employer references were not available, one reference was obtained from a source other than a past employer and validated.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all four adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) International police vetting was not required, as no member of staff had lived in another state for a period longer than six months as an adult.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to any adults being appointed and having access to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (4) The staff working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 6 to 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- (6A) One adult was employed under the access and inclusion model of care and provided additional support.

### 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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) At all times during the period of the inspection, the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the pre-school children.
- (3) Documentary evidence in the form of child attendance records and staff rosters indicated that adult child ratios were adhered to.
- On the morning of the inspection, there were 14 pre-school children aged between 3 and 5 years of age. There were two childcare staff and an adult who was providing additional support working directly with the children on the day of inspection. In addition, the registered provider assisted with the administration part of the inspection and provided childcare relief when it was required.
- (8)(c) The preschool is not operated single handedly; a minimum of two staff work on the premises during the hours of operation.

### 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.*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The position and qualification of each staff member was maintained and kept on file in the service.
- (g) A hard back folder was available with all the service updated policies and procedures. Additionally, a handbook was available for parents/guardians with the policies, procedures and statements of the service.
  - (h) Details of children’s attendance was accurately recorded.
  - (i) A staff roster was available onsite.
  - (j) Records were available of medication administration forms with parental consent and staff signatures recorded. A sample of four forms were reviewed.
  - (k) Details of accidents and incidents were recorded and there was evidence available that parents were informed following an accident or incident involving their child. A sample of 18 forms were reviewed dating back to July 2025.

### 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

(1)(a)

- The parents/guardians provided the children's snacks/meals. Each child had a sippy cup filled with water they could access throughout the session. Healthy eating was promoted by the service.
- The children had their snack/meal in the indoor environment. Staff were observed using this time as an opportunity to enhance social interactions with the children. The snack observed was healthy, nutritious and varied- some children had sandwiches with ham or cheese, wraps, crackers, yogurts and chopped fruit.
- The children used the sanitary area indoors and assistance was provided if requested. No child wore a nappy on the day of inspection.
- A rest area was available in the playroom with a couch, cushions and bean bags adjacent to the reading area.
- The children had the freedom to play indoors or outdoors throughout the session, while staff supervised the children in both areas throughout the morning session.
- The children were observed climbing the activity centre, playing with the water basin and bubbles while some children played on the tricycles.

##### Supporting Relationships

- The staff continuously communicated with the children on the day of inspection, provided prompts when necessary and offered reassurance as required.
- The children were allowed to choose their own activities in the outdoor play area and could change their activities if they wished. They had access to bikes and tricycles, a water basin and water pipes, jars of water and taps, a sand basin with utensils and a planting area.

- As the parents arrived to collect their children the person in charge or key worker would discuss the child's day and any significant issues that may have arisen during the session.
- Each child had a scrapbook "My Learning Journal" to capture their artwork, ideas and themes collated together and observations by the staff included. Each scrapbook was filled over the course of the year and was presented to each parent/guardian at the end of the school year. Themes included were pyjama day, all about me, chimes and play, community involvement, my holidays, road safety, Christmas and many more. On the day of inspection, the children were learning about Springtime.
- The indoor environment had many visual learning aids- educational posters, prompts, family photographs and artwork carried out by the children, child friendly posters where the children could sign in with buttons and various prompts to assist taking turns and activities during the session.
- The children had access to outdoor clothing and rain gear with wellington boots for their time in the outdoor environment. Spare clothes were available if the children required a change of clothing during the session.
- The children were observed playing in various areas of the preschool playroom, planting seeds with the staff members while they learned about how seeds grow, some children played with clay, some children were playing with construction materials while others were observed looking at books and puzzles in the playroom. Additionally, the staff and children took part in singing and dancing together as a group.

## 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 main entrance to the preschool was appropriately secured and the outdoor play area had a secure system in place.
- The childrens arrival and departure to the service was recorded on the child attendance roll book at the entrance door.
- The materials and play equipment in the playroom were maintained in good condition.
- The indoor playroom temperature was recorded within normal limits at 18.3°C.
- All cleaning agents were inaccessible to the preschool children.

##### Infection Control:

- There was a fridge in the playroom for the safe storage of perishable items from the childrens lunch boxes.
- The sanitary area was appropriately equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and a foot pedal operated bin was available.
- The children had access to two toilets and two wash hand basins in the sanitary area with the addition of a wash hand basin in the preschool playroom.
- Both the children and the adults washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, toileting and before mealtimes.
- Tissues were widely available throughout the preschool for use by the children or staff if required.

##### Administration of Medication:

- No medication was administered on the day of inspection. The registered provider advised the staff are aware of the medication administration policy.

##### Safe Sleep:

- The children had access to a cosy rest corner with comfortable seating if they chose to take a break and have a rest throughout the morning session.

### Fire Safety:

- The fire exit door was free from obstruction.
- There were clear visual displays of the evacuation procedure and the steps to follow in the event of a fire.
- There was a clear visible sign identifying the assembly point in the outdoor play area to the front of the premises.

### Outing:

- No outings were carried out on this day.

## 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)

A record book was available which detailed the children's arrival and departure to and from the service daily.

(3) (a)

The registered provider ensured that no person other than the persons outlined in (i) to (iv) entered the service without prior approval. All visitors recorded had written approval by the person in charge.

(b)

A written record was available recording all visitors at the entrance to the service.

### 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) Two staff had up to date training in FAR (First Aid Responder) first aid course and an additional staff member had first aid training. Evidence was available from the staff attendance record book to inform the inspector that at least one trained staff member was available to the children during the hours of operation of the sessional service if required.
- (2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in a conspicuous area in the playroom.
- (b) The first aid box was available in the playroom for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

### 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) Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out in the service. The last fire drill was dated 18/02/2026.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system were available. The most recent firefighting equipment maintenance service took place on the 30/04/2025. The most recent fire alarm maintenance service took place on the 30/04/2025.
- (4) Fire action notices demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed on the notice board in the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The preschool service had adequate insurance cover for 22 children attending a sessional service with an expiry date of 27/03/2026.