

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KE047
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballycane Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Holy Child National School, Lacken View, Naas, Co. Kildare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	W91 Y266
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Beatriz Gomez , Tracy Bridges
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	15/04/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	20	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate TUSLA Child & Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare W91 X38W
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F. Maher
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Ballycane pre-school is a privately run service that is located in a large classroom in Scoil an Linbh Íosa in Naas town. A dedicated play area is located on the school grounds and the pre-school also have access to the school basketball court, school hall and sensory room.

Sessional care and education is provided to children from 3-6 years of age. Opening hours are from 09:00am-12:00pm for 38 weeks of the pre-school year. The service is registered to provide a school age service.

### Staffing

There were five adults present on the day of inspection, this included one of the registered providers who was the person in charge and three staff members working directly with the pre-school children. One transition year student was present on work placement for the week.

### 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 and 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 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.*

*(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)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The named person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

The files of five staff members, including both registered providers and one transition year student, were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of all files reviewed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults employed in the service.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

Garda vetting was not required for the transition year student.

(d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months whose record was reviewed.

### 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 20 children attending the service being supervised directly by four adults.
- (3)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the inspection as specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6.

### 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.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-  
(c) an authorised person.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.*

## Compliance Information

A sample of 10 Children's enrolment forms were reviewed.

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered providers ensured the information as described in (a)-(i) of the regulation, was completed on each record reviewed.

(3)(c)

The records were available for inspection.

(4)

The registered provider present on the day confirmed all records were retained for the required period of time.

## 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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

### Compliance Information

(1)(h)

The attendance record for the service was reviewed and children’s attendance in the morning and on leaving the service at the end of the session were recorded in real time; any child who was absent was recorded as such in the attendance record.

(k)

The accident and incident record book was reviewed.

A sample of ten recorded incidents, between 15 December 2023 - 22 February 2024 were inspected and contained the relevant information and details.

(2)(b)

The registered provider advised all records were retained in storage for the required periods of time as dictated by these regulations.

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

### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

There was a wide variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys, materials and equipment available in the pre-school room for the children to use and play with throughout the morning. Low level open shelving units displaying the pre-school materials and equipment, ensured the resources were freely available and easily accessible to the children at all times.

Child sized tables and chairs were maintained in good condition and provided areas for the children to sit comfortably for tabletop activities and when eating their snack. There were plenty of art and craft materials available including, paint, paper, crayons, play dough and materials for gluing, cutting and sticking.

The resources and materials facilitated all types of play and learning and encouraged each child to experiment and use their imagination. The children were observed engaged, active and involved throughout the morning as they chose their play and learning materials and used the various interest areas.

Equipment in the outdoor play area included a percussion wall, small wooden climbing frame, digging area with mud kitchen and props and a large wooden structure with seats and steering wheels to prompt imaginary play.

## 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 door to the service was accessed via a door to the rear of the school building; this was secured with a keypad entry system and controlled by the staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school. The door to the pre-school room was secured on the inside with a slide bolt locking mechanism.

Children were observed being safely escorted by the staff members through the school grounds to reach their dedicated play area which was a short distance from the pre-school.

Staff members advised the inspector they immediately cut/chop any food provided by parents for snack, that may pose a choking risk to a child and would remove any necklace/beads if observed that a child may be wearing same.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents which were stored out of the children's reach.

### 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.*
- (2) *Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.*
- (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.*
- (4) *A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)  
The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in the pre-school room.
- (2)  
Not applicable as this was not a drop in service.
- (3) (a),(b)  
The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.
- (4)  
The registered provider advised all records were retained in storage for the required periods of time as dictated by these regulations.

## 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)

A staff member present was trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and was immediately available to the children attending the service. Two further staff members were trained in paediatric first aid and were also immediately available to the children.

(2)(a),(b)

The first aid box was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous position in the service and immediately available for the children at all times.

### 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)

A record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises, the last recorded fire drill was dated 15 March 2024.

(b) There were records available detailing the maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire/smoke detection system in the service dated December 2023 and 11 April 2024 respectively.

(4)

Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

#### Compliance Information

The children were observed to be supervised by the staff members at all times in the pre-school room during the inspection; this included during snack time, bathroom use and handwashing, during activities and when taken for outdoor play.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2025. The insurance provided cover for 22 children.