

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE055
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Bright Beginnings
-------------------------	-------------------

Address of Service:	Bungalow 1, Dunmurray Road, Kildare, Co. Kildare
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	R51 D276
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Audrey Lynch
-------------------------------------	--------------

Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

Date of Inspection:	15/04/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	93	PM	93
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child & Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Ballymore Eustace Road Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 X38W
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Maher, T. Duignan
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.
---------------------------------	-----------------

Description of service

Bright Beginnings is one of three private childcare services operated by the registered provider in Kildare town and the village of Brownstown, The Curragh.

The service provides full day care, part-time and sessional education and care to pre-school children aged 0-6 years and opens from 7:00am – 6:30pm, Monday to Friday. The service is registered to provide school aged care.

The service is located across 2 adapted and extended bungalows and a stand-alone building to the rear of the premises in Kildare town. Eleven pre-school rooms, two dedicated sleep rooms, a sensory room, a kitchen, office and a staff room are provided. Outdoor play facilities are located to the rear of the premises including a large, covered play area to the side and ample parking is available to the front of the building.

Staffing

There were twenty-nine adults present in the service on the day of the inspection, of these, nineteen of the adults were working directly with the children. The ten additional staff members included relief staff, members of the management team and two cooks. The registered provider was not present and does not work directly with the children.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under
Regulation 19 (1)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child
Regulation 20 (1)(a) - Facilities for Rest and Play
Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms 214, 216, 219, 223 and 208.

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 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.*

(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)(b)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise; both were present on the premises throughout the inspection.

The records of seven staff members, employed since the last inspection, were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b)

Fourteen written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer reference were available in respect of seven staff members whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all employed staff members.

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

(d) Police vetting was available for three recently employed staff members who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Of the seven recently employed staff members working directly with the children, six staff members held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)
There were 93 children attending the service being supervised directly by 19 staff members during the inspection, several relief staff members were available to provide support and assistance to the rooms if required throughout the day.

(2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day as specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6.

(8)(a)
There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the inspection, this was verified by the up-to-date staff roster.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

Regulation 19(1)(b) was assessed in rooms 214, 216, 219, 223 and 208.

(1)(b)

Children were observed happy, content and relaxed within their room environments. All the children moved freely around their rooms playing with the toys and equipment and/or exploring their environments. The staff members demonstrated warmth and affection in all interactions with the children and were respectful and kind and observed to use gentle touch, positive body language and soft voice tones. The young children went to the staff members for reassurance and comfort and were immediately lifted, cuddled and gently spoken to by the staff member.

A comfortable chair was in place in room 214 (Baby room) to enable staff sit comfortably to nurse and nurture the children.

The younger children, requiring sleep in a cot, were provided with sleep based on their individual needs and were immediately placed to sleep if showing signs of tiredness. Children aged over 2 years, availing of a period of sleep from rooms 208 and 223, slept on low-level beds at a designated time after dinner.

Bibs were provided to protect the babies/wobblers clothing during mealtimes and staff were observed feeding supervising and/or assisting the children as needed. The babies and wobblers' hands and faces were cleaned after eating with individual face cloths or as needed throughout the day. Regular hand washing routines had been established in all rooms.

Nappy changing was carried out at set times and as needed during the day and staff were observed chatting and interacting in a reassuring manner when changing the children.

Children availing of outdoor play were appropriately dressed for the cold weather in coats and hats.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The pre-school rooms inspected had suitable and age-appropriate play and learning materials/equipment for the children attending the rooms. The indoor environments were constructively planned with dedicated play/interest areas that included home/kitchen, construction, small world and library areas with plenty of props and real-life materials. There was plenty of sensory materials, puzzles, jigsaws, art and craft materials and equipment for fine and gross motor development and skills. A sensory room had been developed and provided a quiet space for the children to use. A sufficient and appropriate number of child sized tables and chairs and highchairs in the baby room were available and low-level shelving units displaying the materials and equipment, were easily accessible to the children.

The outdoor area consisted of various areas of interest that included digging, planting, climbing, outdoor kitchen and space to run and play ball games. A large, enclosed play space also provided areas of interest for imaginative play and learning throughout the year and during inclement weather.

(b)

Suitable rest areas with child sized couches provided a place for children to sit and relax during the day and there were soft floor mats in the baby room for the comfort of babies.

There were two sleep rooms with 23 cots available for children aged up to 2 years. This was adequate to provide needs led sleep. Low level beds were available for all children aged over 2 years who slept at a designated time after they had their lunch.

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

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and provided the meals and snacks to all children attending. Meals and snacks were freshly prepared daily by the two chefs employed and a three-week menu displayed all food served and was observed to be varied and nutritious and included a variety of casseroles and various pasta/curry dishes with meat and vegetables added. Snacks and evening tea included a variety of sandwiches and wraps, fruit bowl, pitta pockets and soda bread. Drinking water was freely available throughout the day in each pre-school room and milk was observed being served with the morning snack and main hot meal which was chicken curry and rice.

The food was prepared with respect to cultural preferences and any allergies children may have. Children were not rushed when eating and extra food was available should a child request same or if a staff member observed a child was still hungry.

During conversations with staff members, they advised they were very observant of any food provided that had the potential risk of choking and immediately removed or cut the food into smaller pieces.

The staff members advised they encouraged healthy eating practices with the children and incorporated discussions about food and food choices daily.

The staff assigned to food preparation were trained in food safety and the kitchen was registered with the relevant health authority.

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 secure and controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school service.

Daily indoor room and outdoor risk assessments were completed and maintained to ensure a safe play and work environment for the children and staff.

Staff members in each room advised the inspector they would remove any beaded necklace if observed that a child may be wearing them.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towel, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying and handwashing routines were well established and observed.

Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues, paper towel and waste. Plastic aprons, disposable gloves and nappy sacks were available for hygienic nappy change practices. Specific sealed foot pedal bins were in place for the hygienic disposal of soiled nappies and one nappy change was observed carried out in a hygienic manner for infection control purposes.

Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Safe Sleep:

The staff members were familiar with current safe sleep guidance to reduce the risk of sudden infant death including completing 10-minute sleep check observations on all sleeping children and documenting the colour, position and breathing pattern of sleeping children in their care.

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)
Persons were trained First Aid Response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2)(a)
The first aid equipment was safely stored, in conspicuous positions throughout the service.
- (b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*
- (c) *kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
 - (d) *cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

Compliance Information

- (c)
The premises were well lit with windows providing natural light to each room and fluorescent ceiling lights provided additional lighting when required. All rooms and the sanitary areas were well ventilated with openable windows.
- (d)
The premises and its environs were well maintained; a system was in place for any repairs to be carried out by maintenance, this was in evidence as room 222 was currently being decorated. The sanitary areas in the main building had been upgraded since the last inspection and the floor covering on the stairs had been replaced.