

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE089
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Name of Service:	Bright Sparks Childcare Centre
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Address of Service:	Station Road, Allenwood, Naas, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W91 EF29
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Name of Registered Provider:	Donrina Shorunke
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	24/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	66	PM	40
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla office, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Road, Naas, Co Kildare
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty and S Quigley
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

Bright Sparks Childcare Centre is a not for profit early years' service located in Allenwood, Co Kildare. The service offers full day, part time and sessional care. The service is provided from a purpose built creche facility. The service operates from 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday. A sessional only service operates from 9.15am to 12.15pm daily for 38 weeks of the year. A school age service was also available to children on the day of inspection.

The service consists of 5 care rooms, sanitary facilities and an office area. An additional area known as the Den was available for small group activities. A large multi surface secure outdoor play area to the rear of the building was also available.

Staffing

The service currently employs 23 staff members including two cooks, the centre manager and an administrator. On the day of inspection there were 17 adults present including the centre manager, administrator and 1 cook. Fifteen adults were working directly with the children including the registered provider.

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, information and records, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

- 9 - Management and Recruitment,
- 11 - Staffing Levels,
- 16 - Record in relation to pre-school service,
- 19 - Welfare and Development of Child,
- 23 - Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,
- 25 – First Aid
- 26 – Fire Safety

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, 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.

Compliance Information

(1)
(a)(b)
The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)
Following a discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed that four adults commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 16 April 2024. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these four adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b)

Of the eight references that were required, seven were available from a past employer and one was available from a reputable source.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no adult had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(3)

The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to the newly appointed adults commencing employment in the service.

(4)

Records were available evidencing that all newly recruited staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or 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.

Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.

(2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were 66 children present in the service being supervised by 15 adults during the inspection.

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;*
- (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

- (h)
Details of the attendance of each child in the service were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.
- (j)
A sample of medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.
- (k)
A sample of accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately

Non-Compliance Information

- (i)
The staff roster was available on the day of inspection however, it did not accurately reflect the adults present and which care room they were assigned to.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (i)
We have implemented a new roster that reflects the daily changes throughout the day.
Staff input their time of arrival and departure break and lunch cover in a separate book. Staff ensure attendance is recorded daily when they move room/session in the roll book of each room. The roll book and attendance records

are easily accessible in each room. Staff have been made aware of the changes to the roster. The weekly shift roster is sent out in our group chat and is posted on the notice board. This will always be an agenda item at our staff meetings. All rosters and role books are checked daily by management to ensure they represent accurately the room changes throughout the day.

Supporting documentation submitted

(i)

Staff roster detailing changes was submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 16.

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

(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

(1)(a)(b)

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and all meals were prepared on site and provided by the service. The service had a weekly meal plan which detailed a range of nutritious meals and snacks served to children at regular intervals throughout the day. Dinner was provided by an external catering company and reheated on site. It was served at 12:30pm to the children in the preschool rooms and 1.45pm to the Babies, Wobblers and Toddlers following sleep. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the inspection and children were

given a drink with their meals. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported younger children who needed assistance with their dinner.

Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including cleaning up after their play. Older children were encouraged to use the toilet independently. Children's nappies were changed regularly, and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. An area was provided within the care rooms where the children could rest or take a break from activities. There was a designated nap time in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms and children in the Baby room were placed to sleep when they displayed signs of tiredness or as their individual routine dictated. The sleep room was calm and conducive to sleep. Soothers were offered to children who used them when they were being placed to sleep.

Staff were observed holding children and speaking to them softly. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's positive behaviour management policy.

Staff recorded information on the children's day and passed this information to parents at collection time.

The care rooms provided developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children.

Care rooms were arranged to provide a range of play materials providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Materials available included small world toys, construction toys, musical instruments, home corners and library areas. Family photos, children's artwork and children's photos were displayed in the care rooms.

The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms.

There was a large outdoor area on the premises which had direct access from the care rooms and provided age appropriate play materials. There was a large, grassed area with planting and a football net, swings and stepping stones. There were smaller areas fenced off for the younger children.

All children in the Preschool, Toddlers and Wobbler rooms accessed the outdoor area on the day of inspection and wore appropriate outdoor clothing.

Non-Compliance Information

1. At 11:55 the lights in the Toddler room were turned off and twelve children were placed to sleep on beds. White noise was played, and two staff members were present. A number of children were not displaying signs of tiredness and continued to get up and out of their beds. Staff repeatedly told the children to 'shh'

and put them back to bed when they got up, tucking them in. After forty minutes in bed ten children out of twelve were still awake. One child was taken up after 1 hour 20 minutes and brought to the cosy area. Children who do not require sleep should not be placed to sleep and provided with an alternative activity.

2. A number of incidents were observed in the Toddler room which were at variance with the service Behaviour Management Policy. A child was observed walking around to sleeping children and taking their soothers out, waking them up. Staff were ignoring this behaviour and the inspector had to bring this to their attention. On another occasion the same child was observed grabbing a child roughly on their face and shouting at them. The staff did not observe this incident, and the inspector had to inform them what happened as the child was extremely upset following the incident. Staff did not respond promptly to the child's behaviour which is at variance with the service Behaviour Management Policy.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. We have taken the inspector's feedback and carried out a complete review of the room and our current practices. As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, additional staff will be joining the team in May, which will enable us to provide further support during rest periods. This will include the capacity to bring children who are not sleeping to an alternative room, ensuring minimal disruption for children who require rest. We have reviewed and updated our Sleep Policy in line with the Quality and Regulatory Framework and current HSE guidance. As part of this process, we also consulted with the parents, recognising the importance of working in partnership to support the children's well-being. If a child has not fallen asleep within 10 minutes and does not appear tired, they are now supported by an available staff member and brought to an alternative space for quiet play, so as not to disturb others who are resting.
2. Management carried out a review of the room and adjustments were made following discussions with the staff team. A joint decision was made by management, in agreement with staff to allocate different staff to the room, ensuring that the best interests and well-being of the children remain central to our practice. We are currently receiving support from our County Childcare Committee and are actively reviewing the room layout to create a more engaging environment. As part of this process, we are introducing clearly defined interest areas to support children's learning, play and self-regulation. Additionally we are in the process of reviewing our Behaviour Management Policy in line with the Quality and Regulatory Framework, to ensure that it continues to reflect best practice and promotes positive, respectful and consistent approaches to supporting children's behaviour.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documents submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 19.

This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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

The inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- All toys and equipment in use appeared in good working order and free from hazards.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to wash their hands in line with the infection control policy. Children were observed washing their hands before meals and after outdoor play.
- Children's nappies were changed in line with the service's nappy changing policy in the wobbler and toddler rooms to reduce the risk of the spread of infection.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.

Administration of Medication:

A sample of administration of medication records were reviewed. Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take when giving medicine to children, including obtaining written parent/guardian consent.

Records were available detailing medicines given. These included the signature of the staff member who gave the medicine and the staff who witnessed the medicine being given. The records had been signed by parents indicating the information had been shared. A care plan was available for a child who required emergency medication and staff were aware of the steps to follow in the event of an emergency.

Safe Sleep:

Sleep logs were maintained in the Wobbler and Baby rooms, cots were provided for all children under the age of 2 years to sleep in and children who were aged 2 years were facilitated to sleep on low level beds.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Electrical wires were within reach of children in the Preschool ECCE room. This poses a risk of strangulation.

Infection Control:

2. On the day of inspection, a bottle of formula milk for a baby was not refrigerated. The bottle was observed in the care room throughout the day and the child was observed drinking it throughout the day. Staff stated they do not refrigerate the bottle which can pose a risk of gastroenteritis.
3. The staff did not wash the baby's hands following nappy changing which poses a risk of cross contamination and was at variance with the service policy.

Safe Sleep:

4. Sleep checks did not take place in the Toddler room where children aged 2 slept, staff stated they never record sleep checks in the room which is at variance with the service policy.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Electrical wires were fixed to the wall and are out of children's reach the day after inspection by our caretaker. Check for trailing cables has been added to our daily risk assessment checklists.

Infection Control:

2. As we recognise that this poses a risk to the child’s health and safety due to the potential for bacterial growth in unrefrigerated milk. We have taken steps to address this oversight. Staff have been reminded of the importance of proper storage of milk and formula, and that all bottles must be clearly labelled, refrigerated immediately when not in use, and discarded after the recommended time if not consumed. All staff have reviewed our Food Safety and Infant Feeding Policy, and a clear protocol is now in place to ensure bottles are only offered to children under supervision and returned to the fridge promptly if not finished. Bottles will no longer be left accessible to children throughout the day. Instead, they will be offered by staff at appropriate times under supervision and immediately returned to the fridge if not fully consumed.

Our Infant Feeding and Food Safety Policies have been reviewed and updated to reflect these procedures. All staff have been briefed on the updated policy, and food safety practices will be regularly reinforced during team meetings and supervision sessions. Ongoing spot checks by management will help ensure compliance and consistency across the team.

3. Following the inspection, immediate action was taken to address the issue regarding hand hygiene after nappy changing. All staff have been reminded of the importance of supporting children to wash their hands after each nappy change to prevent the risk of cross contamination, and this practice has now been strictly followed. Visual aids illustrating the steps for proper handwashing are displayed at the children’s eye level in the nappy changing and toileting areas. Staff have been reminded of these prompts for staff and education tools for children. Staff are actively supporting and encouraging children to develop independence in their handwashing routines, in line with the age and stage of development. This includes verbal guidance modelling of correct technique. Additionally, our Infection Control and Nappy Changing Policy has been reviewed and updated in accordance with current best practice guidelines to ensure consistency and compliance going forward

Safe Sleep:

4. We acknowledge that on the day of the inspection, sleep checks were not recorded in the toddler room. This practice is not in line with our Sleep Policy and represents a variance from our service’s standard procedures, as well as non-compliance which requires that children be closely supervised during sleep and that checks are documented at regular intervals. Immediate steps were taken to address this. All staff were reminded of their responsibility to carry out and record sleep checks consistently, in accordance with our policy. Refresher training was delivered to the team to ensure understanding of the importance of sleep monitoring in safeguarding children's health and well-being.

The Sleep Check Record sheets have been reviewed for clarity and visibility within the room to ensure they are consistently completed. Room leaders are now required to oversee and verify the completion of sleep records daily as part of their routine duties. This corrective action ensures that sleep checks are conducted every 10 minutes, as outlined in our policy. Room leaders are responsible for conducting daily audits of the sleep records to ensure full compliance. In addition, management will carry out routine spot checks to verify that sleep checks are being recorded consistently and accurately.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. No supporting documents submitted.

Infection Control:

2. Healthy Eating Policy submitted.
3. Nappy Changing Policy submitted.

Safe Sleep:

4. Safe Sleep policy submitted together with sleep checklists.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23.

This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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

(2)

(a)(b)

A number of first aid boxes were available throughout the service, were well stocked and were available to the adults caring for the children at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

A person trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) was not available to children at all times. From 7.30am to 9.00am there was no person available to the children on the premises who was (FAR) trained.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

FAR Responders, we had three FAR responders on the premises during the inspection however we did not have one rostered between 7.30-9.00 am. We have now corrected this, and we have a FAR responder on premises between 7.30am and 6.30pm.

We have two other staff member who will be trained for FAR responders and are awaiting confirmation for course enrolment.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documents submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 25.

This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place on the 10th February 2025.
- (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on the 20th March 2024 and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had taken place on the 23rd August 2024.