

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 of Inspection:	21/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	69	PM	53
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Suite 7, Floor 2, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co Kildare
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty and R Brien
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).

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Description of service

Bright Sparks Childcare Centre is a not-for-profit early years' service located just outside the village of Allenwood, Co Kildare. The service operates from a purposely adapted building and comprises of five care rooms, two sleep rooms and an outdoor area to the side of the premises. The service is registered to provide full day, part time, and sessional care and education for children aged 0 to 6 years and a school age service in the afternoon. Opening hours are Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6:30pm.

Staffing

The service currently employs 22 staff members including two cooks, the centre manager and an administrator. On the day of inspection there were 18 adults present including the centre manager, administrator and two cooks.

Fourteen 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.

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

9 (1)(a)(b),(2)(a)(b)(c)(d),(3),(4) – Management and recruitment,

11 (1),(2),(8)(a) – Staffing levels,

15 (1) – Record of a preschool child,

16 (1)(h)(i)(j)(k) – Information and records,

19 (1)(a)(b) – Health, welfare and development of child,

23 – Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child,

25 – First aid.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations (15)(1), 16(1)(h)(i)(j)(k), (19)(1)(a)(b) As a result, the scope of the inspection included Baby Room, Wobbler Room, Toddler Room and Preschool Room.

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, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN1761	21/04/2026	Regulation 25 – First Aid A person trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) was not available to the children at all times. The staff roster evidenced that there was no person available to the children with the required FAR training between 7.30am and 8:00am each day during the week of inspection.
Status	Action was taken by the registered provider immediately following service of the notice and the provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

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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.*

(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 on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

The inspection focused on the recruitment records for three adults employed since the last inspection on 24th March 2025. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults who were present and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b)

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Of the six validated, written references that were required, five were available from a past employer and one was available from a reputable source.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the three adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for one adult. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(3)

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had been carried out prior to the three staff members commencing employment in the service.

(4)

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

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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.

(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)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services were adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 69 children attending the service being supervised by 15 adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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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.*

Compliance Information

A sample of 20 records were reviewed. The registered provider ensured that a record in writing detailing all the above details from (a) to (i) were kept for the records reviewed.

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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.*

Compliance Information

(h)

Details of the attendance of each child were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service in written form and on a software application.

(j)

A sample of five medication administration 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 but did not reflect the adults working in the service. This was found non-compliant on the last inspection dated 24th March 2025. The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider did not prevent the non-compliance from re-occurring.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service promptly reviewed and updated the roster after staff swapped shifts due to an emergency hospital appointment, ensuring the documentation accurately reflected all adults present on the day of the inspection. A standard daily roster is in place which includes all staff, students, agency staff, relief staff, and management personnel present in the service. The weekly roster is emailed to staff every Friday and will be updated immediately to reflect any changes due to emergencies or staff sickness.

The person in Charge is responsible for reviewing and signing the roster twice daily. We have now added a section on the back of the roster for changes and additional notes.

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A compliance tracker and monthly management audit system have been introduced to monitor and adherence to roster requirements. Failure to maintain accurate roster records will now be addressed through staff supervision and performance management processes where necessary.

The register provider will review the effectiveness of these measures over a 3- month period to ensure sustained compliance and prevent further recurrence.

Supporting documentation submitted

Amended roster submitted for review.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive measures together with the supporting evidence were reviewed by the inspectors and 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

(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 registered provider ensured that children's learning, development and wellbeing were facilitated in the service through the provision of the following practices. Staff reported that the service provides all meals and snacks for the children attending on a full daycare and part time basis. During the inspection, children were served pasta bolognese with cauliflower for their dinner. The inspectors observed children feeding themselves independently, with staff remaining close by to provide support if required. During the meal, the staff engaged in conversation with the children, supporting the development of their communication and social skills. Drinks of water were available to children throughout the inspection in the Baby, Wobbler and Preschool rooms, and

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children were offered water with their meals. Additional servings were available in the care rooms and staff were observed providing additional portions to children who requested more.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's noses as required and children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner. Children's nappies were changed regularly, and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care.

Areas with rugs, cushions and child size sofas were available in the care rooms allowing children the opportunity to rest or take a break from activities. Children requiring sleep were offered the opportunity to rest at a designated time after dinner. Staff reported that children could sleep outside this time if they displayed signs of tiredness. The lighting was dimmed in rooms where children slept and the environment was conducive to sleep. Play was child led and children were observed to move confidently around the care rooms and appeared content in their interactions with one another and their environment. During this time staff were observed to be warm, respectful and playful in their interactions with the children. Children engaging in outdoor play were observed to be appropriately dressed for the weather.

Transitions from one activity to the next were well managed, and children were given verbal indications of the change approaching. Staff reported that parents have the opportunity to discuss their child at drop off and collection, and the service uses a software application to provide information to parents in relation to updates on meals, nappy changes, sleep and daily activities.

Staff were affectionate and respectful in their interactions with the children. They used the children's names, provided praise and encouragement, and dropped to their level when engaging in conversations. Toys and equipment were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving, which facilitated choice and spontaneous play. These included home areas, libraries, construction materials, small world, puzzles and mark-making materials. Child size tables and chairs were available to allow children to comfortably sit during mealtimes and while engaging in tabletop activities. There were a number of outdoor areas provided to the children with specific areas designated to younger children. The areas included, a kitchen, playhouse, sand and water trays, seesaws, and a slide.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The registered provider did not take all required measures to ensure that drinking water was accessible at all times to children in the Toddler room. It is acknowledged that there was a water station in the care room, however, this was out of reach of children. Water was not offered to the children from 10.22am to

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2.11pm when the children were having their dinner. Allowing children to drink water as needed maintains hydration, aids digestion, prevents constipation, and regulates body temperature.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff moved the drinking water tray back to its original location, allowing the children to access it whenever they want. This decision ensures that the children can stay hydrated while still maintaining a safe environment.

Staff will request that parents provide non-spill cups for their children.

The water station has been reinstated and will remain in place at all times throughout the day. This ensures that children have consistent access to drinking water while promoting hydration and safety.

Before discussing this issue with the staff, the camera footage was reviewed to confirm that water was being offered to the children on previous days. It was observed that the staff were actively providing and offering water to the children during that time. However they were putting it back on the shelf due to concerns about slip hazards caused by a child pouring water on the floor.

Staff were reminded that our policy and procedures require children to be offered water every 20 minutes throughout the day, as some children may need reminders to stay hydrated. This ensures that all children have regular access to water and helps promote their overall well-being.

The kitchen staff were instructed to ensure that toddlers receive water at every meal, rather than relying solely on their own sippy cups.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photos of water station in situ submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive measures together with the supporting evidence were reviewed by the inspectors and meet the requirements of Regulation 19.

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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 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.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.
- Cleaning agents and medicines were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing.
- Children's nappies were changed in line with the service's nappy changing policy to reduce the risk of the spread of infection.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers and mouthed toys.
- Individual bed linen was provided for children. Staff stated that bed linen is laundered weekly or as required.
- All cot mattresses in use had waterproof covers.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had an administration of medication policy in place. There were documented care plans available for children attending the service who required emergency medication. Staff working in the rooms with the children were aware of the treatment plans and demonstrated knowledge of the procedures to follow if the medication was required.
- Staff demonstrated, through discussion, that they were familiar with the procedures and practices in place for the administration of medication in line with the service policy on medication administration.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes.
- Sleep logs were available for review, detailing the room temperature, breathing pattern, colour and position of each sleeping child.

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- The temperatures in the rooms where children slept were maintained at the required level for safe sleep.

Fire Safety:

- All fire exits were clear of obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Whilst it is acknowledged that 11 adults Garda vetting was renewed as required there was one vetting declaration which exceeded 3 years.

Infection Control:

2. There were a number of practices observed that posed a risk of cross contamination as follows:
 - No handwashing took place before snack or after using nappy changing in the Toddler room.
 - In the Baby Room the children's hands were not washed before snack or dinner.
 - Staff were observed handling the nappy and general waste bins and not washing their hands afterwards.
 - The pedal bin in the Wobbler room was broken, requiring staff and children to handle the bin.
 - A toy was observed to be brought into the nappy changing area during nappy changing in the Toddler room.
 - The disposable hand towel was not stored in a dispenser; a number of staff were observed taking pieces of tissue from a roll posing a risk of cross contamination.
 - A staff member observed a child's cracker on the floor during snack time and asked the child to pick it up. The staff member did not take the cracker from the child, and the child was observed to then continue to eat the cracker.

Safe Sleep:

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Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The Garda vetting issue was due to human error, as incorrect dates were entered into the tracking system used to monitor staff Garda vetting renewal dates. The service immediately obtained updated Garda vetting for the staff member whose vetting had exceeded the three-year renewal timeframe. A vetting

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tracker/calendar reminder system will be implemented to ensure all Garda vetting disclosures are reviewed and renewed every three years in line with Tusla requirements.

The manager will monitor compliance and maintain records of all vetting renewals, to ensure ongoing compliance with Regulation 23 and the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory notice.

Infection Control:

- Management had meeting to address hand washing routine with toddler staff. Posters are on display for the nappy routine, bins have pedals that staff have no reason to handle bins and staff have to wash hands after every nappy change this is also part of policy and procedure. Staff are trained at induction to follow correct nappy changing routine.
- Meeting with Baby room staff regarding not washing children's hands. Management had a meeting with staff regarding the importance of hand washing, staff were reminded this was in our Infection control policy. Unannounced spot checks are carried out.
- Staff were reminded about infection control and this was addressed at the staff meeting.
- We acknowledge the bin was broken and we have replaced the bin in the wobbler room. Staff were instructed to immediately report any broken equipment to management, both verbally and through the daily risk assessment. Management will monitor risk assessments sheets.
- We recognize that the child brings the toy to the nappy changing area as part of their self-regulation needs. As we implement the Right Space curriculum, we respect and accommodate the child's needs in this situation.
- We have acknowledged that staff were using blue rolls that were not placed in a dispenser, and we have removed the blue rolls as a result.
- We acknowledge there was a risk of cross contamination, and we held a support meeting with the new staff member as part of her ongoing induction and support process.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Email submitted on the day for staff members renewal of Garda vetting.

Infection Control:

1. Pictures of Hand washing.
2. Minutes of staff meeting going over Tusla report 2026 and all non-compliance being addressed however, there were other meetings with staff regarding report and non-compliance.
3. One-to-one meeting Toddler staff non-compliance.

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Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive measures together with the supporting evidence were reviewed by the inspectors and meet the requirements of Regulation 23.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) See Statutory Notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IN1761 served.