

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE122
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Name of Service:	Bright Sparks Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Ellistown GAA Centre, Mountrice, Monasterevin, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	R51 RX74
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Name of Registered Provider:	Caitriona Gleeson
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	08/06/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre Ballymore Eustace Road Naas Co. Kildare. W91 X38W
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Maher
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable

Not applicable

Description of service

Bright Sparks is a private pre-school located in a rural setting and operates from a log cabin with two pre-school rooms on the grounds of Ellistown G.A.A. club in the town land of Ellistown outside Kildare town.

Sessional care and education is provided to children from 2-6 years of age. Opening hours are from 9:30am-12:30pm for 38 weeks of the pre-school year. The children have access to the enclosed community playground on site.

Staffing

Four people, including the registered provider are employed in the service. All staff were present and working 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 and safety. The inspections 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 records of four persons employed including the registered provider were reviewed.

(2)(a) (b)

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source were available in respect of four persons whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for three persons employed and the registered provider.

(d) Police vetting was not required, no person had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)
Three employed staff members held qualifications in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(4)
There was no documentary evidence that one adult employed had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Application was made to QQI for record of awards to ensure staff had Major award in Early Childhood Education and Care. Bright Sparks will not employ staff without evidence of Major award in Early Childhood Education and Care

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, Level 5 for one staff member.

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 9 has been met.

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 22 children attending the service being supervised directly by three staff members.

(3)

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

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

Children were observed happy, content and relaxed within the pre-school environment. Staff members ensured children in their care were supported in all aspects of their physical, emotional and social wellbeing and demonstrated warmth and affection in all interactions with the children. Staff were very respectful towards the children in their care and positive body language and gentle voice tones were used. There was an emphasis on positive behaviour, and this was observed to be managed in a calm consistent manner. Children were immediately acknowledged on an individual basis or as a group and were praised for a job well done.

The staff members sat with the children during snack making it an enjoyable and social experience for them.

Children were supervised and assisted with hand washing as necessary which was observed taking place prior to the children eating snack and following toilet use. Children were encouraged to use the toilet independently and one staff member was observed to change a child's clothing in a very kind, respectful and dignified manner when the child's clothing became wet.

Staff ensured children had sun protection applied for outdoor play and the children's drinks, first aid kit and attendance record were brought to the adjacent playground to ensure the children's needs and safety were looked after when playing outdoors.

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 parents provided the morning snack for their child. Foods provided included sandwiches/wraps with various healthy fillings, fresh fruit pieces, crackers, cheese and yoghurts or fromage frais.

Children had their own drinks of either water or fruit juice and fresh drinking water was available at all times in the service.

Staff members ensured all food provided was nutritious and suitable and immediately cut any whole grapes or similar foods observed in lunch boxes to prevent a choking risk to a child.

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 and outdoor risk assessment were completed by the registered provider.

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

Infection Control:

The pre-school rooms were observed maintained in a clean and hygienic condition and cleaning schedules were completed daily and displayed for the room environments. Thermostatically controlled hot water, paper hand towel, liquid soap and foot pedal operated bins were available for hygienic hand washing and drying and for the hygienic disposal of used paper towel. Childrens hand washing routines were well established and hand sanitiser was also readily available.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. Medication was observed stored out of reach of the children.

Fire Safety:

Fire drills had been carried out and fire exits were not obstructed.

Outing:

The registered confirmed outings do not take place from the service.

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 each care room.

(2)

Not applicable, this is 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)

It was confirmed by the registered provider that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1)

Two staff members were trained in in first aid for children, expiry date, August 2024, one staff member was present and was immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)

The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the pre-school.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the children attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

There was no person with completed First Aid Responder (FAR) training as the certificate had expired August 2021. It is acknowledged that documented refresher FAR training has been booked for July 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

One staff member is booked into FAR training to comply with Regulation 25. Staff member will be alerted by company by telephone and email when refresher course is due.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of FAR training booked (with invoice) for 20/21 July 2023.

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 25 has not been met at this time due to the timeframe to complete training

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (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.

(b)

There were records available detailing the maintenance of the firefighting equipment in the service dated August 2022.

(4)

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Documentation was unavailable for the servicing/maintenance record of the smoke/fire detection system in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Electrical contractor has updated the maintenance record for smoke alarm.

Supporting documentation submitted

Maintenance certificate for smoke/fire detection system dated 16 June 2023.

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 26 has been met.

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 at all times both indoors and outdoors by the staff members during the inspection.

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 2024. The insurance provided cover for 22 children.