

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY012
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Name of Service:	Bellview Woods Childcare
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Address of Service:	Ballydowney, Killarney, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V93 HN53
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sean O'Mahony
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	16/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	136	PM	104
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	134 Bank Place, Mallow, Cork. P51 EC59
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Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Bellview Woods Childcare is an early years service in operation since 2003 offering a choice of full day, part-time and sessional services. The facility is registered for children aged from 0 to 6 years of age, currently children attend from 6 months to 6 years of age. Opening times are from 7:45 am until 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday, 52 weeks of the year. The Early Years Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated, and school age care is available.

Bellview Woods Childcare is a purpose-built two storey building located at the entrance to a residential estate in the urban area of Killarney Town in County Kerry. The service consists of both upper and ground floors. The ground floor consists of six care rooms (Babies, Wobbler 1, Wobbler 2, Playschool 1, Playschool 2 and Seomra Bui) and six sleep rooms (One in the Baby room, three in Wobbler 1, and two additional sleep rooms which were in operation after lunch), a wheelchair accessible toilet, reception area, office, small kitchen and sanitary areas for adults and children. The first floor consists of four care rooms (Seomra's Glas, Gorm, Oraiste and Corcra), a staff room and kitchen along with children's and adult's sanitary areas. In addition, Seomra Dearg is situated in the outdoor area in a prefabricated building and operates as a sleep room after lunch. There is a car park located to the side of the service which facilitates drop off and collection.

Staffing

There are thirty-three staff employed in the service including three AIM Support Workers. Twenty-four were present on the day of inspection. The registered provider does not work in the service

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 both managers, supervisors, 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) The registered provider ensured that there were two designated persons in charge, and three named supervisors available to deputise.
 - (b) Both managers and the three supervisors were on the premises when the inspector arrived. Staff rosters indicated that the designated persons or the named supervisors were available, on the premises, when the early years children were present.
 - (c) Photographs of the staff and their roles in the service were displayed in the reception area. Staff were aware of the management structure, roles and responsibilities.

- (2) Both managers confirmed that eight adults had begun working in the service since the last inspection on 13 April 2022. Therefore, recruitment records in regards to these adults were reviewed.
- (a) (b) There were eleven validated references from past employers, and five validated references from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available for all eight adults who had begun working in the service.
- (d) International police vetting was available for three of the adults, for whom it was required, who had lived outside of the State, for a period of six months or longer.
- (3) The documentation on file evidenced that the procedures required for paragraph 2 were in place prior to the eight adults having contact with the children.
- (4) Seven of the eight adults working directly with the children, all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework. The eighth adult held a Letter of Eligibility to practise from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

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) The registered provider ensured that, at all times, there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2) On the day of inspection there were 11 care rooms in operation with the minimum adult/child ratios:

Room/ age range	Adults	Children (am)	Children (pm)
Baby (6 months – 18 months)	2	7	7
Wobbler 1 (12 – 24 months)	3(am), 3(pm)	13	13
Wobbler 2 (18 – 24 months)	2	10	10
Playschool 1 (2-3 years)	2(am), 2(pm)	12	12
Playschool 2 (2 – 3 years)	1(am), 2(pm)	6	11
Seomra Dearg (2 – 4 years)	2(am), 3(pm)	14	20
Seomra Oraiste (3 – 4 years)	1	10	
Seomra Bui (3 – 5 years)	2(am), 2(pm)	16	16
Seomra Gorm (3 – 5 years)	2(am), 2(pm)	19	15
Seomra Glas (3 – 6 years)	2	20	
Seomra Corcra	1	9	
Total		136	104

(8)

(a) The staff roster indicated that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

- Nappy changing was carried out regularly and promptly. Staff in the Wobbler 1 care room were observed changing children at 10.30 am and 12.30 pm. These interactions were handled sensitively and positively, with staff members observed socially interacting with the children. In conversation staff stated that they have designated changing times in addition to the times the inspector observed and these are at 3.30 pm and also as and when required.

- Changing units were fitted with steps enabling the children to make their way independently to the changing units, adults were nearby to provide assistance.
- Staff in the Seomra Dearg sleep room responded promptly and sensitively to a child who had an accident, the child was changed, bed removed and replaced, by a staff member.
- Bibs and aprons were observed on children at lunch time in the Wobbler 1 care room.
- Cutlery and crockery were provided suitable for the age and stage of development and needs of the children. Children in the Baby/Wobbler 1 care rooms had access to cups with handles while older children in Soemra's Dearg and Gorm had access to individual bottles.
- Children with allergies were catered for with the hot meal served on the day available in two versions, one with all ingredients included and one with onion and pepper removed.
- The weather in the outdoor play area of the service in the afternoon was warm. Staff members were observed assisting children to put on suncream and hats. Children's individual water bottles were available ensuring they had access to fluids while playing.
- Quiet areas were available in all of the care rooms which were placed away from active, noisy and busy areas for children who required a rest or wanted to sit quietly.
- Children in the Baby and Wobbler 1 care rooms were observed having space to crawl, sit and learn to walk in a safe space. There were areas of soft matting in both rooms in which the staff were sitting on the floor playing with the children. Both care rooms had access to the outdoor play area and the children were observed playing and being able to move freely throughout the day in these areas.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS:

- Staff were observed sitting at tables engaged in social conversation with the children at mealtimes and during tabletop activities. They were sitting at the children's level helping children to feed themselves in the Wobbler 1 care room and encouraging others to use their cutlery independently where appropriate.
- In both the indoor and outdoor areas staff were observed supporting children to engage positively with one another in activities which required turn taking and sharing such as the slide and putting on individually labelled suncream.
- Children who were visibly upset were comforted and cuddled by staff. This was observed in the outdoor area where a child was crying awaiting their parent and in the care room when a child in the Wobbler 1 room was crying before lunch.

- Communication with parents was observed to be mainly through a software application on a tablet available in the care rooms. This enabled the staff to capture, store and communicate information to the parents in real times such as their child’s eating, toileting, activities and sleep information. Staff were also observed speaking to parents at drop off and collection.
- Curriculum planning was stated as taking place informally each day and weekly where possible in each room. Staff meetings happen two or three times a year and supervisors and management deal with issues as and when they arise.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The care rooms were laid out in clearly defined areas with resources and equipment which were suitable for the age and stage of development of the children in the rooms. The Wobbler 1 care room had two soft play areas with mats on the floor. Activity centres and a musical wall were positioned at the children’s height on the walls for ease of access and toys were placed on shelving which made them easily accessible and encouraged choice and independence.
- The Wobbler 1 room had an adult sofa where the staff could sit to comfort and feed children.
- The walls of the care rooms were decorated with colourful artwork, family trees with family photographs, birthday balloons and areas of interest including the solar system.
- The outdoor play area provided an alternative environment for all of the children who were observed playing outdoors on the day of inspection. There were four main areas for the different age groups, each with developmentally appropriate equipment. Examples included the areas for the older children with balance bikes, cars and balls. Children in these areas were observed running, riding and climbing. The Babies and Wobblers were sharing the same area which was covered in safety matting. Equipment in this area included rockers, blackboard flowers for mark making, ride-ons and a small slide. There was a covered area available ensuring that the children could go outdoors in all weathers.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES:

- Observations and scrapbooks were available which documented the children’s activities, needs and interests. Staff stated these are shared with parents and they were linked to Aistear the curriculum framework.
- Children’s language development was supported through one-to-one discussions and storytelling which were observed during the inspection in the Wobbler 1 and Seomra Gorm care rooms.

- Children were facilitated to make their own choice in selecting play equipment and activities they wanted to engage with.

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 service had adequate and suitable facilities both indoors and outdoors. Each care room was supplied with age and stage appropriate play materials and resources along with suitable chairs and tables. Examples included children in the Baby care room sitting in highchairs while being fed and children in the Wobbler 1 care room sitting on low chairs with trays.
 - (b) There were adequate facilities and sleep equipment for the children to rest/sleep during the day, as required. There were seven sleep rooms in operation on the day of inspection:
 - Baby care room had six cots located in a sleep room off the main care room (the number of sleeping children varied throughout the day, as sleep was child led)
 - Wobbler 1 care room had seven cots in three different sleep rooms off the main care room. There was also an additional dedicated sleep room which had seven cots, five of which were in use on the day after lunch.
 - Wobbler 2 sleep room, a separate dedicated sleep room, had ten cots (10 asleep after lunch)
 - Seomra Dearg had 11 stackable beds in operation after 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 promoted healthy, food and snacks were provided at regular intervals during the day. The service provided breakfast, a hot lunch and the 4.00 pm evening snack while the parents provided both the 10.00 am and 2.30 pm snack. Breakfast included a variety of cereals which were available from 7.45 am, mid-morning snack was available from 10.00 am (this was observed in Playschool 1 and Seomra Corcra and consisted of filled sandwiches, wraps, yogurt, cheese and a selection of bite sized fruit pieces). Lunch of Turkey curry was served in Wobbler 1 at 11.50 am and all children were seated and had started eating by 11.55 am. There was a mid-afternoon snack at 2.30 pm and evening snack in Seomra Gorm was served at 4.00 pm and was noted to consist of rusks and pineapple. Children in all care rooms were observed throughout the day to have access to individual water bottles both indoors and outdoors. Cutlery and crockery were available in all rooms.

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:

- All internal and external doors were secured to prevent the unauthorised entry of adults and children leaving unsupervised. There were three entrance doors including the main door which had electronic buzzers (Seomra's Oraiste and Gorm, Glas and Corcra) alerting staff to the presence of someone at the door. Staff were observed personally answering these doors and collecting each child.
- Access points in the additional ground floor rooms were located outdoors, outside each room. These rooms could only be accessed by parents/guardians when the adult in the room was alerted by the doorbell. Staff unlocked the bolt and released the push handle to allow entry, the bolt and push handle were located out of the children's reach.
- All blind cords in the sleep rooms were secured and made safe.

- The staircase leading to the upstairs care rooms was brightly lit and had a handrail fitted to facilitate access.
- All highchairs in the Baby room were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.
- Indoor and outdoor toys and equipment were in good condition and well maintained.
- Heavy equipment and furniture was secured to preventing tipping or falling in all care rooms.
- Flexes and cords were stored out of reach of the children.
- Safety plugs were located in unused low-lying sockets.
- Cleaning agents were stored in each of the care rooms and sanitary areas in cupboards and high shelves which were inaccessible to the children.
- The kitchen areas were not accessible by the children.
- The perimeter of the service was secured by a large concrete wall and high metal fencing. Individual gates to care rooms were secured with electronic gates which required a key code.

Infection Control:

- Children in the Wobbler 1 care room were observed washing their hands after outdoor play with thermostatically controlled hot water, dispensing soap, automatic dispensing paper towels, pedal operated bin for disposal of paper towels and a step up to facilitate reaching the taps.
- Staff in the care rooms were observed sanitising the tables before and after food preventing cross contamination.
- Disposable aprons and gloves were visible when staff were serving lunch to the children reducing the risk of contamination and cross infection.
- Tissues were available and a staff member in the Wobbler 1 care room was observed assisting a child with their nasal hygiene.
- Children's soothers were noted to be stored in individually labelled containers in Wobbler 1, preventing cross infection.
- There were 50cm between all cots and stackable beds, to prevent the spread of infection.
- Each child's belongings were stored on individual hooks off the floor area.

Administration of Medication:

- Five bottles of anti-febrile medication were available and were stored out of reach above the first aid box in the reception area, all of the medication bottles were in date.

Safe Sleep:

- The temperature of the sleep rooms were recorded within the recommended limits of 16°C-20°C while the children were sleeping.
- Children had access to age and stage appropriate sleepwear and bed linen. Younger children, under 12 months old, were observed to have cellular blankets and those over 12 months wore sleep suits.
- Physical sleep checks of the children were observed being recorded every 10 minutes on an electronic application in Seomra Dearg and the Wobbler 1 care rooms.

Fire Safety:

- All emergency fire doors were unobstructed.
- The fire assembly point was located in the outdoor play area of the Baby/Wobbler 1 play area.
- Fire appliances were secured on stands and on the walls.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- (1) There was no individual medical plan available for a child with a chronic illness in Seomra Gorm, posing a safety risk in the event of an emergency. While it was acknowledged that staff in the room were aware of the procedure to be followed, these staff go on breaks and staff confirmed that it could not be assumed that those covering know the procedure to be followed should the child require the medication to be administered.
- (2) There were five potties on the floor of the sanitary area of Playschool 2 posing a tripping hazard.

Infection Control:

- (3) A staff member from the Baby room was observed changing a child's nappy in the changing area located in Wobbler 1 and did not wash their hands or the child's hands after nappy changing, posing a risk of cross infection. This was in contradiction to the nappy changing procedure which stated: "Wash hands thoroughly before leaving changing area".
- (4) The nappy bin in Playschool 1 was not pedal operated, posing a risk of cross infection from the number of adults handling it throughout the day.
- (5) The vent in the Seomra Gorm sanitary area was covered in dust preventing the circulation of clean air.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- (1) A medical plan is now in place for the child in Seomra Gorm.

(2) Hooks are now in place to store the potties, preventing adults or children from tripping over them.

Infection Control:

(3) Staff were reminded by management of the importance of washing their hands and each child hands after each nappy change.

(4) The nappy bin in Playschool 1 was replaced with a pedal operated bin.

(5) The air vent in Seomra Gorm was cleaned. A sign has been put up to remind staff to clean air vents weekly.

Supporting documentation submitted

The following photographic and documentary evidence was received in the office of the inspectorate:

General Safety:

(1) A copy of the individual medical plan for the child in Seomra Gorm.

(2) The potties on hooks in the Playschool 2 sanitary area. A notice reminding staff to hang potties up when not in use.

Infection Control:

(3) The statement from the provider that staff have been reminded of the importance of handwashing after each nappy change has been accepted. A photograph of the reminder was submitted.

(4) New pedal operated, sealed and lidded bin.

(5) Clean vent and sign reminding staff to clean air vents weekly.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances under this Regulation have been adequately met.

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) The staff rostered confirmed that there were at least four staff members available at all times who had First Aid Responder (FAR) training completed. Dates of expiry of the available certificates were noted as being, 12 March 2024, 18 March 2025, and two certificates were dated 8 April 2025.

(2)

(a) (b) Three first aid boxes/bags were visible, within easy reach of the adults, and available at all times. One was located hung on the wall in the corridor between the Baby and Wobbler 1 care rooms, the second one was on the wall in reception and the third was located above a shelf in Seomra Glas.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) Written records were available for the firefighting equipment and the fire alarms. The maintenance certificate for the firefighting equipment was dated 14 September 2022 and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 28 March 2023.
- (4) Fire evacuation notices were visible in all of the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) Up to date fire drills were not available in the service. The last fire drill was recorded on 9 February 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (a) A fire drill was carried out on 18 May 2023. Fire drills will be carried out monthly as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1)
- (a) Copy of the fire drill completed on 18 May 2023 was received in the office of inspectorate. The statement from the manager that the fire drill will be carried out monthly has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance under this Regulation has been addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured for 170 full day care children and included important details such as public liability, professional indemnity and personal accidents. The expiry date of the policy was noted as 27 March 2024. Separate comprehensive motor insurance was available for the service, and the expiry date was recorded as 31 July 2023.