

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY115				
Name of Service:	St. Brigid's Pre-school Crèche				
Address of Service:	Hawley Park, Tralee, Co. Kerry				
Eircode:	V92 WY6Y				
Name of Registered Provider:	Angela Walsh				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	29/10/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>32</td> <td>PM</td> <td>16</td> </tr> </table>	AM	32	PM	16
AM	32	PM	16		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.				
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy				
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	N/A
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Description of service

St. Brigid's Pre-school Creche is a community based early years service that is registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day care to children aged between 0 and 6 years.

The service is currently catering for children aged between the age of 1 year and 6 years. The service is open Monday to Friday inclusive between the hours of 8:30 am and 6:00pm.

There are 4 care rooms catering for the children in operation on the ground floor of the building. The children attending have access to enclosed outdoor play areas each day

Staffing

There are currently 16 adults attached to the early years service, 15 of whom are involved in the direct care of the children. This includes 3 Community Employment (CE) participants who are studying towards achieving a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. There were 2 adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. The registered provider is not service based and does not work directly with the children who attend the setting.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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 person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,*
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and*
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) There is a designated person in charge and a named deputy. Both adults were on the premises to facilitate the inspection process.

(b) The person in charge and the named deputy person in charge was on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

(2)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that 7 new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. 3 of these new staff members joined the service on a Community Employment (CE) scheme, studying towards achieving a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

A total of 7 files were reviewed.

In addition, Garda vetting for 4 staff members whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

(a) Of the 14 references required, 7 references were available from past employers with 6 records of validation.

(b) Of the 14 references required, 6 references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer with 5 records of validation.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 7 new staff members and for 1 staff member whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal. 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.

Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was on file for 4 adults who lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) The adults working directly with children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least 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

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) & (b)

1. A 2nd written and validated reference was not on file for 1 adult.
2. There were no written validations on file for 2 written references.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The 2nd written validated reference was obtained for the 1 adult.
2. Validated the references that had not been validated prior to the inspection. The system for monitoring staff files will be updated with a staff files checklist document.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. The 2nd written validated reference required was received.
2. The 2 required validations required were received.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation 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.

(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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The required adult to child ratios were observed in all four care rooms as follows:

Morning:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Baby Room (1 to 2 years)	6	2
Creche Room (2 to 3 years)	10	2
Pre-school 1 (4- 5 years)	10	2 (a C.E worker was present)
Pre-school 2 (3-4 years)	6	2

Afternoon

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Baby Room (1 to 2 years)	2	1
Creche Room (2 to 3 years)	8	2
Pre-school 1 (4- 5 years)	6	2
Pre-school 2 (3-4 years)	0	0

(8) (a) The registered provider did ensure that a minimum of two adults were always on the premises during the hours of operation.

Non-Compliance Information

(8)(a) As evidenced on the staff rosters provided to the inspector two adults were not on the premise at all times while the service was operating.

On October 24th & 29th for example one adult was rostered to work at 8.30 am and the second adult rostered for 8.45 am.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The roster was reviewed and adjusted. There are 2 childcare staff on the premises at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of the staff rosters demonstrating that 2 adults are on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has been met.

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

(1)(a)

Basic needs:

- The children were observed to have free floor space to explore their surroundings and had free unlimited access to the toys in the care rooms.
- The children had access to the outdoor play areas during the course of the inspection.
- The inspector observed the children were appropriately dressed for playing in the outdoor area, for example the children from the Baby room had coats and hats on.
- The toilets were easily accessible to the children within the care rooms with nappy changing facilities provided for the children who required nappy changing.
- The children who could use the toilet independently did so with the staff nearby to assist if required.

- Nappy changing took place as was required during the session in a timely manner.
- The inspector observed the allocated adult that carried out the nappy changing in the creche was kind, caring and spoke freely to the children explaining the steps to them and assisting them at their level with handwashing afterwards.
- The mealtimes observed were relaxed and unhurried. The children who had finished eating before the others played with the toys available.
- The children sat at the child sized tables and chairs with the adults sitting with them. The children in the baby room had low level feeding chairs that were used to sit at the low-level table.
- The parents/guardians of the children attending and the service provide the food for snack times.
- The service offers a main hot meal cooked in the kitchen each day. The kitchen had a supply of fruit, bread, crackers, cheese and cereals.
- The food observed on inspection included for example sandwiches, yogurts, pasta, cheese, a selection of fruit and crackers and for the main hot meal, Spaghetti Bolognese.
- The inspector was informed when the staff were asked that additional portions and alternative if required is available for the children.
- The inspector observed the children helped themselves to their drinks bottles that were accessible to them in the care rooms during the session.
- The adults were observed to be kind and caring and attentive to the children's individual needs.
- They comforted children who became upset, coming down to their level, sitting the children on their laps providing re-assurance and comfort.

Physical and material environment:

- The care rooms were bright, comfortable and aired by means of the openable windows.
- The toys and play materials provided were accessible on the floor, on low level open shelving and on racks to allow choice and to encourage the children to independently access them.
- The outdoor play areas had a variety of play surfaces that included grass and concrete. The equipment available included a fixed play unit with a slide, swings, ride on toys and balls.
- Each care room had a notice board located outside the door displaying the Curriculum theme and a selection of the artwork children had completed in the service.

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 care rooms were secured to prevent children exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access.
- Cleaning agents observed on inspection were inaccessible to the children, they were stored on high level shelving and in the secured kitchenette in the creche.

Infection Control:

- There was warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels at the sinks to promote effective handwashing by the adults and the children to reduce the risk of cross infection.
- The inspector observed children washing their hands prior to the mealtimes, after using the toilet and after nappy changing.
- There was an adequate supply of single use disposable gloves and single use plastic aprons for nappy changing.
- At the nappy changing the inspector observed, the staff member washed their hands before and after nappy changing, wore single use plastic gloves and aprons. The staff member afforded the children plenty of time washing their hands after their nappies were changed, coming down to their level, talking to them and using the paper hand towels for hand drying.
- The linen observed in sealed boxes for the cots and stackable beds was clean and dry.
- When asked, the staff members stated that linen was individual to each child, and it was laundered after each use.
- The children's toiletries observed were individually labelled.

Safe Sleep:

- The inspector observed that 10-minute physical sleep checks were carried out on children who were sleeping and a record of the position, breathing and colour was kept.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 11 adults attached to the service. However, 3 vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EY-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'. Evidence was supplied that demonstrated the said Garda vetting was applied for in respect of the 3 adults.

2. In the creche sleep room there was a dangling cable attached to a monitor accessible to the children posing a risk of injury to them
3. In the creche, there was a dangling telephone cable accessible to the children posing a risk of injury to them.
4. In pre-school room 1 there were medicines stored in the first aid wall mounted box where all medicines should be stored separately to the first aid box.
5. In the pre-school room 1, a labelled emergency medication had expired on 08/2025 posing a risk of illness to children in the event the emergency medication was required. The inspector was informed the child who the medication was prescribed for is currently not attending the service.
6. There was a staff handbag stored near the low- level fridge in the pre-school room 1, it was accessible to the children posing a risk of injury should a child access it.
7. There was a rusted hook accessible to children on the security grid used on the exit doors in creche posing a risk of injury to children.
8. The cover of a large plastic box storing timber blocks stored on the floor in the sanitary accommodation in the pre-school room 2 was cracked posing a risk of injury to children.
9. There were briars protruding through the fencing in the outdoor area located at the rear of the building posing a risk of injury to children.
10. There was a gap between 2 stainless steel fences that was accessible to the children in the outdoor area at the rear of the building posing a risk of injury to children
11. There was a low-level rusted container accessible to the children posing a risk of injury to children in the outdoor area at the rear of the building.
12. There were some areas of the timber handrail in the outdoor area to the rear of pre-school room 1 that had splinters posing a risk of injury to children.

Infection Control:

13. There were no waterproof covers provided for the 2 safety mattresses for the shared standard cots in the baby room posing a risk of cross infection.
14. The pedal operating opening device on the lidded, sealed and lined nappy bin in the creche sanitary accommodated was not opening the lid. The inspector observed staff and children opening the lid of the bin to dispose of used paper hand towels and nappies posing a risk of cross infection.
15. Not all the children's drinks bottles in the creche were labelled posing a risk of cross infection.

16. Within the sanitary/nappy changing room in the pre-school 2, there were 6 stackable beds, linen, pillows, some play materials not stored in boxes, a mop and a floor brush posing a risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The Garda vetting renewals for the 3 staff was actively being processed at the time of the inspection. The 3 Garda vetting disclosures have been received. The monitoring system has been updated to ensure timely tracking and renewal of all future vetting.
2. The cable has since been securely fixed and is now safely mounted. The service will continue to review and monitor the area on a regular basis to ensure no additional hazards are present. The room leaders are fully aware of their responsibilities for conducting regular health and safety checks and reporting the procedures.
3. The cable has been securely fixed and is now safely secured. The service will continue to review and monitor the area on a regular basis to ensure no additional hazards are present. The room leaders are fully aware of their responsibilities for conducting regular health and safety checks and reporting the procedures.
4. These items were not intended to be stored in the first aid box and were immediately removed after the inspection. The room leaders and staff have been reminded of the correct procedures regarding medication storage. To prevent recurrence, continuous regular monitoring of all the first aid boxes will take place. Each room will have a designated and suitable lockable area for storing medication.
5. The out-of-date medication was removed immediately and returned to the parents when the child returned to the service at the beginning of December. In date medication is in place and stored in a locked medicine cabinet in the room for the child in question. To prevent recurrence, monthly checks of all medications will be implemented.
6. The handbag was removed immediately. The staff were informed that all personal belongings are to be stored in the designated staff lockers. This will be continuously reviewed to ensure no personal belongings are accessible to children.
7. The hook has been removed and replaced with a new one at a higher level out of the reach of the children. The area will be reviewed and continued to be monitored to prevent recurrence.
8. The lid has since been disposed of and the box has been removed from the sanitary accommodation.

9. The briars have since been cut back. The roots of the briars will be dug up to prevent regrowth. Until this work is complete, the children will not use this outdoor area. Once the works are complete, the garden will re-open for use.
10. The stainless-steel fence has since been secured and the gap is no longer accessible. The area will continue to be monitored to ensure no additional hazards are present. The area is not currently used by the children until other works required to be carried out are complete.
11. The container was disposed of. Staff have been spoken to report or dispose of objects posing a risk to children.
12. The gap in the timber handrail has been filled in and the rail has been sanded. The staff will continue to monitor the area regularly to ensure no additional hazards are present.

Infection Control:

13. Waterproof sheets are available and are placed on the cots when the children due their naps.
14. The bin has been replaced.
15. All the children's bottles are now labelled. The staff are aware to continuously check the bottles to ensure they are labelled. A notice has been placed above the bottle storage area in all the care rooms to remind the staff about labelling and cleaning the bottles each day.
16. All the items were immediately removed from the sanitary/ nappy changing area.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. The 3 required Garda vetting disclosures.
2. A photograph of the secured cable.
3. A photograph of the secured cable.
4. The statement is accepted as evidence.
5. The statement is accepted as evidence.
6. The statement is accepted as evidence.
7. A photograph of the new hook in place.
8. The statement is accepted as evidence.
9. The statement is accepted as evidence.
10. A photograph of the repaired fencing.
11. A photograph of the area without the container in place.
12. A photograph of the work carried out on the timber rail.

Infection Control:

- 13. The statement is accepted as evidence.
- 14. A photograph of the new bin.
- 15. The statement is accepted as evidence.
- 16. The statement is accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation is 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 registered provider ensured that there were adults available at all times with first aid responder (FAR) training. There were 4 adults with a completed in date FAR certification.

(2)

(a) The wall mounted first aid boxes were located in each of the care rooms, up high, out of reach of children.

(b) The first aid boxes were suitably stocked for the number of children attending the service and available for staff to attend to the children if required.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

(b) safe and secure,

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

(b) the premise was observed to be safe and secure on the day of the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) Within the outdoor play areas at the rear of the premises there was: -

- Area of the timber fencing that separating the grassed area and the concreted area that were broken.
- The nets on 2 soccer goal posts were torn and entangled around the goals.
- On the grass area in the outdoor play area located to the rear of the premise, there was some of the soft matting under the play unit with the slide and under swings that had become deeply embedded in beneath the earth.
- The pathways to the outdoor play areas were not clean with an accumulation of leaves and dust posing a risk of cross contamination.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(d) The rear outdoor area is currently off limits and has been since the inspection until all the necessary works are complete. The area will be monitored and reviewed to prevent recurrence.

- Currently the timber fence is being replaced
- The 2 goals posts have been discarded as the frame was not strong enough after replacing the netting.
- Currently replacing the soft matting.
- The pathways in the outdoor lay area have since been power washed and cleaned.

Supporting documentation submitted

The statement is accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has been met. The above will be the subject of inspection on the next inspection.