

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LD005
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Name of Service:	Lanesborough/Ballyleague Community Childcare Service CLG
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Address of Service:	The Green, Lanesboro, Co. Longford
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Eircode:	N39 V104
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Name of Registered Provider:	Brid Gordon
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	38	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Lanesborough/ Ballyleague Community Childcare service was established in 1997 and is a non-profit community service. It provides sessional preschool care and education to children aged 2-6 years. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) and operates from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

The service is located in a former primary school in the town of Lanesborough, Co Longford. There are 3 care rooms in the service namely the Junior Preschool room, Room One and Room Two. Each care room has a separate enclosed outdoor space available to the rear of the service. Parking facilities are available.

The service is registered to provide school age care.

Staffing

Fourteen adults are employed in the service. The registered provider does not work in the service and was not present for the inspection.

On the day of inspection there were eleven staff present. Of the eleven staff present, nine staff members were working directly with the children. The manager was not assigned to a care room but was available to provide support across all of the care rooms as required. The administrator for the service was also present.

All adults working directly with the children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection 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*
- (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)(b) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required, both remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c) There is a clear management structure in place in the service, and the staff members were familiar with specific roles and responsibilities of the various staff members in the service.

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that four new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection.

(2)
(a)(b) Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of four adults whose records were reviewed.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. An in date garda vetting disclosure was available for eight staff members which required renewal since the last inspection on 18 March 2025.

(d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had resided outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months whose records were reviewed.

(4) Three adults working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 thirty eight children attending the service being supervised directly by nine staff members during the inspection.

(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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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)

Children were observed to enjoy the play activities during the morning session in all care rooms and this included free play, tabletop activities, speaking out loud and singing songs as part of the preparation for the upcoming graduation day and outdoor play.

Children enjoyed a healthy lunch provided by their parents which consisted of wheaten bread, sandwiches, crackers and cheese, fruit and yoghurt with water to drink.

Children were encouraged to be independent as they dressed for outdoor play assisted by staff as needed. Children went to the toilet independently and washed their hands supervised by staff.

The staff were positive towards children and were familiar with each child and their personalities. Staff used individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities.

The physical and material environment of the three rooms were constructively planned, considered and presented from a child's perspective. They were well resourced with equipment, toys and resources. The indoor environments had interesting play and learning spaces which provided developmentally appropriate, challenging, diverse, creative and enriching experiences that facilitated child led play.

The three care rooms were bright and colourful with children's artwork and family photographs displayed.

Areas of interest were evident and included a home area, a dolls house, arts and crafts area and sensorial materials were noted. Age and stage appropriate toys and materials were accessible to children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were in place. Children were observed to relax in the rest area established in the pre-school room.

The service works in partnership with parents and guardians. There is an open door policy, and information is shared at the drop off and collection point as the parents were collecting their children. A closed electronic messaging system was in place with parents sharing the children's daily play and work activities. The use of the story board observed in room 3 had pictures of stories about each child and strengthened the link between home and the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

The service had close engagement with the local primary schools and the 'Mo Scéal' document was completed by the child's key carer in partnership with parents and then sent to the child's school to support their transition from preschool to primary school.

There was evidence of short, medium and long term curriculum planning to support the children's learning. The theme this week was holidays, going to primary school and the school graduation. The short term subject plan is flexible and can adapt to the children emerging interests. These are all incorporated through the medium of song, music, dance movement, conversations during circle time and arts and crafts with the children.

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 to the service was electronically secured and the garden gates were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the Early Years' service.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. The staff members advised the inspector that they immediately cut/chop any food that may pose a choking risk to a child at snack time. They also stated that they would remove any neck jewellery if they observed a child wearing it.

There was documentary evidence available that daily indoor risk assessments were completed daily and reviewed to promptly identify and manage any potential risks in the care rooms. The service had a system in place to manage maintenance issues.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled warm running water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying in the sanitary area. The staff members were familiar with the importance of handwashing practice as a means to control the spread of infection in the service. They supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. The staff were observed washing their hands also. Nappy changing facilities were available in the service however it was not required on the day of the inspection. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal and containment of used tissues. Written cleaning

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. The staff members were familiar with the required practice when administering medication in the service including recording of same. Medicine was safely stored out of the reach of children.

Safe Sleep:

A designated rest area was available for any child wishing to take a break from activities and rest in each of the three care rooms.

Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out, and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service. Fire assembly signage was in place in the area at the front of the service.

Outing:

The manager confirmed that the service does not conduct outings.

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 members present were trained in first aid response (FAR) and was immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)

(a) First aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in each care room.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the children in the three care rooms attending the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 for the numbers of children attending the service. The expiry date was noted to be 27 March 2027.