

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH010
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Name of Service:	Ainedanbury Ltd T/A Bright Beginnings
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Address of Service:	257 Lower Point Rd, Dundalk, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A91 RW20
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Name of Registered Provider:	Irenaeus McCaffrey
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time
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Date(s) of Inspection:	26/01/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	60	PM	31
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Flood & S.Skinnader
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Ainedanbury Ltd T/A Bright Beginnings is a privately owned service that has been in operation under its current management since October 2023. It provides Sessional, Part-time and Full Day Care services to pre-school children from 2-6 years of age.

The service operates from a two-storey building that adjoins a domestic dwelling. This area comprises of 4 care rooms that are named as The Lavender Room and The Bluebell Room and are located on the ground floor. The Sunflower and Daisy Rooms are located on the 1st floor. An additional 5th room is located in a separate building in the outdoor area and is called The Poppy Room. Ancillary accommodation consists of sanitary facilities, a kitchen area, a sensory room off the Lavender Room, office and storage areas. An outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises

Staffing

There were 25 staff employed in the service which included the following:

- The registered provider who works directly with the preschool children.
- Seventeen childcare staff who work directly with the preschool children and this includes the deputy person in charge.
- 3 staff who work with children attending the school aged service.
- 4 staff members who carry out catering, administrative and maintenance duties.

One student was also present in the service during the inspection.

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance. As a result, the scope of the inspection included The Lavender, Sunflower, Daisy and Poppy rooms.

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, 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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named deputy person to deputise as required. The deputy person was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service at 10.30am. The person in charge who is the registered provide arrived on the premises at approximately 11.15am and was present for the remainder of the inspection.

(c) When questioned staff were familiar with the management structure within the service and the roles and responsibilities of the various staff members.

(2) Following a discussion with the registered provider and a review of the staff rosters, 7 new members of staff have been employed since the last inspection on 04/02/2025. A contracted music teacher also attends the service on a regular basis.

These 8 files were presented for inspection and reviewed:

(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for 7 new members of staff and 1 contracted music teacher.

(c) A processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for the 7 new members of staff and 1 contracted teacher. Garda vetting disclosures were also reviewed for the registered provider, 1 student, and 17 other staff members who were present in the service. The registered provider adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for the 1 new staff member who had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 3 new members of staff who are reported to worked directly with the children held at least the minimum required level 5 childcare qualification on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent

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) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service at 10:30am and throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed:

- In the **Bluebell Room**: there were 14 children (aged between 3-5 years) being cared for by 4 staff members.
- In the **Lavender Room**: there were 10 children aged 2 years being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In the **Daisy Room**: there were 9 children aged 3-4 years being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In the **Sunflower Room**: there were 20 children aged 4-5 years being cared for by 4 staff members.
- In the **Poppy Room**: there were 7 children aged 3-4 years being cared for by 2 staff members.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times. This was verified by staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained at the service

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A curriculum vitae detailing qualifications and experience was available for each of new staff files reviewed including the contracted music teacher.
- (h) Documentary evidence was available of the daily attendance of each child in the service and included the arrival and departure times of each child. This information was recorded on the services communication tablet.
- (i) Up to date daily/ weekly staff rosters were available in the service and were reflective of the staff present in the service.
- (k) A sample of 13 accident and incident forms were reviewed. The information was recorded on the services parent linked communication tablet and included the required information. For example: the incident details, the time and date of the incident, parent signature, the staff signature and managers signature indicating that they had reviewed the information.

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

There were 5 rooms in operation on the day of the inspection namely; The Bluebell Room, The Lavender Room, The Daisy Room, The Sunflower Room and The Poppy Room. The Poppy Room ran 2 sessions from 8.30am- 11.30am and the 2nd session from 11.40am- 2.40pm.

A sampling process was used and as a result the Sunflower, Lavender, Daisy and Poppy Rooms are the subject of inspection under Regulation 19.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs:

- Healthy eating was promoted in the service as was evident by the varied menu on display. All morning and afternoon snacks were provided by the parents, with perishable items being stored appropriately in the fridge. Dinner was prepared by the resident cook in the service and was observed to consist of mashed potatoes, mince, mixed vegetables and gravy. All dietary requirements were provided for in the service with a vegetarian option also available. Additional portions were provided if the children requested and portion size and consistency was appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children in each room. Staff assisted the children as necessary with their dinner in all care rooms with independence being promoted and encouraged. For example "...do you need some help with your spuds?...you try first and then if you need help, I will help you..."
- Potable drinking water was available for the children to access in all rooms. The children's drinks bottles were stored on a low-level accessible shelf and were visible and accessible to the children at all times thus promoting their independence.

- The children who were toilet trained were encouraged to be independent with toileting. Discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children after toileting.
- Nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with pleasant interactions observed between children and staff.
- In the Lavender Room one child who required a sleep was facilitated to sleep in the care room.
- The children in all rooms were observed to have a change of environment to the outdoors on a number of occasions throughout the inspection. They were appropriately dressed to go outside.

Supporting Relationships

- The staff when questioned stated that they use an electronic interactive communication system to record and share information about the children’s daily activities and care needs with parents. For example, evidence was available that demonstrated how staff sent messages to parents about their children’s food intake and their likes and dislikes. Pictures of activities, games, curriculum plans, and the children’s learning journey are also shared through this ‘app’. Partnership with parents is also supported through verbal communication at drop off and collection, social media and email.
- A key worker system was in place throughout the service and the names of the children, and their key worker was on display in the care rooms. The staff when questioned were familiar with their allocated key children and this promoted the development and sustainment of relationships between the children, their parents, and the staff in the service. Parent/ teacher meetings are also reported to be used to share information about the children’s learning in the service.
- The staff were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children and staff members e.g. one child who complained of a sore finger *“do you need some magic dust on your finger to make it better?... the fairies in my garden give me the magic dust to bring into school... well done”*.
- The staff were observed to use a variety of strategies including timers and redirection of activities to support transitions for example to ‘tidy up’.
- Inclusion plans were available for children who required additional supports and strategies were also observed being implemented to support their daily attendance in the service.
- The staff have a communication group where they share information through a messaging service. The staff also report regular staff meetings in the service.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

Compliance Information

(3)(a) The children were observed to access the enclosed outdoor play area on the premises. The area has undergone maintenance works and is now a large spacious accessible area for the children. The area has a variety of surfaces including paved paths, artificial grass, and safety matting. Partially covered areas were available for use in all weathers including the tree house under the large tree and the classroom off the Poppy Room. A storage area for outdoor boots was also available. A variety of toys and equipment were available including, a climbing frame with rope bridge and slide, a gadget wall and music wall on the fence, a greenhouse for planting, blackboards, dolls house and equipment and ride on equipment. A wooden shed was also available for storage of toys and equipment.

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

It was observed that the registered provider has taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service including:

General Safety:

- The external and internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the Early Years' service.
- The staff were observed to accompany the children to the front door at collection time.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.
- The outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises was gated and secured with fencing to prevent a child gaining unsupervised access to a roadway or other source of danger.

- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children on high shelving and in locked cupboards.
- Cleaning equipment were observed out of children's reach or secured.
- All blind cords in the service were restricted or inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Frequent hand-washing practices were observed to be carried out after toileting and nappy changing, outdoor play and before mealtimes.
- Staff were observed to wear appropriate disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies in accordance with best practice guidelines.
- Good environmental cleaning practices were observed being carried out such as; cleaning tables prior to and after mealtimes. During discussions, staff were familiar with best practice cleaning guidelines for the care and management of toys and equipment in the service, including 'mouthed toys'.

Safe Sleep:

- Physical safe sleep observations were observed being carried out. The sleep records maintained for each sleeping child recorded the breathing pattern, sleeping position and colour of sleeping children at 10-minute intervals. The room temperature was also recorded. All information was recorded electronically on the service electronic 'app'.

Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection

General Safety:

1. At 10.45am, the surface temperature of the radiator in the sanitary area on the ground floor, was recorded at 58.8°C which exceeds the recommended maximum surface temperature of 50°C. This went unnoticed by the staff present in the service. The risk assessment sheets that were on display in the sanitary area did not detail the surface temperature of the radiator as a potential risk even though this is also a recurring non-compliance from the previous inspection on 04/02/2025 inspection.
2. At 11.00am the hot water temperature in the sanitary area off the Poppy Room was recorded at 48.3°C which exceeds the recommended maximum hot water temperature of 43°C. This went unnoticed by the staff present in the care room and was not documented on the risk assessment sheet that was completed on the day of the inspection.

- At 11.35am the air temperature of the Sensory room was recorded at 24.6°C. This exceeds the recommended maximum room temperature of 18-22 °C to ensure the children’s safety and comfort. The staff member was heard to say “it’s hot in here” but no remedial action was taken at this time to reduce the room temperature.

Infection Control:

The staff did not always take appropriate steps to prevent the spread of infection in the service. For example;

- One staff member returned to a care room without removing the disposable apron used while changing a child’s nappy.
- In the Poppy Room the preschool children were observed to use a blue cloth towel to dry their hands after handwashing which is a cross-contamination risk. At this time the paper towel dispenser was empty.
- The nappy bins in use in the sanitary areas off the Daisy and Lavender Rooms, for the disposal of soiled nappies were lidded and pedal operated. However, staff members were observed using their hands to open the inner flap of the nappy bin to dispose of soiled nappies. This practice is incorrect as it is a source of cross contamination of the staff members hands.
- The pedal function on the metal bin for blue paper towel disposal in the downstairs sanitary area was broken. The staff were observed to use their hands to open the lid to dispose of the use towel. This is a cross-contamination risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- To correct the surface temperature of the radiator area on the ground floor, the registered provider has completed the following:
A wooden radiator cover was installed to prevent the children from being exposed to high-temperature heating. Risk assessments of the surface are being carried out on a daily basis to ensure the correct temperatures.
- The registered provider turned down all the hot water thermostat to ensure the correct temperatures. Risk assessments have been carried out to prevent the hot water temperature from rising at any time.
- The registered provider turned off the radiator in the sensory room and a daily risk assessment will be carried out.

The radiator in the sensory room has been turned off because the space is small and sufficient heat flows in from the Toddler Room to maintain the recommended room temperature.

Infection Control:

4. The registered provider has spoken to the staff member who returned to a care room without removing the disposable apron following changing a child's nappy and has stated 'this will not happen again'. Staff have received a copy of the policies regarding Infection Control and in-house training will commence next month.
5. The cloth towel has been removed and staff have been spoken to by the registered provider. Staff have been advised not to use cloth towels to dry children's hands and that the blue roll must be used to prevent cross contamination.
6. All nappy bins have been replaced in all changing areas. Going forward, all staff will use pedal labelled bins to dispose of nappy waste.
7. The blue paper towel bin and staff are using the pedal to open the bins. In-house training will commence in a month in relation to infection control measures within the services policies. Staff have been advised to use the pedal bin to dispose of blue paper towels.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs nappy bins

Risk assessment documents for rooms and water temperatures.

Staff declaration to use paper towel for hand drying

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances, together with documentary and photographic evidence. Based on the information submitted, the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed. Implementation and sustainment of the corrective and preventative actions will be assessed at the next inspection.

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 firefighting 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)(a) A record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. Fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 07/01/2026.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment was last serviced on 14/02/2025 and the fire alarm on 10/11/2025.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.