

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH010		
Name of Service:	Ainedanbury Ltd T/A Bright Beginnings		
Address of Service:	257 Lower Point Rd, Dundalk, Co. Louth		
Eircode:	A91 RW20		
Name of Registered Provider:	Ireneaus McCaffrey		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time		
Date(s) of Inspection:	04/02/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	57	PM 23
Address of the 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, 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, 2 kitchen areas, a separate sleep room off the Lavender Room, office and storage areas. An outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises

Staffing

There are 26 staff working in the service. This includes the registered provider, 2 students, sixteen staff who work directly with the preschool children, four members of staff who are employed to work with children attending the school aged service, and three members of staff who are employed in an administrative role catering duties and maintenance duties.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19.

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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to immediate safety concerns that were identified. The registered provider responded and gave written assurances of appropriate immediate actions undertaken in the service to control the risk to children within 24 hours of the inspection.

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

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named deputy person to deputise as required. The deputy person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service. The registered provider who is the designated person in charge arrived on the premises at approximately 1pm and was present for the remainder of the inspection.

There were 26 files presented for inspection including the registered provider, childcare staff, school aged staff, students and ancillary staff:

(2)(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written references from a past employer or an alternative source available for 25 members of staff including the registered provider and the students.
- There was 1 written reference for 1 staff member.

All written references available were validated as required.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda vetting disclosure was available for all 26 staff members in the service. The service 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) Following a review of the staff files presented on the day of inspection, international police vetting was available for the 5 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of greater than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that the registered provider and 16 members of staff, who work directly with the pre-school children had at least the minimum required Level 5 childcare qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) One staff member did not have a second written and appropriately validated reference.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A new reference has been obtained from the employee.

The registered provider will ensure that the appropriate references are kept on file for all employees.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Documentary evidence of written and validated reference.

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-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (2) (a) has been adequately addressed.

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) On arrival to the premises at 10.45am there were 5 rooms in operation namely; The Bluebell Room and Lavender Room, located on the ground floor, The Sunflower Room and Daisy Room which are located on the first floor and The Poppy Room which is located in a separate room in the outdoor area.

The following adult to child ratios were observed on arrival:

- **The Bluebell Room:**

There were 12 preschool children aged between 3-4 years with 2 members of staff.

- **The Lavender Room**

There were 7 children aged 2-3 years being cared for by 2 staff members.

- **The Sunflower Room:**

There were 17 children aged 3-4 years with 2 members of staff.

- **The Daisy Room:**

There were 12 children aged 2-3 years with 2 members of staff which included the deputy person in charge

- **The Poppy Room**

There were 9 children aged 4 years with 2 members of staff.

Two staff members and 2 students were also present in the service at this time and were engaged in administrative and catering duties. One additional staff member arrived on the premises at 11.19am and was observed to work with the preschool children attending the Daisy Room at this time.

The registered provider arrived on the premises at approximately 1pm and was present for the remainder of the inspection.

(8)(a) Following a review of the available documentation e.g., staff rotas and children's attendance records this information demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times

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:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Non-Compliance Information

(i) The service rota was not reflective of all staff who work or provide relief in the service. For example, the staff rota reviewed for the week prior to the inspection did not detail 1 staff member who provides relief in the service and works directly with the preschool children and 1 student who was employed to carry out catering and administrative duties.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The Manager will ensure that all staff is recorded on the rota on a daily basis going forward. The rotas now display all staff from all areas of the business.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence provided.

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 evidence. Based on the information submitted the non-compliance identified under Regulation 16 has been addressed.

Implementation and sustainment of the corrective and preventative actions detailed will require assessment at the next inspection.

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

Compliance Information

There were 5 rooms in operation on the day of the inspection: namely: The Lavender and Bluebell Rooms on the ground floor. The Sunshine and Daisy Rooms on the 1st floor and The Poppy Room which is located in a separate building in the outdoor area.

A sampling process was therefore used and as such the Lavender, Bluebell, Sunshine and Daisy Rooms are the subject of 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:

- Independence with toileting was promoted for the children who were toilet trained. Discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required and gentle handwashing reminders were given to the children after toileting.
- Nappies were changed as required and in a timely manner with positive interactions observed between children and staff.

- The children’s care needs were attended to on a regular basis for example, hands were washed before mealtimes and after toileting; and noses were wiped.
- The children’s drinks cups/ bottles were stored in the care rooms, and they were accessible as required. Assistance was given to the younger children who required feeding. Bibs were put on the younger children before meals and hands and faces cleaned appropriately after the meals. Staff were observed to sit with the children at mealtimes and this time was used to encourage conversations between the children.
- A 3-week menu was on display in the service which detailed the breakfast and the variety of hot meals provided in the service. The children attending on a sessional basis brought in lunches and snacks from home.

Supporting relationships around children

- A key person system was in place in the service with staff members allocated a group of children. The key person took the lead in supporting that group’s transitions, recording their daily activities, maintaining relationships with their families, and documenting their learning and development. Documentary evidence was also available of strategies used in the service for children who require additional supports.
- Communication between the parents and staff was informal at drop off and pick-up. The staff also confirmed that most communication with parents and guardians occurs through the electronic application system, an “app”. While not fully operational on the day of the inspection the staff demonstrated how it is used to share information with parents about the children’s basic care needs on a day-to-day basis, photographs of activities taken in the service, upcoming events and regular newsletters. Each care room has a direct phone line which the parents can use as required. Parent/ teacher meetings are also used to share information.
- The staff members in the service 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 member for example, “...that is lovely...just beautiful...” “...are you alright... do you need some help...” The children were observed to seek out the staff for assistance.
- In the Bluebell Room there was a “Helping Hands” list where the children got to participate in different jobs which would help promote independence.

- In the Lavender Room staff intervened immediately with any behavioural issues to try and prevent escalation and used age-appropriate strategies such as getting down to the child's level; and making eye contact with them and explaining why the behaviour was not ok.

Physical and Material Environment

- Child sized furniture and equipment was in use throughout the service.
- A variety of age-appropriate materials and equipment was available in the care rooms. Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in these rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children.
- The children were observed to engage in a variety of activities that promoted many areas of development for example, story time with discussions about the story. Sensory play included trays with coloured rice and cotton wool and shredded paper, table top activities with a variety of blocks and magnets and activities that promote fine motor and coordination development including cutting and lining up small buttons on various shapes and lines.
- The children's artwork was evident in the care rooms for example; the bug hotel, penguin splat, melted snowmen and rockets.

Non-Compliance Information

1. In the Daisy Room two children were observed together in the small toilet area with a staff member. One child was having their nappy changed and the 2nd child was using the toilet both at the same time. This does not maintain the privacy and dignity of the child during toileting.
2. On the day of inspection, the children did not have access to the outdoor area due to previous flooding issues and the area was in a state of disrepair. Maintenance works were required. This was also noted on the last inspection where the outdoor area was not suitable for use. There was no other alternative area for those children attending on a parttime or full daycare basis to avail of a change of environment to the outdoors. In addition, some staff did not appear to be aware that the outdoor area was out of use when questioned. It is acknowledged that the registered provider had engaged the maintenance person to commence work on the outdoor on the day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. All staff have been spoken to and will follow the policies of the service, it is vital that at all times we respect the rights and needs of the children in our care. All staff have received a copy of the Intimate & Personal Care policy & also the Toileting Policy to review. These policies will be reviewed in our next staff meeting.
2. A landscaping company has been contracted to make the garden suitable for usage. Monthly Management Checklists to check staffs work under Regulation 19.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Staff statement and acknowledgement of review of personal care policy and Toileting Policy.
2. Photographic evidence of completed works on outdoor area.

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 19 has been adequately addressed. Implementation and sustainment of the corrective and preventative actions detailed will require assessment at the next inspection.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure that all reasonable measures were taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a preschool child in relation to the following:

General Safety:

1. Blind cords were not restricted and were accessible to the children attending the Daisy and Bluebell rooms.
2. The hot water temperature in the Poppy Room exceeded the recommended maximum safe hot water temperature of 43°C. The hot water was recorded at 60.2°C at 10.50am by the inspector.
3. The surface temperature of the radiator in the sanitary area downstairs exceeded the recommended maximum safe temperature of 50°C. The radiator surface temperature was recorded at 63°C at 11.00am by the inspector.
4. An unsecured laminator machine was accessible to the children attending the Daisy Room, which is a potential impact hazard if pulled by a preschool child.
5. A sweeping brush was inappropriately stored at the sink in the Daisy Room and was observed by the inspector to fall over onto the floor. This was a potential impact and safety risk.

These safety concerns went unnoticed by the staff members present in the care room and even though documentary evidence was available of a risk assessment which had been completed on the morning of the inspection it did not identify these risks.

As an immediate risk was identified, an immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of the inspection in relation to the identified non-compliances 1, 2 and 3.

Infection Control:

The following infection control risks were observed:

1. There was no running hot water in the Daisy Room when checked by the inspector at 11.25am or in the nappy changing room off the Lavender Room. This went unnoticed by the staff members present and was not identified on the daily risk assessment sheet which had been completed and signed by staff. As such the children and staff were unable to carry out effective hand washing practices after toileting and nappy changing which is an infection control risk.

2. In the Lavender Room nappy changing area the nappy changing mat and station required a deep cleaning as there was evidence of soiling on the nappy changing mat. This is a cross infection and infection control risk.
3. The sleep mats were stored in the nappy changing area off the Lavender Room, this is an infection control and cross contamination risk.

Safe Sleep:

4. When the Lavender Room was converted to a sleep room the room temperature was not being checked or recorded on the 10-minute sleep checks. In addition, there was no way for the staff to check the room temperature. Staff were unaware of the need to check and record the room temperature when this was discussed with them.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Actions

General Safety

1. All blind cords were examined on the day of the inspection by the manager and restricted from the children until fixed properly. A blind repair company came out to examine all the blind cords and fixed any that were not properly secure. Daily risk assessments from staff have been ongoing to alleviate risk. Monthly Management Checklists to check staffs work under Regulation 19.
2. &3 All radiators & water temps have been checked to remove any risk to children or staff. The gas repair company came out to fix the problem with the hot water. The radiator in the toilet was switched off until a carpenter puts a radiator cover on it. The Room leaders are conducting daily risk assessments, and the Management team are conducting monthly safety checks to ensure compliance under regulations. The gas company was contacted to come to the service and rectify the problem with the water. All staff have received a copy of the risk management policy and have signed off on it to prevent this from happening again.
- 4 &5 All items were removed in accordance with the Health & Safety & Welfare policy. The laminator is stored in the stationary press which is located in the reception area. The sweeping brushes have been secured with a holder to prevent them from falling or obstructing a child in a room.

Infection Control

1. The gas repair company came out to fix the problem with the hot water. The Room leaders are conducting daily risk assessments, and the management team are conducting monthly safety checks to ensure compliance under regulations.

2. Regarding the nappy changing area, a deep clean commenced straight away and has been scheduled twice a week.
3. Sleep mats have been removed from the nappy changing area and stored in a new area.

Safe Sleep

4. The Safe Sleep policy has been discussed with all staff and a thermometer has been purchased and is on display in the Lavender room. The temperature is now being recorded on the 10-minute checks on a daily basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Documentary and photographic evidence of repairs to blind cords
- Signed statements by staff that daily risk assessments are being carried out and that they have received a copy of the services Risk assessment policy.
- Photographic evidence of secured brush
- Risk assessment template
- Documentary evidence of hot water temperatures.
- Documentary evidence that radiator has been turned off

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 has been adequately addressed. Implementation and sustainment of the corrective and preventative actions detailed will require further assessment at the next inspection.

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 was a person trained as a First Aid Responder (FAR) at all times in the service as was evidenced by the available FAR certificates in the service.
- (2)(a) and (b) There were several adequately stocked first aid boxes for the children in the service available at all times.