

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LH016
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Claddagh's Treasures Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	69 Claddagh Park, Tom Bellew Ave, Dundalk, Co. Louth
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A91 AY6P
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Linda Bradley
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	08/05/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	45	PM	33
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Flood & S. Skinnader
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

Claddaghs Treasures is a community-based service, managed by a voluntary committee and in operation since September 2006. The service provides Full day care, Part- time and Sessional care to Pre-school children from 2 to 6 years. The maximum number of children that can be accommodated is 51 and the service operates from 8:30 – 5:30 daily.

The service operates from a purpose-built building within a residential area of Dundalk town. There is off street parking available for parental drop off and collection. There are 3 care rooms in operation namely the Daisy, Bluebell and Sunflower Rooms. There is an outdoor play area on the premises and the ancillary accommodation consists of storage area, utility room, office, kitchen, and sanitary accommodation.

### Staffing

There are 22 staff employed in the service including the following:

- Twenty childcare staff who work directly with the pre-school children, which includes the service manager, designated person in charge and deputy person and staff who provide relief in the service.
- Two staff members who are employed to carry out catering and cleaning duties and caretaker 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 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 inspectors wish 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) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. The deputy person was on the premises when the inspectors arrived at the premises at 11.10am and was present throughout 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) Twenty-two staff files were presented for inspection and reviewed:
- (a) and (b) Two written and validated references from a past employer or alternative source were available for the 22 staff employed in the service.
- (c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda vetting disclosure was available for each of the 22 staff members. 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 3 staff who had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.
- (4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that 20 members of staff, who work directly with the pre-school children held at least the minimum required level 5 Childcare Qualification or a qualification deemed to be 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) On the day of inspection there were 3 preschool rooms in operation namely; Daisy Room, Bluebell Room and Sunflower Room, formally called Rooms 1, 2 and 3.
- The following adult to child ratios were observed when the Inspectors arrived unannounced to the service

- **Daisy Room (Room1)**

There were 9 preschool children aged 3-5 years with 2 members of staff.

- **Bluebell Room (Room 2)**

There were 15 preschool children aged 3-5 years with 6 members of staff.

- **Sunflower Room (Room 3)**

There were 21 preschool children aged 3-5 years with 5 members of staff.

Two additional members of staff were also present including the person in charge and 1 staff member who was engaged in catering duties.

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

## 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

(1)(a) There were three rooms in operation on the day of the inspection namely; The Daisy Room, The Bluebell Room and The Sunflower Room.

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

#### **BASIC NEEDS:**

- The children had free movement in the care rooms and all children had a change of environment to the outdoor areas located on the premises on a number of occasions.
- A homemade dinner consisting of chicken curry and rice was served to all children attending the service. Extra portions were offered and provided and many of the children happily took the 2<sup>nd</sup> portions. The staff were observed to sit with the children at mealtimes and this time was used to encourage conversations between the children and also between staff and children. Consistency of the dinners were

observed to be age appropriate throughout all rooms. A variety of snacks were also provided including toast and cereal for breakfast, and fresh fruit and homemade scones for morning and afternoon snacks.

- Drinks were available to the children as required and were easily accessible in the care rooms as the children required them.
- Nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with pleasant interactions observed between children and staff. Throughout the service 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.
- The children were observed to spontaneously access the rest areas to take a break from activities.
- The children were well supported during transitions which were swift, and this ensured that no behavioural issues arose, for example; going outdoors, for handwashing and in preparation for lunch.

### Supporting Relationships

- A key worker system was in place throughout the service and the names of the children, plus their key worker was on display in all 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. The children were observed to actively seek out staff members.
- Throughout the care rooms, children were observed to be provided with sensitive care and nurturing interactions by all staff. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children in all rooms. For example, *"..if we all wait our turn then everyone gets a turn...that's very clever of you...or we can have a go tomorrow.."*, *"anyone else like a little help?"*
- 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 daily care log with parents. 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 and email. Parent /teacher meetings were also planned for the following week.
- An "emergent Web Plan" was also on display in the Sunflower room detailing emerging interests of the children.

- The staff have a communication group where they share information through a messaging service. The staff also report regular staff meetings in the service between room staff, room leaders and person in charge and meetings/ training with staff from a 'sister' service.
- Individual plans for children who required additional supports in the service were available and were being implemented. The plans reviewed during the inspection, detailed the voice of the child and included targets and strategies being used for the children. Some multidisciplinary plans were also available and were being implemented to promote the children's learning and development in the service.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*

*(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,*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b)

- A suitable comfortable rest area was available in each of the care rooms, with soft seating, mats and cushions provided, should a child need to rest or take a break from activities during the day.
- Although no child was observed to sleep on the day of the inspection, a number of individual day beds, suitable for children aged over 2 years were available if required.

(3) (a) There was a large outdoor area to the rear and side of the building which was fully enclosed and secured. The area outside the Sunflower Room was partially covered. Wooden posts were covered in protective padding and sharp corners protected.

There were a variety of ride on toys available to the children. Tabletop activities were carried out at the outdoor tables and benches. There was also a large frame and swing set and new large wooden sand pit, beside a gravel /construction area. All areas of development were supported and the children enthusiastically played for long periods rotating around the various toys and play equipment.

## 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. This was evidenced by the availability of up to date FAR certificates for 4 staff.
- (2)(a) and (b) There was an adequately stocked first aid box in each of the care rooms, which were available at all times and were stored in a conspicuous location.