

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK032
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Name of Service:	Butterfly Preschool Kilmeedy
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Address of Service:	Kilmeedy, Kilmeedy, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V42 AP96
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Name of Registered Provider:	Majella Behan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	01/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Estuary House, 1 st Floor, Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	Ellen Brown
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	Not Applicable
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Description of service

This sessional preschool service is in the small rural village of Kilmeedy in West Limerick. It provides a sessional service for children aged 2 – 6 years for 3 hours a day between the hours of 09.30 to 12.30 pm, Monday to Friday. This service is registered to cater for 30 preschool children.

This service operates from designated preschool rooms in the Community Development Centre, Kilmeedy.

The children have access to the main playroom, a rest room, a small playroom and the kitchen area for messy play, bathroom facilities for the adults and children and a hallway.

There is a large enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the building and children also have access to a large grassy area that has been updated with matting, footpath and some additional sheltered covering.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge of running the pre-school. There are 5 additional staff employed to work at the service. All staff have achieved an award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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, and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 24, 25 and 26. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 *registered provider, 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.

(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) The designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required. The registered provider was not present on the day of the inspection.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.

(c) There was a clear management structure that identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.

(2) The files of the six staff members were viewed on the day of inspection.

- (a) Two written and validated references were on file for all staff members working in the service. References were mainly from past employers.
- (b) Where two past employers were not available, references from other reputable sources were submitted where required.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of Garda Síochána were available for the all the staff members working at the service. Garda vetting for the staff was dated within the last three years as per the regulatory notice, EYI-RN12.3 renewal of garda vetting, published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 1st of January 2024.
- (d) Police vetting was on file for one person who had lived in another country for longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (3) All of the above documentation was furnished to the registered provider prior to each new staff member taking up employment at the facility.
- (4) All the staff members working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection, there were 3 childcare staff working with 18 preschool children present in the morning sessional service. During the period of inspection, the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained and that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children attending the preschool service.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(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

BASIC NEEDS:

A healthy eating policy was available in the service and parents were encouraged to provide healthy snacks and drinks for the children attending each day. The staff sat with the children at break time and actively encouraged break times to be a social occasion. Children's drinks were stored out of their bags and were easily accessible to them throughout the morning.

The bathroom facilities for the children were located near the main entrance and playrooms and the children were encouraged to use the toilets on their own. Hand washing was encouraged and observed throughout the morning, following outdoor play, toileting and before break times. The staff ensured that constant careful supervision by both sight and sound occurred to ensure the children's safety. A change of clothes was available for all children if needed. Protective clothing was available for children when engaging in messy play activities. Outdoor raingear was available to ensure children got lots of opportunities for outdoor play regardless of the weather conditions.

A rest area was accessible throughout the morning in the quiet room if children wished to relax and have quiet time away from the active play environment. Soft furnishings were available in this space to promote a relaxed setting

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The preschool children had access to the main playroom, a rest room with couch and library and a smaller preschool room for small group activity. The kitchen area was used for small group activities such as sensory play. The main playroom contained interest areas such as a home corner, play kitchen and dress up for imaginative play. Open shelving containing small trays of car/trucks, animals, small timber blocks, jigsaws, and equipment to

promote fine motor skills were also provided in the room. Low level tables and chairs were available for break time and for tabletop activities

The facility has a well-developed outdoor play area with a sheltered area positioned at the main entrance area of the premises. Opportunities for gardening and planting were facilitated outside. Outdoor mud kitchens, black boards, benches, playhouse and climbing frame and equipment ensured that the outside area was an extension of the well-planned indoor area and was linked with the learning plans for the children. Children were observed in the outdoor area directing their own play, working in small groups and staff were observed joining in with them when invited

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:

On arrival to the service, the entrance door leading into the pre-school facility appeared to be secure and safe.

Safe storage was available for cleaning agents and equipment.

Fire exit doors were unobstructed.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer was kept out of reach of young children.

Rooms throughout the service were well ventilated as windows were observed to be open allowing fresh air to circulate.

The outdoor play area was fenced and made secure to prevent children gaining unsupervised access to a roadway and to prevent unauthorised access.

Infection Control:

A written cleaning record was available where high contact areas were regularly cleaned throughout the day. The service was cleaned thoroughly each day when the preschool service was finished. Children and staff were observed to wash their hand following outdoor play, toileting and before their break.

Staff were observed cleaning the tables before and after their designated break time

Administration of Medication:

There was a policy on the administration of medication, and staff had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the administration of medication. Staff stated that medication was not given routinely only in the event of an emergency

Outing:

There was a policy in relation to outings and staff did have a good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to outings from the service

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) A staff member checked in and checked out every child to the service when they arrived and when they left the premises. The staff documented their arrival time and their departure time each day.

(3)(a) The service ensured that only children attending, the person who drops and collects children and employees are allowed entry to the premises.

(b) A daily record in writing was kept of persons who entered the preschool

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 had ensured that a person trained in first aid responder for children was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. There was 1 staff member present in the service on the day of the inspection who was trained in first aid responder with an expiry date of 15th June 2026.

(2) A suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the kitchen area of the premises.

(b) was available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 fire fighting 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)(b) A record of the maintenance of the smoke alarm system and firefighting equipment for the service were available for review by the inspectorate. The smoke alarm system was serviced on the 12th of April 2025 and firefighting equipment were serviced in March 2025.

(4) A fire action notice was clearly displayed in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) Fire drills were not carried out by the service every month and more frequently if necessary.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The registered provider has stated that:

(1)(a) A fire drill was carried out on the 5th of June, the day after the inspection by the staff and children. Fire drills will be practiced by staff and children each month.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Photographic evidence submitted.

Supporting documentation submitted

Click or tap here to enter text.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 26 Fire Safety, point (1)(a).

This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required

Non-Compliance Information

(d) The service was not maintained as evidenced by the following:

1. There was an old rustic waste bin in the outdoor play area that was accessible to the preschool children. This posed a safety risk to the children and staff.
2. There was an area to the rear of the premises that was unkempt and had accumulated a large collection of waste such as cardboard paper, broken play and work equipment. This area was behind a fence, but it posed the risk of attracting rodents onto the premises.
3. A large set of goal post at the end of the garden appeared to be broken and this posed a safety risk to the children

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has stated that:

1. The old rustic waste bin in the outdoor play area was removed from the premises.
2. All the waste materials were removed.
3. Pins were purchased to secure the goal post into the ground to ensure the safety of the children while playing in the outdoor area.

The registered provider will ensure that maintenance work will be carried out regularly by the service and this includes the committee involved in the care of the community building.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Photographic evidence was submitted to support actions taken by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 29 Premises, point (d), 1, 2, and 3. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.