

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LM006
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Name of Service:	Bright Buttons
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Address of Service:	Day Nursery & After School, Leitrim Village, Co. Leitrim
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Eircode:	N41 HY98
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Name of Registered Provider:	Paula Guckian
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	06/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	41	PM	31
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello
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

Bright Buttons is a privately owned full day care preschool. The service is registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day care for children aged 0 – 6 years. The preschool occupies a two-story premises with an adjacent building offering a sessional service on the grounds of the service. There were three care rooms in operation on the day of inspection.

Staffing

There were seven adults present on the day of inspection and of these, six were working directly with the children which included the deputy manager who provided cover for breaks. There was a further adult who worked exclusively in the kitchen.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 -Management and Recruitment, Regulation 11- Staffing Levels, Regulation 17- Information for Parents, Regulation 19- Health, Welfare and Development of the Child, Regulation 23 -Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of the Child, Regulation 25- First Aid and Regulation 26- Fire Safety Measures.

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)(c).

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required in the service. All staff were aware of the management structure in place to include person in charge, deputy manager and Room Leaders.

(2). (a)(b).

The records of ten staff employed in the service were reviewed.

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source, in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all ten staff employed in the service.

(c).

A garda vetting disclosure was available for the ten staff members employed in the service.

(d)

International police vetting was in place for the one adult working in the service who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4). Nine adults employed and working directly with the children had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above 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.

(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)

The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times. On the Inspectors unannounced arrival, to the service there were five staff providing direct care to 41 children. An additional adult was providing relief cover for staff breaks.

(2).

The minimum adult to child ratio's were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

Year One playroom: 2 adults cared for 17 children aged between two and four years.

Year Two playroom: 2 adults cared for 15 children aged between three and five years.

Sessional playroom: 1 adult cared for 9 children aged between three and five years.

(8)

The registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times when children were present in the service as evidence in sample attendance records reviewed.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The registered provider has ensured that all parents and guardians who have a child in attendance in the service is provided with information referred to in Regulation 16 (1) subparagraphs (a) to (g).

In the entrance hall the Registered provider has displayed an information section for parents to include the name, position and qualification of all staff, the type of service provided, ratios of staff to children, the facilities available and opening hours. The registered provider has the policies available at the entrance hallway. The service uses an application to communicate with parents daily, on the day of inspection this was observed to be used sending parents pictures of artwork completed on the day.

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

Three rooms were in operation on the day of inspection and the children were placed into care rooms depending on their age and stage of development. The sessional service located in a building adjacent to the main building catered for the older children aged four to five preparing for entering primary school next year. This room was a large open plan space decorated with artwork completed by the children. Evidence of the service promoting family relationships was demonstrated by a family wall displaying photographs of the children and their families. The curriculum goals for the week focussed on road safety and children were observed learning about road safety through art and play activities.

Designated interest areas in this room included home corner, small world corner, dress up area, construction area and music area. In this room the children brought in their snacks from home in line with the service healthy eating policy. Snacks included sandwiches, fruit and yoghurts. A fridge in the room was used to store perishable items brought in from home. The staff member in the room sat with the children at snack time, encouraging social conversation and providing a calm inclusive environment. This room was self-contained with sanitary areas located off the main room. Children independently used the toilet and hand hygiene was prompted by the staff member on return to the care room.

The year one room located on the ground floor of the main building was equipped with various interest areas including a library and reading corner, playhouses, dolls house, fire stations, art and crafts, cars and construction, home corner, puzzles and tabletop activities. The walls were decorated with the children's artwork as well as child friendly posters on the alphabet and numbers. Artwork was been completed on the day and the staff members in the room demonstrated how to complete the task including cutting and gluing, the children took time in completing their art work using scissors and glue, staff members encouraged and praised each step completed and the children were satisfied with their accomplishments eager to show their work to other adults who entered the room including the person in charge, cook and inspector. The interactions observed by the inspector were seen to be kind and encouraging. The children appeared happy and content in their surroundings eager to learn. The service focussed on ensuring the needs of the child were met and each child was content in the service. On the day of the inspection, one child who was new to the service was having difficulty settling in. A support plan was in place to aid this transition and appeared to be working well. This plan was agreed in consultation with the family and included a structured plan for transition, including building up time spent in the service and a key member of staff to link in with child and family.

The year two room was located on the first floor of the building, similar to the other rooms was equipped with various resources and interest areas suitable to the age and stage of development of the children using the room. Circle time was observed to be inclusive; staff members ensured all children were involved and got an opportunity to choose songs or stories. Children were observed to lead the plan for the day, choosing what activities to be involved in. The curriculum focus for the week included autumn and children were observed painting autumn leaves as part of their art work. Staff members were observed to be gentle and encouraging in their interactions, explaining why leaves fall from the trees in autumn and encouraging children to mix paints to achieve autumnal colours.

The outdoor area of the service was accessible to all rooms and a timetable was in place to ensure all room had access to this space each day. Children had appropriate shoes and jackets to play outdoors in inclement weather

ensuring the outdoors were accessed daily. The outdoor area provided opportunities for gross motor skills development with bikes and trikes, tyres and climbing frames. Other areas included mud kitchens, sand boxes, black boards and footballs.

Children who were availing of part time or full day care had meals and snacks provided by the service. On the day of inspection meals and snacks provided included cheese toasted sandwiches, yoghurt and fruit, dinner of fish fingers, mash and beans, evening snack of homemade banana bread and fruit. The adult working in the kitchen informed the inspector of how meals are planned in line with the service healthy eating policy. An alternative is provided if for some reason a child does not like what is on the menu for the day.

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 front entrance door was secured, access to the building was through a buzzer system which was operated by staff. This prevented children from exiting the building unsupervised, and unauthorised persons from entering. The sessional room located adjacent to the main building was secure with a keypad entry system and buzzer. The gates of the outdoor play areas were also found to be secured.
- CCTV was in place throughout the service
- Finger guards to prevent pinching or injury to child fingers were found on all internal doors within the premises.
- Cleaning products were stored up high in cupboards out of reach of children. Lower cupboards were secured with safety latches.
- Equipment, materials, and toys were in good order throughout the service and developmentally appropriate to the children using them.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Hand hygiene was observed to be carried out prior to mealtimes, after messy play and using the toilet.
- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available to promote adequate hand hygiene practices.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior and post mealtimes.
- Children had completed learning about germs as part of the curriculum and informed the inspector on the day, the correct way to sneeze, using their elbow and how to dispose of their tissues correctly.

Administration of Medication:

- An Individual Care plan was in place for one child who may require medication during the day. Staff were aware of signs and symptoms in relation to the child's illness. Staff were trained in the administration of this medication and were fully aware of the procedures to follow should an intervention be required.

Safe Sleep:

- Rest areas were provided in care rooms, with soft furnishings and matting.
- Low level sleep beds were available for those children if sleep was required.

Fire Safety:

- All fire emergency doors were free from obstruction.
- Fire evacuation notices were displayed in the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Foot operated pedal bins provided in two care rooms were broken, resulting in children and staff using their hands to open and close the bin.
2. Blind chords in the sessional service were not secure to the wall. It is acknowledged that when this was brought to the attention of the person in charge on the day immediate action was taken and these chords have been removed.

Infection Control:

3. The ventilation ducts had evidence of layers of dust, which could affect the operation of the system to ensure adequate ventilation in the sanitary areas.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Foot operated pedal bins were removed in two care rooms and replaced with new foot pedal bins. Pedal bins are now included in our risk assessment sheets, it will be brought to the managers attention if a pedal bin needs to be replaced.
2. Blind chords corrected on the day.

Infection Control:

3. Ventilation ducts have been cleaned and are now clear of dust. All the ventilation ducts have now been added to the cleaning schedule for the cleaner and will be checked by management.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted by registered provider after the inspection have been reviewed. Regulatory compliance for regulation 23 has now been met.



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) Three persons working on the day of inspection were trained in first aid responder (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2). (a)(b).

A first aid box adequately equipped was readily available and safely stored in a conspicuous location in the service in each of the care room.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (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)
- The designated person in charge provided evidence of monthly fire drills taking place in the service the most recent being the 28.09.2023.
- (b) The service maintained an inventory of all fire equipment and smoke detection systems in the facility with the most recent service date of 29.09.2023.
- (2) All fire safety records were made available to the inspector for review on the day of inspection.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedure was displayed in conspicuous position in the care rooms and the assembly point was noted in the car park.