

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MH014		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Blossoms Preschool		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Enfield Business Park, Possextown, Trim Road, Enfield, Co. Meath		
<b>Eircode:</b>	A83 HY99		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Catherine Tyrrell		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	22/10/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	54	PM 21
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D.Murray & AM. Cunningham		
<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

Blossoms Preschool is a privately operated Early Years' Service which provides part-time and sessional care and education to children from 2 to 6 years. A school aged service is also provided along with a dedicated autistic spectrum disorder class which operates from 12:30 – 16:30 pm weekdays in the Mighty Meerkats room upstairs. The pre-school is situated in a two-storey building and comprises of four care rooms. The service operates from 7:30 to 18:30 and eligible children can participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE). The rooms were as follows:

Downstairs:

The **Toddler** room facilitates the care of children from 2 to 2.8 years.

The **Mad Monkeys** room provides care and education for children from 2.8 years to 5 years.

Upstairs:

The **Mighty Meerkats** and the **Busy Bees** rooms provide care and education for children from 2.8 years to 5 years.

Additional facilities include a kitchen, office, sanitary accommodation and an outdoor play area located to the rear and side of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs a deputy person in charge and 10 childcare staff members. Present on the morning of inspection were the registered provider, deputy person in charge and 8 childcare staff. One additional staff member commenced work from 14:30 to 18:00 and one staff member was on leave.

### 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.

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, deputy 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.

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

#### Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) Twelve staff files were reviewed.

(a)&(b) Twenty-four validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for 12 staff members. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6) (a) One staff member was employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

### 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) Present on the morning of inspection were the registered provider, deputy person in charge and 8 childcare staff caring for 54 children. An additional staff member commencing work from 2:30 to 6pm.

(2) On the morning of the inspection the following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity:

The **Toddler** room had 10 children ranging in age from 2 to 2.8 years being cared for by 2 staff. All children were attending for sessional hours only.

The **Mad Monkeys** room had 16 children ranging in age from 2.8 years to 5 years being cared for by 2 adults. Eight children were availing of the ECCE sessional service, and 8 children were staying to avail of the part time service until 2pm.

The **Mighty Meerkats** room had 15 children ranging in age from 2.8 years to 5 years being cared for by 3 adults (one staff member providing AIM support). Eight children were availing of the ECCE sessional service, and 7 children were staying to avail of the part time service until 2pm.

The **Busy Bees** room had 13 children ranging in age from 2.8 years to 5 years being cared for by 2 adults. Seven children were availing of the ECCE sessional service, and 6 children were staying to avail of the part time service until 2pm.

(8)(a) According to the staff roster the registered provider ensured that there were always two adults on the premises when the service was in operation.

### 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*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

##### Basic needs:

- Children were observed engaging in tabletop activities, art and crafts and free play with children afforded the opportunity to choose and change activities if they so wish. The curriculum was child led with the themes of the month being "Halloween" and "Autumn" with children's art work displayed to reflect these themes.
- The service embraced outdoor play and learning. The outdoor space had areas of interest which supported children's play and curiosity with adequate space for children to play alone and in small and large groups. Children were observed enjoying imaginative, energetic and messy outdoor play with both their peers and staff members. Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative.

- Children’s individual care needs were well supported during nappy changing and when going to the toilet with gentle reminders regarding hand washing.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- At snack time jovial conversation was heard between the staff member and children which created a positive atmosphere for developing relationships especially for the new children. Any child that became upset were nurtured and cuddled until they were ready to re-join the group. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together.
- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed in the care rooms which gave a sense of identity and belonging. Engagement with families and parents was facilitated by the daily sharing of information at drop off and collection which was supported by electronic means.

### 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) Cosy areas consisting of mats, cushions and soft furnishings were available in each care room should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. There were no children requiring sleep attending the service.
- (3)(a) The outdoor space was divided into 2 areas and was enclosed by railings with secure gates. A variety of surfaces were available to suit all play activities such as soft low impact tiles, gravel areas and a large grass area.

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

### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- The care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving at their height.
- The outdoor spaces were equipped with age-appropriate play materials and equipment. Equipment included activity unit with slide and climbing rope, ride on toys, rockers, large tyres, wooden benches for outdoor dining and activities, free standing slides, playhouses, play kitchens with play equipment, counting stand, rocking horse and balancing planks.

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

### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The children brought in their own healthy lunch from home and the service provide a snack at 12:45pm for the children staying until 2pm. On the day of the inspection the children had a choice of snacks including pancakes, fruit and yogurts.

## 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:

The following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- When the inspectors arrived at the service, access to the main door was by a buzzer system which was monitored by staff. In addition, the outdoor play area was enclosed by fencing and securely gated. These security measures restricted unauthorized persons from gaining access to the service and prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Both indoor and outdoor risk assessments were conducted on a daily basis.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.
- Liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided in all sanitary facilities.
- Fridges were available for the storage of perishable items in the children's lunch boxes.

##### Fire Safety:

The following fire safety measures were observed:

- Fire drills were conducted on a monthly basis.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. Four staff members garda vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

### Infection Control:

2. Throughout the service there were hand operated bins for the disposal of contaminated waste which poses a risk of cross infection. All bins for contaminated waste must be foot operated with a tight fitting lid.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. One staff member has left the service. The 3 staff members garda vetting have been renewed.

The registered provider will ensure that all garda vetting are renewed every 3 years.

#### Infection Control:

2. All bins for contaminated waste have been replaced with foot operated bins with a tight fitting lid.

The registered provider will ensure that foot pedal operated bins are available for contaminated waste on a daily basis.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Three garda vetting.

Photographic evidence of 3 new bins.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

## 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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

### 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)(a) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

(b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fire fighting equipment was last serviced on the 24/06/2025. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 30/08/2025.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 70 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026.