

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MO009
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballinrobe Bright Beginnings
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Convent of Mercy, Convent Rd., Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo
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<b>Eircode:</b>	F31 T667
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Kate Keane
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part-time
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20 March 2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	3	PM	-
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Gallagher & M. Farrell
<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

Ballinrobe Bright Beginnings is a privately operated early years service which is situated on the outskirts of Ballinrobe town in Co Mayo. Part-time and sessional services are provided for children aged from 2-6 years of age. The service is registered to operate from 9:00am to 2pm. A registered school aged service is also provided. The service is located in a building previously used as a convent on the outskirts of Ballinrobe town. The service is operated from one ground floor playroom and one first floor playroom. The service has access to a large outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

There were 3 adults working directly with the early years children on the day of the inspection. This included the registered provider who is involved in the day to day operation of the service.

### 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 regulations 9, 11, 15, 16, 19, 23, and 27. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

The upstairs playroom only was inspected as the downstairs playroom catered exclusively for school aged children on the day.

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 regarding the unavailability of garda vetting for a staff member was issued by the Early Years Inspectorate to the registered provider on the 21 March 2023. On the 22 March 2023 the registered provider submitted a response to the Early Years Inspectorate with evidence of the application for the required garda vetting. On the 23 March 2023 the registered provider submitted a copy of the required garda vetting documentation.

### 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

*(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.*

### Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider advised the inspectors that there was one staff member in the service whose vetting documentation had not be reviewed previously.

(2) The following documents were not available on file or inadequate for the staff member:

- (c) A vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána was not available.
- (d) It was unknown if international police vetting was required for the staff member as there was a gap in the employment history/experience supplied for this person.

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

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

- (c) A vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána has now been provided to the Inspectorate for the staff member.
- (d) The employee has provided the service with a full employment history. The employee has not resided overseas.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

A copy of the vetting documents.

### Summary Comment

An Immediate Action Notice regarding the unavailability of garda vetting for a staff member was issued by the Early Years Inspectorate to the registered provider on the 21 March 2023. On the 22 March 2023 the registered provider submitted a response to the Early Years Inspectorate with evidence of the application for the required garda vetting. On the 23 March 2023 the registered provider submitted a copy of the required garda vetting documentation.

The actions taken together with the evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the non-compliances found on inspection.

### 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) There were 3 staff working directly with 3 children in the upstairs playroom on the day of the inspection.
- (2) The following child to adult ratios were observed on the day of the inspection:  
There were 3 children aged 3 years to 5 years attending the Upstairs Room on a sessional basis being cared for by 3 adults during the inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (8) There was no documentary evidence of staff rosters available for inspection to ascertain that there are always at least two adults on the premises when the services is in operation.

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

- (8)
- The registered provider advised in a written response that:
- Corrective and Preventive Action**
- The staff rosters have been updated and now demonstrate that the relevant number of staff are always available.
- Preventive:**
- The staff attendance will in future be completed when staff arrive for work.
- Photographic evidence of roster provided.

## Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of staff attendance record.

## Summary Comment

The actions taken together with the information submitted was reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to address the non-compliance found on inspection.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 15 -Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child; 16 [221]*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

## Compliance Information

(1)

A sample of 14 children's records were randomly selected for review by the inspectors from the children currently enrolled in the service. The following details were recorded on the sampled children's enrolment forms:

- (a) The names and date of birth of the children.
- (c) Not applicable as all children were still attending the service.
- (d) The name, address and contact details for parents/guardians when the child was present in the service.
- (e) Details regarding authorisation for collection.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The following details were unavailable or incomplete from the 14 records sampled:
- (b) 12 records sampled did not contain the date on which the child first attended the service.
  - (f) There was no information regarding allergies for 6 children.
  - (g) There were no telephone numbers for 3 children's registered medical practitioners and no name or telephone number for 1 child's registered medical practitioner.
  - (h) There was no information regarding vaccination status for 1 child with the information available for a second child unclear.
  - (i) There was no written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment in the event of an emergency for 2 of the children sampled.

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

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (b) The children's enrolment forms have now been updated to contain the starting date for all children.
- (f) The enrolment forms for all children have now been updated regarding allergies, in consultation with parents.
- (g) The children's enrolment forms were updated and now all include the name and telephone number of the medical practitioner.
- (h) All enrolment forms were updated with regards to vaccinations for the child, in consultation with the parent.
- (i) Written consent was sought from parents in regards allowing medical treatment to be provided in the event of an emergency.

All enrolment will in future be checked before the child attends the service, and information will be sought from parents as necessary to fully complete the information.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of enrolment forms.

### Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on inspection.

## 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:*

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) The attendance of the children on the day was not recorded in the attendance records during the inspection.
  - (i) There were no daily staff rosters available in the service. There was no evidence to show that the staff in Upstairs playroom recorded their attendance in the service on a daily basis.

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

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

- (h) The children’s attendance register will be completed when a child arrives and leaves the service.
- (i) The staff roster will be completed daily.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

A copy of staff roster.

### Summary Comment

The actions taken together with the evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to address the non-compliances found on 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

##### Basic Needs of Infants and Children

The children's snacks were provided from home. Drinks of water and fruit juices were brought from home and potable water was also available in the service. Children were observed to eat their lunch whilst conversing with the staff and their peers at a low-level table.

The children attending were toilet trained and observed to self-toilet when required.

A rest area with soft seating was provided in the playroom and used by the children at story-time.

Wellington boots and outdoor rain gear was worn by the children for outdoor play.

The children moved freely between the areas of interest in the playroom. A large part of the day was spent in the outdoor area.

Positive behaviour was supported by the staff with children encouraged to be nice to each other as reflected in the pictures of the "class rules" displayed in the playroom.

##### Supporting relationships around Children

The staff told the inspectors that there is a key person system in place in the service.

Children were observed to positively engage with their peers and the staff who cared for them. The staff were observed to provide one to one support and attention when needed.

The staff were observed to provide for smooth transitions from one activity to another.

There was a birthday wall with the children's names on one of the walls.

The registered provider informed the inspectorate that communication with parents comprised of verbal information exchanges at drop of and collection time, messages via an electronic messaging system and by email.

The staff informed the inspectors that the service had taken part in a recent St Patrick's Day parade in the local town.

### Extent to which the physical and material environment supports children's development:

The upstairs playroom was inspected on the day. The ground floor playroom was utilised by the school age service on the day and was not part of the inspection. The upstairs playroom and the outdoor area were adequately resourced and arranged to provide a range of developmentally appropriate, diverse, imaginative and creative experiences choices and fun for the children.

The upstairs room was laid out with areas of interest accommodating various types of play opportunities for the children. Areas of interest included a library and rest area, a home area, low level tables and chairs, table-top activities including blocks and puzzles and play resources including dolls, a playhouse and transport toys. Artwork created by the children was displayed on the wall.

The outdoor area was spacious and had defined areas of interest. Ground coverings including large grass areas, tarmac and pebbled areas. A large, roofed structure with seating provided shelter thus affording the opportunity of outdoor play throughout all seasons. Play resources included ride on toys, a mud kitchen area and a black board. There was a large, covered sandpit with a variety of construction toys. Large tyres had been sunken in vertical positions in a section of a grass area. An elevated wooden den accessible via a sloped ramp had two sheltered play areas underneath. A swing frame unit with a slide and a climbing wall, a large wooden tepee hut, a balance frame and two goal posts were positioned in the grass areas. There was a large wooden rabbit hutch and run containing a rabbit. The children were observed on the day to play in the kitchen area, splashing in the puddles, and digging in the sand and pebbles looking for treasure.

## 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 main entrance door was secured upon the inspector's arrival to the service, allowing no unauthorised entry or exiting of a child unsupervised. The shelving units were anchored and secure. All toys and play resources were appropriate for children's use. The refuse storage bins were inaccessible to the children. The cleaning products for the service were not accessible to the children. Blind cords were secured with window restrictors in place in the playroom inspected on the day.

### Infection Control:

Foot operated pedal bins were observed in the upstairs playroom. Warm running water was available in the children's wash hand basins, with paper towels and liquid hand soap available for use in the sanitary area located off the upstairs playroom. The cleaning checklists for the service were in place and completed up to date. Childrens snacks containing perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator in the kitchen.

### Fire Safety:

The emergency exit doors and routes were free from obstruction during the inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The securing mechanism on the wooden gate located at the rear of the outdoor play area was damaged and not secured thus posed the risk of a child exiting from the service unauthorised. The unsecured gate led directly into an area with rusty galvanised sheeting, a rodent bait box at ground level and stone wall with fallen debris.
2. Rodent bait boxes labelled to contain harmful rodenticide and a do not touch warning were located in a raised bed in the outdoor play area and beside the steps at the exit door from the service to the outdoor play posed a risk of injury to a child.
3. The nets on two goalposts in the outdoor play area were torn thus posing the risk of entrapment and strangulation. The two goalposts were not anchored thus posing a risk of injury to a child.
4. A bolt protruding from the timber post on the swing frame posed a risk of injury for a child.
5. The side panels on the range cooker in the outdoor area had jagged rusty edging of metal protruding thus posing a risk of injury to a child.
6. A microwave located on a section of the mud kitchen was not secured thus posing a risk of falling on a child.
7. Two hinges on the window surround with the shutter removed and one hinge on the door frame with a section of the door removed in the den had sharp edging exposed thus posing a risk of injury to a child.
8. A section of the den wall had jagged edges of wood exposed posing a risk of injury to a child.

### Infection Control:

9. The wipeable tablecloth attached to the low-level table used by the children were torn thus could not be cleaned effectively.
10. A dolls bath had visible staining on the inner surface thus posing a risk of cross infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

#### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

##### **General Safety:**

1. The wooden gate at the rear of the outdoor play area is now fitted with a new bolt, therefore, disallowing children access to the walled garden at the end. All gates and perimeter fences will be checked regularly to make sure they are in good repair.
2. In consultation with the pest control company the 2 bait boxes were located to an area where children are not able to access them. All rodent bait boxes will be checked to make sure they are not accessible to children.
3. The two goal posts are now removed from the garden and will not be used by the service.
4. The metal bolt protruding from the swing has now been removed. Play equipment will be checked regularly for defects.
5. An old cooker was removed, and a new cooker installed beside the range cooker thereby covering side panel of range cooker. All outdoor play equipment such as cookers etc, will be checked to make sure they do not pose risk of injury to a child.
6. The microwave in the mud kitchen has now been attached to the draining board by a chain, preventing it from falling from the draining board. Outdoor equipment will be checked on a regular basis, to ensure there is no risk of injury posed to children.
7. The protruding hinges on the playhouse have all been removed, preventing any risk of injury to a child. The outdoor playhouses will be checked regularly to ensure they are in good repair.
8. The jagged edges on the den wall were repaired, preventing any injury. All faulty areas in playhouses will be repaired as necessary.

##### **Infection Control:**

9. The wipeable tablecloths have been removed from the tables enabling them to be cleaned effectively. Tablecloths will no longer be in use.
10. The dolls bath has been removed from the playroom. Any damaged play equipment or toys will be repaired or removed.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence was submitted by the registered provider.

## Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on inspection.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27- Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

## Compliance Information

The children were observed to be supervised predominantly by sight, by the staff members at all times during the inspection. Children when out of view of the staff whilst using the toilet were within close proximity if assistance was needed to be provided. Two staff sat with the children when supervising them eating their food at snack time.