

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MO012				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballyglass Community Childcare Service				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ballyglass, Claremorris, Co. Mayo				
<b>Eircode:</b>	F12 VW77				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Breege Jennings				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	14/01/2025				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>39</td> <td>PM</td> <td>33</td> </tr> </table>	AM	39	PM	33
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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>	M Farrell and S Killeen				
<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

Ballyglass Community Childcare Service is a community childcare service located in Ballyglass in Co Mayo. The service is registered to provide full day care, parttime and sessional services to children aged from 0-6 years of age and is open from 8am to 5.30pm. The service is also registered to provide school age childcare services.

The premises is a purpose built, detached, single storey building with four preschool playrooms, two sleep rooms, a sensory room, kitchen and sanitary facilities. An outdoor play area with a range of outdoor play equipment is provided on the premises.

### Staffing

There are 20 adults in the service including a manager, office administrator, childcare staff, chefs and a cleaner who works outside service opening hours. There was one adult student present at the time of the inspection. The registered provider does not work directly in 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/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under sections of regulations 9, 11, 22, 23, 25, 26 and 29 however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 16. 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 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

*(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

(2) There were 21 adults in the service at the time of the inspection. The following vetting documents were available for the adults:

(a) Two written validated references from past employers, in particular the most recent employer for 12 adults. One written validated reference from a past employer for 5 of the adults.

(b) Written validated references from sources other than past employers for 3 adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 21 adults. However, the service did not always 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) International police vetting documentation was available for three adults who had lived outside of the State for periods longer than six consecutive months as adults.

(4) Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available for 16 staff who worked directly with the preschool children.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) There were no written validated references on file for one adult and a second written validated reference was required for another adult. Two written validated references were required for a further three adults as the information provided did not meet the requirements of the regulation. There was no evidence provided of the validation of a written reference for one adult.
  - (d) The international police vetting on file for one staff was not the International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) required for this staff member. There were gaps in employment/experience histories for two adults and it was unable to be verified if international police vetting was required for these periods of time.
- (4) There was insufficient evidence available to show that the qualifications for one adult met the requirements of the regulation.

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

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (a) All references have been obtained and added to staff files.
  - (d) Required documentation has been acquired and added to files. An ICPC application has been made for an adult but will take 20 days to process.
- (4) The service has received the qualification documentation from the staff member and added it to their file. In future the staff will ensure that upon commencement of employment all required documentation will be gathered and added to their file.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of references, validation of references, application for international child protection certificate and evidence of qualification.

### Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the service has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Information regarding regulation 9(2)(d) remains outstanding in relation to international police vetting for an adult employed in the service. The service forwarded copy of an application made for the required international police vetting on the 6 March 2025. This documentation is to be forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate on receipt by the service.

### 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 10 adults working directly with 39 children on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service. Sufficient staff were available during the inspection to work directly with the children and provide relief cover for breaks ensuring that adequate numbers of staff were always available.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratios were maintained during the unannounced inspection as follows:
- Baby playroom: Two staff cared for one child aged under one year and two children aged over one year old attending full day care services.
- Toddler playroom: Two staff cared for two children aged one year and three children aged two years of age attending full day care services. One child was in the process of settling into the service and attended reduced hours on the day.
- Preschool playroom: 3 to 4 staff cared for 21 children on the morning of the inspection and 17 children in the afternoon.
- Playschool playroom: 3 staff cared for 10 children on the morning of the inspection and 8 children in the afternoon.
- Additional staff were provided for break and relief cover.
- (8)
- (a) The was always at least two adults on the premises during the inspection. Staff rosters showed that two adults were present during service opening hours.

### 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

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service and a three-week rotating menu with a variety of meals was followed. The service provided snacks, breakfast, tea and a main hot meal for the children which were eaten in the playrooms. On the day of the inspection, a main meal of spaghetti Bolognese with vegetables including chopped peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms and onions with a dessert of jelly was provided. Additional portions were available for children as needed. The staff informed the inspectors that a breakfast of a choice of cereals was provided for the children by the service with a drink of milk. The mid-morning snack was observed to be chopped fruit and corn cakes. An afternoon meal of fresh chicken sandwiches and fruit was planned for the day of the inspection. The staff told the inspectors that readymade cartons of formula were provided from home for a child who still drank formula.

### 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 service's main entrance door had an electronic securing system in place and was secured on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service. The staff controlled access to and from the service preventing unauthorised people from entering and children from leaving unnoticed. The kitchen off the main lobby was inaccessible to the children. The gate to the outdoor area was observed to be secured during the inspection. There was an outdoor roster displayed on the walls of the playrooms with a schedule in relation to staff from each playroom tidying the outdoor area and identifying and reporting any toys/play items that needed replacement. Soft padding was in place on the metal uprights in the outdoor area to reduce the risk of an injury to a child. The high-chairs in the Baby playroom had safety harnesses and were clean and in satisfactory condition. A safety gate was in place at the door leading from the Baby playroom to the kitchenette restricting access by the infants. Cleaning products

were stored out of reach of children in the service for example in a secured cupboard in the Baby playroom kitchenette.

### **Infection Control:**

Aprons and gloves were provided for nappy changing and worn by staff when changing children's nappies. There was individual storage containers provided for children's soothers and systems were in place for the regular sterilisation of the soothers. Separate storage containers and systems were used to store the children's personal items. A nappy changing mat that had a tear in the covering was replaced with a new mat during the inspection. The children in the Preschool playroom were observed to wash and dry their hands following eating their dinners supervised and prompted by staff members.

### **Administration of Medication:**

Emergency medication administration pathways were displayed in playrooms for staff guidance in the event of an emergency. The staff informed the inspectors that they were aware of how to administer the emergency medication and stored it in accordance with manufacturer's instructions in an accessible location out of reach of children. Medication administration forms were used to record the administration of medicine to children and were signed by two staff who checked the medication before administering it to a child.

### **Safe Sleep:**

There were two separate sleep rooms provided for the younger children in the service, one located off the Baby playroom and a second located off the Toddler playroom. Standard cots with waterproof mattresses were provided for the young infants to sleep/rest in. The staff observed resting/sleeping children at 10-minute intervals and made electronic records in relation to the children's colour, position and breathing patterns. The air temperature of the sleep room was also recorded on the sleep observation logs.

### **Fire Safety:**

The emergency exit routes were observed to be free from obstruction during the inspection. The staff were aware of the exit routes to be taken by the staff and children in their playrooms in the event of an emergency.

## **Non-Compliance Information**

### **General Safety:**

1. Garda vetting available for four staff members was not dated within the previous three years and not in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. The water temperature of the water at several of the wash hand basins in the sanitary/nappy change areas used by the children ranged from 44.9 to 48.5°C and was above the required maximum level of 43°C.

- A play activity engaged in by the children and staff sitting in groups in one of the playrooms involved using large and mini-marshmallows and thin wooden sticks to construct different shapes on tables. One of the children was observed to be eating the marshmallows. Marshmallows can cause choking and should not be given to young children. The service's healthy eating policy also stated that a balanced diet is provided with no sweets.

### **Infection Control:**

- The nappy bins in the lobby, Playschool, Toddler and Baby nappy change areas were operated by handles and were not foot pedal operated as required.
- A push top bin was provided in the Preschool room sanitary unit and observed to be used by children for the disposal of waste including paper handtowels.
- A stackable bed was stored in a cot used by children in the Toddler sleep room. Two of the cot sheets on cot mattresses were stained and dirty and required washing. The laundry roster on display detailed that the linen from this sleep room was due to be laundered the next day.
- The inspectors observed children in the Baby playroom to eat their morning snack of chopped fruit and cornflake straight off the table without a plate/bowl provided.
- Covering on the blue soft seating in the Preschool playroom was torn exposing foam and posed difficulties for cleaning and presented an infection control risk.
- The aprons/bibs used to protect children's clothes during paint and messy play activities were stored in a pile on the floor beside the Toddler nappy changing unit and posed an infection control risk.

### **Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

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

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

- Garda Vetting has been obtained for the staff members. The service will ensure Garda vetting is up to date for all staff.
- A plumbing company have been out to assess the service and have provided a quote for works to rectify the problem. The use of thermostats and regular servicing will be implemented. Thermostats have been fitted, and the temperature has been set to required range. The service will ensure the monitoring and servicing of the thermostats is carried out.
- All staff have been reminded about the Service's Healthy Eating Policy and to take care when planning activities to ensure they are adhering to the policies.

### **Infection Control:**

4. New pedal operated bins have been ordered. The service will ensure pedal operated bins are the only bins purchased.
5. New pedal operated bins have been ordered. The service will ensure pedal operated bins are the only bins purchased.
6. The sheets were sent to the laundry and fresh linen provided. The service will ensure that staff change dirty linen as soon as necessary. The stackable bed is no longer stored in the cot as demonstrated in a photograph submitted.
7. Bowls are now always provided to children to eat from.
8. New furniture has been ordered. The service will ensure that furniture is maintained in good condition.
9. A labelled storage system has been provided for the aprons. The staff will ensure that all aprons/bibs are stored in a lidded plastic storage box.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence, copies of Garda vetting renewals, copy of quotation for plumbing works, receipts for foot pedal operated bins.

### **Summary Comment**

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and found to have addressed the non-compliance found on inspection under Regulation 23.

## 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) There were First Aid Response (FAR) certificates with expiry dates ranging from 8 March 2025 to 2 November 2026 available on file for eleven staff members. A number of these staff were working in the service during the inspection providing adequate cover if first aid treatment was needed by a child.
- (2) (a) Appropriately stocked first aid boxes were safely stored in easily accessible locations in the playrooms.  
(b) The first aid equipment was readily accessible to the staff if children needed first aid treatment.

## 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) Fire drills were conducted monthly in the service with written records of the fire drills kept by the staff. The most recent fire drill record showed that it was undertaken on the 11 December 2024.
- (b) The service kept a record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system. Records showed that the firefighting equipment was last maintained on the 6 November 2024 and the smoke alarm system on the 2 December 2024.
- (4) Notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (c) The air temperature of the Baby sleep room was recorded at 19.7°C during the inspection between the required range of 18-22°C for children under one year of age.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (d) The ceiling mechanical ventilation vent in the nappy change area of the Playschool room was very dusty/dirty and required cleaning. There were cobwebs on the wall of the Preschool sanitary area that required cleaning.
- (e) A storage area off the Playschool room was now being used by staff as a nappy change facility. The area was small and was still used to store large amounts of items including toys, clothes, sweeping brush/pan, files and paperwork.

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

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d) Cleaning of the vent and removal of the cobwebs has taken place. Regular cleaning of vents and walls will be implemented.
- (e) The nappy changing unit has been removed, and this area will only be used for storage going forward. The nappy changing unit has been moved to another sanitary area and staff have been reminded to use this facility for children in the Playschool room.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted.

#### Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the service has been reviewed by the Inspectorate and been found to have addressed the non-compliance found under this regulation 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:*

*(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(a) There was no record of employment/experience available on file for one adult.

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

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)

(a) All documents have been obtained for relevant staff member. The staff will ensure all documentation is added to staff file upon commencement of employment.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of employment history/curriculum vitae.

#### Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Inspectorate and been found to have addressed the non-compliance found under this regulation on inspection.