

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MO026
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Bualadh Bos
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ballina Road, Crossmolina, Co. Mayo
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<b>Eircode:</b>	F26 WV74
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Lisa O'Boyle
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	11/02/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	-	PM	18
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M Farrell
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable.
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### Description of service

Bualadh Bos is a privately owned and operated service located in Crossmolina, County Mayo. The service is registered to provide daily sessional services between 8:45-11:45 hours and an afternoon session from 12:30-15:30 hours for children aged from 2-6 years of age. There is a playroom with kitchenette and sanitary facilities in a purpose built, single storey building and there is an office in a second smaller adjacent building. The children have access to a well-developed, enclosed outdoor play area located to the front of the premises and to a large enclosed grassed area with trees at the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

There are four staff including the registered provider employed to work directly with the children in the service. One staff member is employed through the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.

### 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 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 inspector wishes 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

*(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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge in the service and there was a named person to deputise in her absence.
- (b) The designated person in charge and deputy were present on the inspector's unannounced arrival at the service and were present throughout the inspection. A review of the attendance records showed that the designated person in charge or deputy were present in the service during opening hours.
- (c) Discussions with the staff and observation of practices in the service found that there was a clear management structure with the staff aware of their roles and responsibilities within the service.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that one new staff member who worked directly with the children had been employed since the previous inspection. In addition, Garda vetting for three staff member whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.
- (a) Two written validated references from past employers particularly the most recent employers for one adult.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all four adults whose files were reviewed. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International police vetting was not required for the adult whose vetting documentation showed that they had not lived outside the state for longer than six consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available for four staff who worked directly with the preschool children.

### 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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) During the inspection an adequate number of adults were observed to work directly with the children in the service. On the inspector's announced arrival to the service there were 4 adults working directly with 18 children. Review of a sample of attendance records found that adequate numbers of staff had been provided to work directly with the children.
- (3) The minimum ratio for sessional services providing care to children over 2 ½ years of 1 adult to each 11 children was adhered to with four adults working directly with a maximum of 18 children during the 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, and*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)(a)
- The registered provider ensured that children's learning, well-being and development were supported through appropriate activities, interactions and materials depending on their ages and stages of development. Wide varieties of toys and play equipment were freely available to the children in the playroom allowing them to choose their preferred play activities. The toys were grouped and arranged in defined areas of interest such as a home corner, art and craft area, tabletop activities and dress up area.

Some children choose to wear dress up clothes such as ball gowns and one staff member was observed to suggest a toy tiara to wear to match a dress. On the inspector's arrival to the service children were playing with small world toys such as toy houses and figures. Some children were feeding red lentils 'calf nuts' to toy farm animals. Groups of children were sitting at tables playing with coloured magnets that they proudly showed to the inspector. The staff organised group activities at tables encouraging teamwork and communication skills such as a messy play group activity with green playdough and rollers/cutters. A daily routine display with pictures to guide children was observed in the playroom. The daily routine provided a sense of predictability for the children. Another group activity involved story telling where the children sat in a semi-circle in front of a staff member who read a story and showed the children the accompanying pictures in the chosen book. The staff member encouraged questions and included all children in discussions. There was a rest area with soft seating near the service's book corner and children were observed to rest in the area at times and look at the books that were age and developmentally appropriate for the children in attendance.

There was a keyworker system in place in the service with the children assigned to keyworker groups which were displayed on a wall in the playroom. The interactions between staff and children were positive and warm with the staff displaying knowledge of the children's likes and dislikes. The staff responded sensitively to the children's needs in a timely manner for example comforting a child who was upset. The children's behaviour was observed to be managed in a positive manner with the staff modelling positive behaviours for them. Individualised care plans were in place for children where needed with samples available for inspection. The staff prepared children for transitions in advance by letting them know when it was nearly time to transition from one activity to another. At clean-up time following free play early in the session, a 'clean-up' song was played which the children were familiar with and sang along to with the staff.

The staff were observed to greet adults warmly when arriving to the service to collect children and share information regarding their child with them. The designated person in charge informed the inspector that electronic messaging systems were also used to communicate service information to parents. A number of open day sessions were held each May for incoming children to help familiarise them and their parents with the service in small groups. A party had been held for the children at Christmas attended by children's family members and Santa Claus.

'My Learning Journals' had been created by the staff with photographs of children and examples of their artworks. The staff kept records of observations they had made of the children's progress at regular

intervals with samples available for the inspector to view. There was a large curriculum planning book with detailed plans for each month's activities for example the planned themes for February included Spring and St. Valentine's Day. This was reflected with a large wall display of Spring including information on the life cycle of a frog and pictures of spring flowers such as daffodils and Spring songs for the children to learn.

During the session, the children and staff went for a walk outdoors singing songs and having conversations while they walked. There were two outdoor spaces available in the service but were not used on the day. One of the outdoor areas had a large section of artificial ground cover with a large wooden climbing system and slide. There was an enclosed covered sand area with a large selection of plastic digger toys, buckets and spades. There was a sheltered area with a chalkboard, mud kitchen, seating and a sensory activity table. A second enclosed outdoor grass area was located to the rear of the premises.

The children brought food from home for their snacks in line with the service's healthy eating policy. The snacks included items such as chopped fruit and vegetables, humus, crackers, yoghurts, cheese and bread. The children sat in groups at tables with the staff to eat their meal. Each child had an individual drink container and there was water available throughout the session to children if they wanted a drink.

The staff supported and promoted children's independence for example encouraging them to put on their own outdoor clothes when going outdoors. The children were encouraged to use the toilet by themselves when they needed to. Staff prompted the children to wash their hands with warm water and liquid soap and dry them with paper towels at key moments for example before eating and after using the toilet.

### 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 entrance door to the service was secured during the session. The inspector was admitted by staff following production of identification information. A visitor book was available and used to record visitor attendance in the service. There was a half-door leading to the kitchenette that was secured by staff to prevent children from accessing the area. Cleaning products were stored in a cupboard in the kitchenette and were inaccessible to the children. A kettle was stored out of reach of children in the kitchenette and not observed to be used during the

inspection. There was a wooden gate near the entrance door to the service as a further access control measure. The toys and play equipment were well maintained, in good condition, and suitable for the ages and developmental stages of the children using them on the day. The children and staff went for a walk outdoors during the session down a long drive on the premises. Staff members undertook a risk assessment of the area prior to leaving the building and ensured that a large gate at the end of the drive was secured. On the inspector's arrival to the service, two adults wearing high visibility jackets were managing a parking system for adults dropping off children at the front of the premises.

### **Infection Control:**

The premises was found to be clean with staff keeping records of cleaning processes undertaken in the service. The staff were observed to clean down surfaces after use such as tables after lunchtime. A refrigerator was provided and used to store children's lunches including perishable food items. The staff were observed to prompt and support children to wash their hands at key moments including before eating and after using the toilet. Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were provided at sinks for children and staff to wash their hands. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for disposal of wastepaper after drying hands.

### **Administration of Medication:**

Systems were in place for the storage and recording of administration of any medication to children in the service and the staff showed knowledge of the safe practices regarding medication administration during discussions with the inspector. Detailed care plans were in place for the potential administration of emergency medication to a child where needed. Training regarding medication administration had been undertaken by a number of staff members. A sample of medication stored in the kitchenette was observed to be within their expiry dates.

### **Fire Safety:**

The emergency exits and escape routes were found to be free from obstruction.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

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

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

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

*(iii) an employee, or*

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

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

### Compliance Information

- (1) Each child was checked in and out of the service by a staff member with up-to-date records kept by staff.
- (3) (a) The staff approved the entry of the inspector to the service following review of identification documentation.
- (b) Written details of the entry to the premises of the inspector were recorded in a visitor record book.

## 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) Written records of the monthly fire drills undertaken in the service were kept by the staff. Records showed that the last fire drill was undertaken on the 19 January 2026.
- (b) Records were available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. The records showed that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on the 29 September 2025 and the smoke alarms were last maintained on 12 September 2025.
- (2) (c) The fire records were made available by staff to the inspector on request.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire with maps of escape plan were clearly displayed in the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

A certificate of insurance for sessional services for a maximum of 22 children with an expiry date of the 27 March 2026 was displayed in the playroom.