

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN011
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Name of Service:	Cuan Bhride Childcare Centre
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Address of Service:	Cuan Mhuire, Ballinderry, Four Mile House, Co. Roscommon
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Eircode:	F42 W326
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Name of Registered Provider:	Georgina Clarke
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	46	PM	30
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy
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

This community operated pre-school was established in 2006. The service offers full day care and part time care provision from 8.00hrs to 18.00hrs, for children aged between 0 to 6 years, from Monday to Friday. Additionally, an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programmes are offered. The service also operates an afterschool programme for school aged children. The service is registered to cater for a maximum number of 60 children, at any one time. There are four ground floor pre-school playrooms, namely the Baby room, the Toddler room, the Ladybug room, and the Busy Bee room. There is a designated kitchen where the main meals are prepared, cooked, and stored on site. There is an interlinked sleep room (with access to the Baby room and the Toddler room), with ten cots, available for younger children requiring sleep provision. Additionally, there are stackable beds, for older children's sleep provision. Quiet rest areas are available in each playroom for children to relax. There are outdoor play areas to the rear and front side of the premises. The service offers a child centred play-based pre-school curriculum focusing on emerging interests

Staffing

The registered provider is supernumerary and not on the premises daily. Fifteen staff hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 to 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education. The staff have documentary evidence of ongoing training and education. There is a chef employed to prepare, cook, and serve the service meals / snacks on site.

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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on Regulations 9,11,19,23,25,26 and 28. 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.

Additional Information

An Immediate action notice was issued on the day of the inspection regarding the temperature of the hot water under Regulation 23 (Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child). Please see body of report for more detail.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, deputy person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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) At all times during the period of the inspection, the persons in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(b) On the day of the inspection, the two persons in charge were on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. The service showed evidence that there was always a named person consistently in charge, on a day-to-day basis.

(2) On the most recent inspection dated the 30th of July 2025 seventeen staff files were presented to the early year inspectors. It was advised by the persons in charge that three of those staff are no longer working in the service. Three staff have commenced in the service since the inspection conducted on 30th of July 2025 and presently there is one student on a childcare work placement.

The following vetting information was available for three adults and the student on the placement were reviewed.

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- (a)(b) Eight written validated references from previous employments or a reputable source were on file for the three adults and the student on placement.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) None of the new staff had resided outside the jurisdiction over 18 years of age for a period in excess of six months.
- (4) The three files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of 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.*
- (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 was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service. On the day of the inspection, the two persons in charge were on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the remainder of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available on the premises at all times when the pre-school children were present.
- (2) On the morning of the inspection, there were 37 preschool children present.
- 9 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
 - 11 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
 - 26 children were aged between 3 to 5 years.
- There were eleven staff directly caring for the preschool children. In the morning, the persons in charge assisted with the relief and break cover.

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In the afternoon of the inspection, there were 30 preschool children present. There were seven staff directly caring for the preschool children

- 6 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 10 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
- 14 children were aged between 3 to 6 years.

(8)(a) The persons in charge ensured that there were 2 staff on the premises at all times while the pre-school was operating.

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

(1)(a) Children had plenty of opportunities to move freely to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.

- The service supported the children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with staff.
For example:
- assigning a key person to each child;
- showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust;
- being actively involved in children's play, where appropriate (initiating games, joining when invited to by children);
- behaving in a way that creates a positive atmosphere (having frequent social conversations, laughter and showing affection);
- listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures, and body language;
- encouraging children to think critically, ask questions and respond to them in a way that promotes sustained shared thinking; nurturing and comforting children;

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- using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact.
- Visual aids (picture and word reminders) and instructions were displayed and used with the children to support their learning.
- Displayed on the walls were posters, visual aids, photographs, artwork, and themes including the children's art displays.
- The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried.
- The children were supported to be confident about their identity and to have a strong sense of belonging, while in the service.
- The service provided parents and guardians with daily information, including significant events or activities involving their child, for example, verbal communication at drop of and collection times.
- Staff adjusted the level of support provided to children depending on the child's abilities, allowing for children's partial participation and participation with support.
- The staff and children sang action songs and nursery rhymes in circle time.
- The children were observed playing in the home area with a selection of dolls and accessories, at tabletop activities including jigsaws, puzzles, magnetic play, sorting shapes, playing with accessories in the doll's house. The children were observed in the construction area playing with blocks and a trainset
- In the outdoor area, the older children were observed running, chasing, playing football, on the see saws, riding on low bicycles, climbing up the climbing frame of the activity centre and down the slide, and playing catch. Younger children supervised by staff, were encouraged to move, to play with balls, age-appropriate tricycles / bicycles and to climb on a low climbing frame.
- The staff listened to children in a caring, gentle way when they expressed emotions, and reassured them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions at times. The staff acknowledged and accepted children's feelings (positive and negative) and the relationships between children's actions and other's responses. The children were given choice on what to do next.
- The staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them, and talking to the children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, and commentating, extending a child's activities and initiating games and activities. The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences.
- Children's behaviour was managed in a competent and positive manner by the staff. It was observed that minor problems were handled promptly and positively by the staff.

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- Staff used positive strategies to support children's inclusion. For example, the inspector noted that the staff acknowledged a child's engagement in an activity 'that is great' 'well done' and used questions such as 'what should we do next?', 'is there any other way to do this?', to allow children to critically think and explore.
- The staff supported children to enter social groups, and to learn to help and positively engage with other children. They encouraged and praised children for specific, positive, and appropriate behaviours. Children were given positive alternatives, rather than just being told 'no'.
- Children were supported in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict. Children could identify, name, and explore their feelings both positive and negative.

(b)

- The children were given sufficient time to eat in an unhurried manner and the children sat at age-appropriate low-level chairs and tables at their snack times. The children consumed their snack which was provided by the parents at 10:30hrs and consumed the hot dinner of mincemeat, carrots and mashed potato. Extra portions were offered if a child was hungry. The afternoon snack was consumed at 15:00hrs and drinking water was available to the children throughout the day.
- The staff encouraged and supported the pre-school children to feed themselves independently, according to their age and stage of development.
- The staff responded to children's individual personalities, sensitivities and needs in relation to nappy changing, toileting and toilet training. On the day of inspection, seventeen children wore nappies and were changed on a regular basis.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets and did not have to wait to use the toilet. Children were allowed to take their time during toileting.
- Staff encouraged and supported children to become more independent in toileting practices.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence, and to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.
- Children were observed sleeping on demand following cues / signs of tiredness. On the day of the inspection nine children from the caterpillar room were observed sleeping in cots. The older children in the little bear cub room were observed sleeping on stackable beds. The older children had relaxation, chill out time.

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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:

- There was a buzzer access system, into the main entrance front door.
 - The staff only areas, office, kitchen, staff sanitary area and storage areas were secure and thereby inaccessible to a pre-school child.
 - The external outdoor play areas were secure so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area.
 - Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.
 - All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to the children.
 - Leads, cables, and flexes were secured and or inaccessible to prevent any trips or strangulation hazard.
 - The playroom temperatures were thermostatically controlled, to ensure the temperatures were maintained between 18°C to 22°C.
 - Heavy equipment and furnishings were anchored appropriately.
 - There were visibility posters on the glass doors as a safety precaution.
 - Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with disposable paper towels and disinfectant spray.
 - Materials and play equipment, both indoors and outdoors, were observed to be safe for the pre-school children using them and in a good state of repair.
- Blind cords were securely fastened thereby preventing any potential risk.

Infection Control:

- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels.
- During the inspection, the children were assisted and encouraged to wash their hands prior to eating, after nappy changing, after toileting, after using a tissue and after outdoor play.
- There were two designated nappy changing areas with a designated wash hand basin
- The nappy changing areas had a nappy changing unit, a wash hand basin, storage space for children's belongings and a foot operated pedalled bin for the disposal of nappies.

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- The children in nappies were changed in a timely manner, on a regular basis. Staff involved in nappy changing wore a disposable apron and gloves.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Refrigerators were provided for the storage of perishable foods.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was stored inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- The medicines examined were within date.
- On discussion with staff in the pre-school rooms staff informed the inspector of five children with allergies or intolerances. Detailed care plans were in place for these children
- The staff were aware of the instructions and storage requirements of the medication.

Safe Sleep:

- There was a safe sleep policy that detailed temperature, lighting, ventilation, space between cots and child safety requirements.
- Sleep records were kept for each child's sleep, recording the time a staff physically checks a child, along with their signature. Additionally, the records included a sleeping child's colour, position, breathing and the temperature of the sleep room with the opportunity to document any necessary remedial actions taken.
- A digital thermometer was available in the sleep room and used as the method of recording the sleep room temperature and taking remedial action when temperatures were above 20 °C and below 16 °C.
- All linen provided was clean, dry, and stored in labelled baskets.
- A staff member supervised the sleeping children and physically checked their colour, position and breathing and the room temperature.

Fire Safety:

- A fire evacuation plan was displayed on the walls in each of the playrooms.
- All exits remained free from obstruction on the day.

Outing:

- It was advised by the staff that the service organise an end of year outing for the older preschool children.
- The staff were familiar with the outings procedure and advised that a risk assessment would be completed prior to the outing, consents would be given by the parents and guardians and the first aid box and the emergency contact numbers and spare clothes are brought on the outing.

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Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. An immediate action notice was issued in relation to the temperature of the hot water in the sinks in the nappy changing areas off the caterpillar and little bear cub rooms. The temperature of the water was 56.4 °C and 58°C which could pose potential risk of injury to a child.

It is acknowledged the manager of the service advised on 17th of February that the plumber has adjusted the thermostat was adjusted and the water temperature has been reduced.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. On 17th of February the manager of the service advised the office of the early years inspectorate that the plumber has adjusted the thermostat, and new valves have been fitted and the staff will check the water temperature regularly throughout the day to ensure the water temperature does not exceed 43 degrees.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. On 17th of February the manager submitted the plumbers report and photographic evidence of the reduced water temperatures in the sinks in the caterpillar and little bear cub sanitary accommodations.

Summary Comment

The early years inspector has assessed the evidence submitted and actions taken and deems it to comply with Reg 23.

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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 there were five staff trained in first aid for children available to the children, attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) There were six first aid boxes on the premises with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 firefighting 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 monthly fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was dated 16th of January 2026.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service dated 16th of December 2025. The smoke and fire detection alarm system for the premises had the last annual service dated 13th of November 2025.
- (4) Notices were displayed within the pre-school rooms of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service's insurance with an expiry date of 27th March 2026 was for a full day care, catering for 95 children. The insurance covered the following,

- Public liability,
- Personal accident,
- Insurance against fire and theft,
- Buildings,
- Outings undertaken as part of the service provision.