

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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Day 1 of the Inspection:	23/04/2024
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Day 2 of the inspection:	24/04/2024
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No of pre-school children Day 1	AM	43	PM	34
No of pre-school children Day 2	AM	45	PM	N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	TUSLA - Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	Helena Heagney & Aileen Kennedy
Title:	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).

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. Staff files (including the registered provider) were presented to the inspectors. 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 are three chefs who prepare, cook, and serve the service meals / snacks. There was one staff member assigned to maintenance cleaning.

There were three adults over the age of 18 years on a childcare work placement and supervised when interacting with the children.

Additionally, there are two staff designated to the care of the school age children.

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 and 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 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

(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.*
- (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.*
- (7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following: (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5; (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and (c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

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

(b)

On both days of the inspection, the person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspectors 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. The staff were aware of who was the deputy person in charge in the absence of the designated person.

(c)

The service showed evidence of a clear management structure that identified the lines of authority and accountability and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker. The service had appropriate administrative processes, ensuring effective operation of the service. The pre-school had a comprehensive handbook for parents and guardians which included the service mission statement, ethos, and best practice policies procedures and guidelines.

Twenty staff and three adults over the age of 18 years of age on a childcare work placement files were presented to the early year inspectors.

(2)(a)&(b)

Forty-six of the forty-six written validated references, on file for the twenty staff and three adults on a childcare work placement were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the twenty staff and three adults on a childcare work placement. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)

Six of the staff had worked outside the jurisdiction, for six months or more, while over the age of 18 years of age, and had the required police vetting for that jurisdiction. It is acknowledged that where applicable these vetting's were translated by a reputable source.

(4)

Fifteen staff who were working directly with children, held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), at a Level 5 to 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the fifteen staff.

(7)(a)(b)(c)

The person in charge ensured that all employees, and unpaid workers, were appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training. This included in relation to the policies, procedures and statements of the service and the Regulations.

The person in charge showed evidence of ongoing staff training and the staff supervision policy being implemented with staff knowing their requirements, roles, and responsibilities.

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 both days of inspection, the person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspectors 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 Day 1 of the inspection, there were 43 children present.

- 7 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 11 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
- 25 children were aged between 3 to 5 years.

There were eleven staff directly caring for these children. In the morning, the person in charge assisted with the administration aspect of the inspection.

In the afternoon, of Day 1 of the inspection, there were 34 children present.

- 7 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 11 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
- 16 children were aged between 3 to 6 years.

There were eight staff directly caring for and supervising these children. The person in charge assisted with the administration aspect of the inspection.

On the morning of Day 2 of the inspection, there were 45 children present.

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

There were twelve staff and one adult over the age of 18 years on a childcare placement directly caring for these children.

It is acknowledged that on both days of inspection, the person in charge was receiving handover from the previous person in charge.

(8)(a)

The person in charge ensured that there were 2 staff on the premises at all times while the pre-school was operating.

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;*
- (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.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)&(i)

Twenty-five children's records were sampled and reviewed by the early year's inspectors.

The twenty-five records reviewed showed that the entries were factual, consistent, and accurate.

The twenty-five children's records contained the following:-

- The name and date of birth of the child.
- The date in which the child first commenced in the service.
- The date on which the child stopped attending the service (where relevant).
- The name and address of the child's parent or guardian, and a telephone number where that parent or guardian (or a relative or friend of the parent or child) can be contacted during the hours of operation.
- Written authorisation / permissions for collecting the child.
- Details are recorded of any illness, allergy, or additional need(s) the child had, together with all the information relevant to the provision of specific care or attention.
- The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner.
- A record of any immunisations the child has had.
- Written parental or guardian consent was included to allow the child to have appropriate medical treatment if there was / is an emergency.

(4) &(5) The person in charge advised and documentary evidence from file review indicated, that all relevant children's records were kept for 2 years from the date a child stops attending the service.

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

- Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snack(s) and meal(s) without being rushed. The atmosphere during mealtimes was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and staff.
- The crockery, cutlery and drinking utensils used were suitable for the children's ages 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 days of the inspection, thirteen children from the Baby room, Toddler room and Ladybug room required nappy changing and were changed in a sensitive manner while having their dignity and privacy maintained.
- The older children had unrestricted access to the toilet 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 had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance. The service had safe and comfortable spaces for toddlers or children not walking to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up, learn to walk and to be protected from children who were more mobile.
- 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 in when invited to by children);
 - behaving in a way that creates a positive atmosphere (having frequent social conversations, joint 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;

- 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.
- 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, each day, 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, a social media interactive communication application, a bespoke childcare application, and via profile scrapbooks. The staff have day to day message and monthly planning boards, as aid memoirs for enhanced communication with parents and guardians.
- The service had a designated childcare application with interactive communication with parents and guardians. There was section with photographs and a description of the child engaged in activities. Staff observations, a child’s milestones and individual learning stories were captured. The childcare application showed details of sleep provisions, meals, nappy changing / toileting, special activities, and a child’s likes, needs and preferences and general observations / comments. There were learning template and developmental checklists showing the child’s strengths, interests, and developmental care needs.
- Staff collated for each child a profile scrapbook ‘my learning journal’, showing the child’s journey, the themes engaged in and samples of the child’s work. A sample of the themes today included ‘this is me’, my family and my friends, my first day at pre-school, my witches spell, sand play, science week, humpty dumpty, tiny seeds, music, mud play, I am a good friend, I am responsible, I am brave, I am smart, Miss Polly had a dolly, fire engine visit, the farm, cottonwool creations, Chinese lanterns, colouring egg shells and sensory play.
- Children with additional care needs were provided with suitable facilities, activities, play opportunities, visual, auditory, tactile cues suitable to the child’s care needs, age and stage of development. Comprehensive written care plans in partnership with parents and guardians and the child’s health care professionals were available. The care plans showed the child’s access and inclusion level goals, personal exercise program, manuals for equipment, physiotherapy tools, prescription consent forms, children’s disability services and my inclusion plan.
- 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.

- On the days of inspection, the children were observed to free play, at story time, at circle time, at construction building, connecting, at sensory play, at pretend kitchen / house with play accessories, and sorting stacking materials. The children painted, played games, puzzles, and insets. The children enjoyed playing with a selection of transport vehicles. They fed, and dressed baby dolls, played with small world furniture, little people, cuddly toys, and dolls and musical instruments. They enjoyed art and craft work including painting, playdough, and sensory play.
- On the days of inspection, in the outdoor areas, the children were observed on spinners, on trikes and bikes and scooters, playing with wheelbarrows, playing house, at water play, digging the sand, at sensory play, playing ball, at construction play, climbing on activity centres, running, chasing, sorting, and exploring.
- 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. In all the playrooms, 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. The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences.
- Staff responded to the younger children in a timely and appropriate way when they were crying or when becoming upset.
- Staff used positive strategies to support children's inclusion. For example, the inspectors 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.

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 doors.
- 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.
- A system was in place to ensure that daily records of attendance were kept for all of the children, attending the pre-school.
- 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.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water not exceeding 43°C to facilitate hygienic hand washing was available.
- Heavy equipment and furnishings were anchored appropriately.
- There were visibility posters on the glass doors as a safety precaution.
- There was a documented risk assessment system for the indoor and outdoor play areas, for checking that toys and equipment were not broken, in a clean condition and maintained in a good state of repair.
- The person in charge clearly identified to the early year’s inspectors, the drop off and collection procedures for children.

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, and after using a tissue.

- There were two designated nappy changing areas with a designated wash hand basin. 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. There were a foot pedalled airtight sealable bins for the disposal of nappies.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Refrigerators were provided for the storage of perishable foods.
- The playrooms were observed to be kept adequately ventilated with the windows and doors left open whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels.
- The person in charge had cleaning records for the materials, equipment, and furnishings.

Administration of Medication:

- It was advised during the inspection that presently there is no child on medication.
- Through discussion with the inspectors, the staff demonstrated that they were aware of the correct procedures for the administration of medicines.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were observed sleeping on demand following cues / signs of tiredness. Throughout both days of the inspection, children from the Baby, and toddler rooms were observed sleeping in cots. The older children in the Toddler room were observed sleeping on stackable beds. The older children had relaxation, chill out time.
- There was a safe sleep policy that detailed temperature, lighting, ventilation, space between cots and child safety requirements, as per the 'safe sleep for under 2's best practice guidelines for childcare services policy'.
- 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.
- An egg thermometer was available in the sleep room and used as the method of recording the sleep room temperature and therefore taking remedial action when temperatures were above 20 °C and below 16 °C.
- All linen provided was clean, dry, and stored in labelled baskets.
- Rest / quiet areas were provided in each of the playrooms to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he/she chose.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety

1. Garda vetting was available for twenty staff member and three adults on a childcare work placement. However, three vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'. It is acknowledged that evidence of the applications for the three staff commenced on the 29th and 30th of April 2024.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

On the 27th and 29th of May 2024, the person in charge advised of the following;

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Applications for the three staff members re-vetting commenced on the 29th and 30th of April 2024. There will be annual checks by management regarding all Garda re-vetting for staff.

Supporting Documentation Submitted

1. Garda vetting for the three staff members dated 14/5/2024, 23/5/2024, and 24/5/2024 was submitted to the office of the early years' inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspectors have reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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) Twelve staff working in the pre-school service had evidence of a current first aid responder qualification.
- (2)(a) Six suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and in an easily accessible conspicuous position.
- (b) The first aid boxes were readily available, with content items within date.