

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN023
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Name of Service:	Regina Bushell T/A Grovelands Childcare
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Address of Service:	Corran Riada, Monksland, Athlone, Co. Roscommon.
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Eircode:	N37 W3Y1
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Name of Registered Provider:	Regina Bushell
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Dates of Inspection:	4 th of July 2023
	5 th of July 2023

No of pre-school children:	AM	49	PM	38
	AM	40	PM	39

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Heagney & A. 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 privately operated pre-school service in a housing development in Athlone town, 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 and sessional 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 114 children, at any one time. There are six playrooms. On the ground floor there are five playrooms, namely the Sunflower room, the Bluebell room, the Mulberry room, Sycamore room and the Chestnut room. On the first floor is the Willow playroom.

There is a designated kitchen where the meals / snacks are prepared and stored on site. The main meals are cooked in another location, in one of the registered providers other services, in the town of Athlone. There are two sleep rooms with four and six 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 sides 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. There is a person in charge and deputy person in charge. Twenty-six staff files (including the registered provider) were examined. Twenty-two 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 two chef / housekeepers who prepares, stores, and serves the service meals / snacks. Additionally, there is a daily cleaner working 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 inspections 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

On the 6th of July 2023, an immediate action notice was issued, for Regulation 23 (Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child). as the water temperatures from the warm taps wash hand basins, accessible to the children, were above the recommended 43°C upper safety limit to prevent a risk of scalding.

On the 7th of July 2023, the registered provider advised that a plumber had been contracted to investigate and had rectified the high-water temperature readings.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the days 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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.
- (b) The childcare manager was the person in charge and on the premises when the early years inspectors arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.
Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises when the pre-school children were present.
- (c) There was a clear management structure that identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(2)(a)&(b) Files for the twenty-six staff (including the registered provider) were presented to the early years' inspectors.

Fifty-two of the fifty-two written validated references on file in respect of the twenty-six staff, were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the twenty-five staff.
 - (d) Six staff, who had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years, had the required police vetting. It is acknowledged that where applicable, these vetting's were translated by a reputable source.
- (4) Twenty -two staff working directly with the children had evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 to Level 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(c) There was a staff member without Garda Vetting disclosure working in the service, but not directly with the children. It is acknowledged the application for Garda Vetting disclosure for this staff member was commenced on the 5th of July 2023.
- (d) A staff member had worked outside the jurisdiction, for longer than six consecutive months or more, while over the age of 18 years, and did not have the required police vetting disclosure. It is acknowledged that this staff member was currently on leave and had advised the service that she had reapplied as she had lost the original disclosure.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

On the 19th of July and the 16th of August 2023, the person in charge advised of the following;

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(c) Garda Vetting is now in place for auxiliary staff members who do not work directly with the children. All staff will re-vetted every three years, as per best practice.
- (d) Police vetting will be applied for when staff member returns from maternity leave. The staff member in question started with us prior to the implementation of an overseas checklist on our recruitment application form. This checklist highlights where a staff member has spent more than six months outside of Ireland and will require additional vetting clearance from abroad. All staff files will be cross checked to ensure there all overseas vetting is in place.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)(c) Garda Vetting disclosure dated 18th of July 2023, for the staff member working in the service, but not directly with the children, was submitted to office of the early years' inspectorate.
- (d) No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

- (2)(c) The non-compliance identified on inspection has been adequately addressed.
- (d) The non-compliance remains outstanding as awaiting police vetting for the one staff member.

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) At all times during the period of the inspection, the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.
- (2) Documentary evidence in the form of attendance records and staff rosters indicated that adult child ratios were adhered to.
- On the morning of Day 1 of the inspection, there were 49 pre-school children present.
- 5 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
 - 21 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
 - 13 children were aged between 3 to 4 years,
 - 10 children were aged 4 to 5 years.
- Additionally, there were 2 school aged children aged between 5 to 8 years.

There were 11 staff directly caring for these children. Additionally, the person in charge assisted with the administration parts of the inspection and acted as childcare relief. The registered provider was on site for approximately 90 minutes. There was a service chef and a designated cleaner.

In the afternoon, of Day 1 of the inspection there were 40 preschool children present

- 5 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 19 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
- 8 children were aged between 3 to 4 years,
- 8 children were aged 4 to 5 years.

Additionally, there were 5 school aged children aged between 5 to 8 years.

There were ten staff, directly caring for and supervising these children. The person in charge was supernumerary and acted as childcare relief. Additionally, there was a chef /housekeeper and a designated cleaner.

On the morning of Day 2 of the inspection, there were 40 children present.

- 9 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 13 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
- 10 children were aged between 3 to 4 years,
- 8 children were aged 4 to 5 years.

Additionally, there were 3 school aged children aged 5 to 8 years.

There were twelve staff directly caring for these children. Additionally, the person in charge and deputy person in charge assisted with the administration parts of the inspection and acted as childcare relief.

There was a service chef working in the kitchen.

In the afternoon, of Day 2 of the inspection there were 39 children present

- 9 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 10 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
- 20 children were aged between 3 to 5 years.

Additionally, there were 3 school aged children aged 5 to 8 years.

There were ten staff, directly caring for and supervising these children. The person in charge and deputy person in charge were supernumerary and acted as childcare relief. There was a chef / housekeeper. From 13.20hrs the registered provider was on site.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were 2 staff on the premises 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 reviewed by the Early Years Inspectors.

The entries reviewed 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 on which the child first attended 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 registered provider 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

- The staff supervised, encouraged, and supported the children to be as independent, as possible.
- The tables and chairs were suitable for the children’s ages and stages of development. The early years inspectors observed that the children’s meal and snack times were sociable and relaxed. Highchairs were available to facilitate feeding younger children in the Sunflower room.
- The older children were given choice and with assistance from a staff member were able to ‘self-serve’ their main meal. The staff and older children did a ‘thank you for the lovely dinner’ blessing before they had their main meals.
- Children from the Sunflower, Bluebell, Mulberry, and Sycamore rooms wore nappies and had their nappies changed on a regular basis, in a timely sensitive manner, in the designated nappy changing areas. The older children had unrestricted access to the toilet and did not have to wait to use the toilet. Staff used the correct language surrounding toileting.

- Children have plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance. Play activities and experiences were developmentally appropriate and suitably challenging. The children could move about freely and explore their environments. The children were observed at free play, stacking, hammering, building, and dressing up. The children played with tracks / transport vehicles, at pretend kitchen / house, dancing to action songs / nursery rhymes and at messy play/ artwork.
- In the Sunflower room, on Day 2 of the inspection, the children were observed playing with a selection of sensory equipment, in the ball pool, playing with musical instruments, shape sorters, building blocks, hugging soft toys, playing in the play kitchen and with activity centres, and push toys. The children had soft floor matting / space to explore. There was adequate seating provided for a staff member to facilitate feeding and comforting a young child.
- In the Bluebell room, the children played in the home area with dolls, buggies and play accessories. They also played in the wooden playhouse and at construction play, building blocks, connecting links, and stacking. The children sorted shapes and moulded playdough.
- In the Mulberry room, the children chatting freely about their day. The children were observed playing in the construction area, building blocks, connecting, sorting, and stacking. The children played pretend house in the home area and enjoyed tabletop activities.
- The children in the Sycamore room, were observed at free play, playing house / kitchen, digging, and playing with flour, glitter, and rice. The children were observed linking, connecting, stacking, constructing, shape sorting, drawing, and painting.
- The older children in the Chestnut and Willow rooms were observed drawing / artwork, at free play, playing with dolls, playing house / kitchen, jumping, hiding, climbing, exploring, at dress up play, at circle time, counting numbers, learning words, making puzzles, stacking, building, at construction, reading, chatting, and playing group games.
- All the children had opportunities to move about freely and explore both their indoor and outdoor environments.
- In the outdoor area the younger children were observed playing on rockers, on a climbing frame, playing group games, and ball games. They were also observed riding on tractors and bicycles.
- In the outdoor area, the older children were observed at free play, engaged in social conversation, riding on bicycles, tractors, motor bicycles, pushing each other on pushcarts, running, playing catch, hide and seek, at sand play, playing in the mud kitchen and rolling on the all- weather surface.

- The service supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships by:
 - assigning a key person to each child,
 - showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust,
 - 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,
 - using soft tones, the child’s individual name, getting down to their level and making eye contact,
 - providing opportunities for individual and small group activities and play, leading to increased social awareness, co-operation, collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of belonging,
 - working with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child’s interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life, and any other concerns.
- On speaking with staff, the early years inspectors were informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child’s experiences in the pre-school including the child’s likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times and via text messages, by phone calls, and by email.
- Each child had an ‘all about me’ profile record on their likes and interests. There were learning template and developmental checklists showing the child’s strengths, interests, and developmental care needs. There was also evidence of staff observations and the development of individual learning stories.
- The service had a designated childcare application for interactive communication with parents and guardians. There was a gallery section with photographs and a description of the child engaged in activities. Activities were categorized under the headings ‘child led’, ‘free choice’ and ‘group engagement’ with prompts for staff ‘what will we do next’. Staff observations and a child’s milestones were captured under the heading’s ‘wellbeing’, ‘identity and belonging’, ‘communication’, ‘exploring and thinking’ with links to the curriculum. 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.
- The staff created individual profile scrapbooks for the older children showing the themes, experiences, and activities engaged in, with the child’s photograph and a staff member’s observations. The learning journals examined captured themes including this is me, my handprints, Autumn trees, glitter fish, my volcano, my fire truck, my hedgehog, pencil skills, leaf painting, yummy fun, Winter, Christmas, my fingerprints, animals, Spring, St Patricks day, Easter, robots, Summer, hungry caterpillar, butterfly, footprints, fish, and a teddy bears picnic.

- Parents and guardians were encouraged to visit the playrooms.
- Children took part in preparing for change, to other rooms, to the outdoor area, for home, and for daily transitions such as meals / snacks, for tidying up time, toileting / nappy changing and sleep provision.
- The social and emotional wellbeing of the children was fostered. Children were supported to recognise, express and cope positively with their emotions. The staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them, and talking to the children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, commentating, extending a child's activities, initiating games and activities. The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences. The early years inspectors noted the staff acknowledged a child's achievements '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 early years inspectors observed mutual manners and respect between the staff and children for example 'thank you so much', 'really appreciate that', 'I love you', 'your amazing' and 'that was a scrummy dinner'.
- On the days of the inspection, the staff showed kindness. They were thoughtful, supportive, and reassuring whilst caring for the children. They cared for children by being supportive while the children engaged in free play, role play, and creative play. A climate was fostered where the children knew their boundaries. 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. Older children could identify, name, and explore their feelings both positive and negative.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe, and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The design, organisation and resourcing of the environment supported each child’s wellbeing, learning and development, within the ethos and philosophy of the service. The environment provided a range of challenging, diverse, creative, and enriching experiences for all children in line with their stage of development. The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried. The play materials and environment were changeable, flexible, and responsive to the emerging changing needs, preferences, and interests of the children. The staff encouraged children to interact and to engage with a range of materials, activities, and equipment in the environment, based on the child’s choices, age and stage of development.

The indoor playrooms were designed and arranged to

- maintain a space that was clean, organised, and free of clutter,
- accommodate children individually, and in small groups,
- divide the space into areas that were supplied with materials organised in a way to support children’s play, development, and learning,
- give all children access to the same facilities, activities and play opportunities, to promote their welfare and development.

The Playrooms

- The equipment was stored on low-level shelving and was readily accessible to the pre-school children.
- The play equipment and materials were age and stage appropriate, they were designed to offer a child manipulative activity, to encourage hand eye co-ordination, to develop fine motor skills and logical thinking.

In the Sunflower room, materials and items of interest included a selection of shape sorters, activity gyms, activity cubes, a ball pool, building blocks, stickle bricks, rattles, soft toys, musical toys, jigsaws, and books. There were construction toys, a home area with accessories, a farm with a selection of animals and a variety of materials to stimulate the senses.

Displayed on the walls were visual aids, educational posters, wall mounted mirrors, photographs, and children's artwork and themes on 'under the sea', 'our adventure begins here' and a birthday display.

In the Bluebell room, there was a home area with a play kitchen / accessory, baby dolls and soft toys. There was a construction area with a work bench, building blocks and accessories. There was a transport area with cars, and trucks. There was a tabletop area with a selection of jigsaws of varying levels of difficulty. There was a farm with a selection of animals, an art and craft area, and a book area. There was a wooden playhouse. There were linking, connecting, stacking, constructing, and shape sorting materials. There were plants, flowers, shells, and acorns. Displayed on the walls were visual aids, educational posters on animals, shapes, colours, parts of the body, cough and sneezing etiquette, and themes on 'our amazing work'. There were wall mounted mirrors, photographs, a birthday chart, and children's artwork.

In the Mulberry room, materials and items of interest included a wooden climbing frame and slide set. There was a dress up area with a selection of dress up outfits, and a vanity area with hairdressing items. There was a household/ kitchen area with dolls, prams, buggies, and accessories. There was a shop with food items and a cash register. There were art and craft materials including crayons, sponges, pencils, scissors, paints, aprons, and a paint easel. There were links, connectors, puzzles, jigsaws, games, and insets. There was a water play area with accessories. There was a fire station with a selection of fire engines. There was a reading area with a selection of age-appropriate books. There were tracks, transport vehicles and animals. There was a selection of shells, chestnuts, acorns, walnuts, straw, and stones.

Displayed on the walls were posters on the days of the week, shapes, colours, numbers, and the seasons. There were visual aids, photographs, and the children's artwork. There was a family wall, and a birthday chart. Hanging from the ceiling were paper decorations.

In the Sycamore room, materials and items of interest included a kitchen/home area with a sink, cooker, utensils, cutlery, pots, and pans. There were dolls, prams, cots and play accessories. There was a vanity area with a mirror and beauty items. There were art and craft materials including aprons, paints, paper, crayons, pencils, playdough, play accessories, sponges, glitter, pompoms, blackboards, chalk, and paint easels. There were shape sorters, insets, puzzles, and games. There were stacking shapes and hammering items. There were transport vehicles, tracks, links, connectors, magnets, and a selection of musical instruments. There were animals, and farmyards. There was a large dolls house with play accessories. There was a construction area with tools and a toolbox. There was a nature area with a selection of acorns, twigs, and plants. There were sensory boards with locks and latches. There were sensory blocks containing moveable glitter and sand. There was a plug in white board with shapes and numbers and a cosy book area.

Displayed on the walls were posters on the days of the week, shapes, colours, emotions, numbers, and the seasons. There was a family wall and a birthday chart. There were photographs, children's artwork, and themes including 'our amazing work'. There were hanging decorations from the ceiling.

In the Chestnut room, materials and items of interest included a kitchen with utensils, toaster, food pieces, flowers, and telephones. There was a rail with dress up clothing, helmets, and vanity items. There was a fish in a bowl. There were books, towers, blocks, shapes, connectors, links, pins, rods, insets, puzzles, and games. There was a house with small world furniture. There were cots, prams, a baby bath, dolls, action figures, animals, little ponies, transport vehicles and tracks. There was art and craft materials including paper, glitter, glue, art trays, bobbins, blackboards/ easels, pencils, crayons, paints, lids, bottle tops, chalk, scissors, stampers, and rolling pins. There was an activity table with army figurines, forts, and transport vehicles.

Displayed on the walls were posters, visual aids, photographs, artwork, and themes including summer, our class timetable, this is my family, birthday board, feelings, and emotions. There were various notice boards and a white board. Hanging from the ceiling there were wooden frames, fairy lights and decorations.

In the Willow room, materials and items of interest included magnets, blocks, stacking materials, hammering items, transport vehicles and coloured shapes. There was a kitchen with kettle, tea / coffee, fruit pieces, a sink, utensils, cups, plates, containers, spoons and forks.

There were art trays, crayons, scissors, glue, easels, paper, glitter, and art materials. There was a house with small world items. There were little people, animals, scarecrows, potato heads, dolls, prams, and cots. There was dress up clothing on a coat stand, with hats, and helmets. There was a wooden rainbow, a trolley, a keyboard mouse, and desktop. There were puzzles, insets, and games. There was a fish tank with sand and small items. There was a storage press with further items and materials.

Displayed on the walls were posters, visual aids, photographs, artwork, and themes including a caterpillar, Summer, days of the week, the weather, today is, every child is an artist, this is my family, our class birthdays, and a tree. There were notice boards and white boards. Hanging from the ceiling were wooden frames, decorations, and paper crafts.

(1)(b)

A rest / quiet area was provided in each of the playrooms in the form of child size chairs and couches, and soft matting to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he or she chose to.

There were two designated sleep rooms with four cots in the Sunflower sleep room and six cots in the Bluebell sleep room for the younger children sleep provision and stackable beds were available for the older children for sleep provision.

(3)(a)

Outdoor areas

- The outdoor areas were an extension of the indoor environment and linked with the learning that goes on inside. Children had the opportunity to be outside as often as possible, in all weather conditions. Equipment and materials in the outdoor play areas supported children's play, movement and exploration and provided opportunities exclusive to the outdoors. The outdoor areas to the side and rear of the premises were surrounded by fencing and gates. The areas were covered with artificial and real grass, pebbles, and concrete and tarmacadam pathways.
- There was a safe and comfortable space for children not yet walking. There was a ball basin, and mounted water play piping, pots, lids, pans. There was a wooden activity centre with a slide, vantage point and set ups. There was a tunnel, tables, chairs, activity centres, rockers, and portable dividers. There were slides, bicycles, balancing beams, seating, boxes with sand with lids / utensils, flowers, and blackboards. There was a kitchen with pots, buckets, cups, and utensils. There were picnic tables, bicycles, and push cars.

- For the older children there was an area for discovery, relaxation, and release of energy. There was an activity centre, with balancing beams, climbing area/ rope frame, bridge tunnel, a vantage area, a slide, and a seating area. There were wooden blocks, bricks, chairs, pans, pots, and flowers. There were signs for ‘mark making’ and ‘building blocks’. There was a mounted bird house. There were dividers, and a pallet with a brushes, racks and dustpans. There were bicycles, chairs, tractors, trailers, and wheelbarrows. There was an all-weather mud kitchen with shelving with a fridge, microwave, pots, pans, funnels, jugs, hooks, and plates. There were rings, a mix and match game, painted tyres, planters, a six-tier pallet bug hotel, and dividers. There was a willow tree hide-out. There were mounted planted wellingtons, fish boxes and a butterfly seat. There were shrubs, trees, willows, flowers, and wildflowers.
- At one side of the premises there was a tile mural wall. There was also a secure steel shed for the storage of toys and equipment. There were flowerpots, tyres, and a sand unit.
- There were three all-weathered sheltered areas off the playrooms.
- There was a balcony outdoor area, adjacent to the Willow room, that is currently not in use as undergoing renovation.

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. The person in charge advised that healthy eating was promoted within the service by visual aids, and adherence to best practice guidelines.
- Healthy eating was promoted within the service. Healthy meals and snacks were no more than 3 hours apart. Children sat at a comfortable height in relation to their tabletops. In the Sunflower room, young children sat in secure highchairs.
- Adequate quantities of food and suitable portion sizes that were adequate for the age and development of each child, were available.
- In the morning between 8.00hrs and 8.30hrs, the service offered the children the opportunity to have a selection of cereals, with milk or water to drink.

- On Day 1 of the inspection, at 10.30hrs, the service offered the children chopped grapes, bananas, and buttered rice cakes with milk or water to drink.
- On Day 2 of the inspection, at 10.30hrs, the service offered pancakes or crackers, with fruit pieces with milk or water to drink.
- On Day 1 of the inspection, at 12.30hrs, the service offered the children their main meal of bacon, cabbage, mashed potatoes, and gravy with milk or water to drink.
- On Day 2 of the inspection, at 12.30hrs, the service offered chicken curry with rice with milk or water to drink.
- On Day 1 of the inspection, at 15.00hrs, the service offered the children a selection of melon pieces, grapes and rice cakes with milk or water to drink.
- On Day 2 of the inspection, at 15.00hrs, the service offered the children sugar free jelly and ice cream with milk or water to drink.
- Cutlery, crockery, plates, drinking utensils suitable for the child's age stage of development were offered for children's snack / mealtimes.
- Clean and safe drinking water at low-level drinks' tables were available and accessible to children in each playroom. There was a fruit bowl in the older children's playrooms for children to 'self-serve'.
- Staff advised that currently there was no child on powdered infant formula. The staff advised that if a child required infant formula, then it would be prepared at home in accordance with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) best practice guidance and stored in the refrigerator in the Sunflower room.

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 three front door entrances.
- The external play area was 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.
- Daily records of attendance were kept for all of the children attending each playroom.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were wall mounted and secured to prevent any trip or strangulation hazard.
- The underfloor heating system was thermostatically controlled, to ensure the temperature was maintained between 18°C to 22°C.
- There were intact safety straps as per manufacturer’s instructions, on the highchairs in the Sunflower room.
- There were visibility stickers on glass doors as a safety precaution.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- A documented risk assessment of the indoor and outdoor play areas was available for review.

Infection Control:

- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels.
- Children were observed washing their hands after toileting / nappy changing, after messy play and outdoor play and prior to their meals / snacks.
- The children’s barrier creams were clearly individually labelled and stored within the nappy changing sanitary areas.
- Airtight sealable bins were available for the disposal of used nappies in each of the nappy changing sanitary areas.
- The service had a steam sterilising system for sanitising younger children’s soothers.

- Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with designated cloth towels / disposable paper towels and disinfectant spray.
- 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.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playrooms.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The outdoor play equipment was cleaned prior to/ after a child's use, with documented records maintained.
- A refrigerator was provided in the Sunflower and Bluebell rooms for the storage of children's milk bottles.

Administration of Medication:

- On the days of inspection, no child was on medication.
- Medications were stored inaccessible and out of children's reach.
- The staff demonstrated to the early years inspectors their knowledge of best practice with regards to the safe storage, administration of and documentation requirement for any medication given in the premises.

Safe Sleep:

- There were two designated sleep rooms adjacent to the Sunflower room and the Bluebell room which had four and six cots respectively for children under 2 years of age, sleep provision. Additionally, there were seven stackable beds available for older children's sleep provision.
- Children were observed sleeping on demand following cues / signs of tiredness. Older children had designated relaxation, chill out time.
- The service had safe and comfortable spaces for the younger children to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up, explore and to be protected from children who were more mobile.
- There was a safe sleep policy 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 provision, recording the time a staff member physically checks a child, and the staff member's 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 supply of clean linen was provided for each child and stored in labelled containers.

- Age /tog appropriate sleeping bags and or cellular blankets that allow air to circulate were used for sleeping children under 2 years of age.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The water temperatures were above the recommended 43°C upper safety limit to prevent a risk of scalding.
On the first day of inspection, at 12.22hrs, a temperature reading of 46.7°C was taken at the mixer tap in the nappy changing area used by the children from the Bluebell room.
On the second day of the inspection, at 11.01hrs a temperature reading of 47.2°C was taken from the mixer tap at the wash hand basin in the Sunflower room.
At 11.59hrs, a temperature reading of 51.9°C, and at 12.34hrs, a temperature reading of 51.4°C, was taken from the mixer tap at the wash hand basin, in the nappy changing area used by children from the Bluebell room.

Infection Control:

2. The edges of the two nappy changing mats were frayed and torn in the nappy changing areas, used by the children from the Bluebell and Mulberry room, posing a potential difficult to effectively clean.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

On the 6th and 7th of July and the 16th of August 2023, the registered provider advised of the following;

Corrective & Preventive Action

1. Immediate actions were taken to reduce the temperature of hot water in nappy changing area used by the children from the Bluebell room and all other areas of the childcare facility to ensure temperatures do not exceed 43°C. A professional plumber has investigated and rectified the water temperatures to ensure the temperature is no greater than the recommended 43°C. The service will risk assess and monitor the water temperatures regularly. Staff will continue to check water temperatures daily and take any corrective action required. In this instance the centre suffered a power cut the previous day which had interfered with a digital thermostat in the boiler house. Management are now checking this dial after any power cuts to ensure that the control is operating correctly.

Infection Control:

2. The nappy changing mats were replaced.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence of the professional plumber and of the safe water temperatures from a calibrated thermometer was submitted to the office of the early years' inspectorate.

Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence of the proof of purchase for three new nappy changing mats was submitted to the office of the early years' inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances 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) The service provided evidence that there were persons trained in first aid for children always available to the children attending the pre-school service.

Seven staff had current training in first aid for children.

(2)(a) There were 3 first aid cabinets which were safely stored, easily accessible and in a conspicuous position.

(b) The service demonstrated that the three first aid cabinets 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 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) A written record was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drills was dated July 2023.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the last annual service dated 14th of September 2022.
- Records of the annual servicing by a competent person, in relation to the premises smoke and fire detection system was dated 29th of March 2023.
- (4) There was evidence of the fire evacuation procedures setting out the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire in each of the playrooms and in the main entrance lobby.

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 of March 2024, was for a full day care, catering for 114 children. The insurance covered the following -

- public liability,
- personal accident,
- insurance against fire and theft,
- buildings,
- outings undertaken as part of the service provision.