

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015RN023

**Name of Service:** Regina Bushell T/A Grovelands Childcare

**Address of Service:** Corran Riada, Monksland, Athlone, Co. Roscommon

**Eircode:** N37 W3Y1

**Name of Registered Provider:** Regina Bushell

**Service type:** Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 14/11/2024

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	72	PM	54
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**Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:** Early Year's Inspectorate  
TUSLA, Child and Family Agency  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, St Mary's HQ  
Castlebar  
Co Mayo

**Inspection undertaken by:** B Lavin, F Kelly

**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

### Description of service

This privately owned preschool service is located on the outskirts of Athlone town, in Co Roscommon offering full day care, part time and sessional ECCE care. The service offers a childcare service from 8:00 am to 18:00 for children aged between 0-6 years each day from Monday to Friday. This service has 6 playrooms, two designated sleep rooms and a kitchen area and dining area. Five of the care rooms are on the ground floor, the sunflower room, bluebell room, mulberry room, sycamore room and chestnut room. The willow playroom is on the first floor. There is a large well-resourced outdoor play area at the rear of the building. The service is registered to cater for 114 preschool children. It is also registered as a school aged service.

### Staffing

There were 28 adults employed in the service. The service manager was the person in charge on the day and facilitated the inspection. The registered provider was present at the service for a short time during the duration of the inspection.

### Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 24, 25 and 32; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23 and 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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, and

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the service manager was on the premises.

It was confirmed that there were 28 members of staff employed in the service.

These files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) There were 43 written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer for the adults working in the service.

- (b) There were 13 written and appropriately validated references available from a source other than recent employer for adult working in the service.
  - (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the staff working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting for staff members every three years.
  - (d) Police Vetting disclosure was available for 12 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) Twenty-four adults who were working directly with the children, had evidence of an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) During the period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service. There were 16 adults working directly with 72 children. Two additional adults and the person in charge was available for break and relief cover.
- (1) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:
- Sunflower room: 2 adults cared for 5 children aged from 9 months to 14 months of age.

Bluebell room: 3 adults cared for 7 children aged from 14 months to 2 years of age.  
 Mulberry room: 3 adults cared for 14 children aged 2 years to 3 years of age.  
 Sycamore room: 4 adults cared for 15 children aged 3 years of age.  
 Chestnut room: 3 adults cared for 20 children aged 3 years to 4 years of age.  
 Willow room: 3 adults cared for 11 children aged 2 years to 4 years of age.

In the afternoon the following ratios were observed:

Sunflower room: 2 adults cared for 6 children aged from 9 months to 14 months of age.  
 Bluebell room: 2 adults cared for 7 children aged from 14 months to 2 years of age.  
 Mulberry room: 2 adults cared for 10 children aged 2 years to 3 years of age.  
 Sycamore room: 2 adults cared for 14 children aged 3 years of age.  
 Chestnut room: 2 adults cared for 17 children aged 3 years to 4 years of age.  
 Willow room: This room was closed for the afternoon.

(8)  
 The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises when children were present in the service as evidenced in a sample of attendance records reviewed

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

#### Compliance Information

##### Basic needs

- The service promoted healthy eating and food and snacks were provided at regular intervals during the day. The children in the Willow room who attended the service on a sessional basis had a snack provided from home. This consisted of fruit, yogurts, sandwiches, crackers and water to drink. The children attending the service on a full time and part time basis had their, meals and snacks provided by the

service. There was a three-week menu plan in place. The menu on the day of inspection was fruit and rice cakes served mid morning. Dinner which consisted of beef stew with mashed potatoes and vegetables was served at approximately 12.30pm. The afternoon snack was pancakes and fruit. Young children had the opportunity to feed themselves appropriate to the age and stage of development, Children's drinks were available on a low shelf in the care rooms within their reach.

- Nappy changing on the sunflower room was carried out regularly and promptly when required and handled in a positive and sensitive manner. Staff members were observed speaking to children during this time and using it as an opportunity for warm one to one interaction.
- Bibs and aprons were available to children for messy play activities.
- The individual sleep needs of younger children were met, and this was observed on the day by children sleeping at various intervals. Older preschool children were facilitated with a scheduled rest period in the afternoon. For children who do not require a sleep, appropriate rest facilities were available in the care rooms and children were observed spending time in this area for short periods of rest throughout the day.
- Children in the sunflower room were observed to be free to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up and learn to walk in a safe space.
- Children in the older care rooms had easy access to the outside area throughout the day and children moved freely between both indoors and outdoors.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions.
- Individual inclusion plans were implemented in line with children's own needs. The plans detailed the current developmental stage of the child, the interventions needed by the staff to always ensure the child's learning and development in the service across all development areas. Staff were provided with additional training to support and manage the individual medical needs of a child.

### Supporting relationships

- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. The inspector observed a child receiving comfort in the Bluebell room when they woke from their nap. The staff member offered reassurance and communicated using soft gentle tones.
- In the Willow room staff supported children to engage positively with one another and the children were encouraged to engage in play activities that required turn taking and sharing. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together.

- Staff and parents work in partnership within the service. The use of a child's profile form gave staff members valuable information about the child's likes, dislikes, daily routine, interests and family.
- Each care room had a learning journal at the room entrance for the parents to view photos and descriptions of the children's; activities and learning.
- Monthly newsletters were displayed on the walls in the corridors for the parents to view. These allowed parents to know about upcoming activities and curriculum plans for the month.

### Programme of activities

- Ongoing observations and assessments were documented which helped create a complete well-rounded picture of each individual child. These observations informed the planning for the curriculum. The curriculum was observed to be flexible in accordance with emerging interests of the children, their needs and preferences. Topics such as hibernation, solar system, dinosaurs and road safety were an example of some of the children's emerging themes.
- Children's language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Basic Needs.

The privacy and the dignity of the children using the sanitary facilities adjacent to the Mulberry room was not respected at all times. On the day of inspection, there was a large window with a view from the playroom directly into this sanitary area which meant that children using the toilet could be observed.

Individual toilet cubicles were not provided for the children using this area. Two child sized toilets were positioned adjacent to each other without any form of partition/cubicle dividing them, therefore there was no privacy if two children used the toilet at the same time.

Children using these toilets had to walk past the nappy changing area. If children were getting their nappies changed at the time they were not any given any privacy.

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

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

A frosting film will be placed on the lower level of the window facing into the children's sanitary area and will provide a level of privacy.

Toilets will be divided using partitions.

Alternative nappy changing area will be used when the children's sanitary area adjacent to the Mulberry playroom are in use.

Alterations to the sanitary areas will prevent such noncompliance is occurring in the future.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

No documentation received.

**Summary Comment**

It is acknowledged that the registered provider submitted a response to the finding of the non-compliances under Regulations 19, However the work outlined was not completed at the time of this report been finalised, therefore the regulatory requirement was not achieved.

**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.*

**Non-Compliance Information**

**Infection Control:**

A leak proof, foot pedalled and sealable airtight nappy disposal bin was not provided in the nappy changing area off the main corridor. The bin present was foot pedalled but not sealable or airtight and may pose a risk of cross infection.

**General safety**

1. At 12:25pm and 12.38pm two children in the sunflower room aged between 9 months and 16 months old were given a bottle of milk to self-feed and a staff member put the children in a lying back position on a floor mat with a small pillow behind their head. This poses a risk a choking as children should be given their meals in a upright position.
2. Powdered infant formula for one child in the sunflower room, was not prepared in accordance with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) best practice guidance, which advises that powdered infant formula should be made up at home. Staff advised that they made up bottles on site, as per parents' preference.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### **Infection Control:**

The bin in the nappy changing area has been replaced with a nappy bin which has an internal sealed compartment inside the lid. Staff will ensure that nappy bins used in the service are leak proof, sealable, airtight and foot operated to minimize the risk of cross infection.

#### **General Safety:**

1. Children will not be put lying down to drink their bottles. A memo was issued to all staff regarding this. Staff meetings and memos will be used to remind staff of all policies.
2. All infant formula bottles for children will be prepared at home and stored in the fridge in service to be served when required. All staff in the area have been reminded of the service policy with regard to infant formula bottles.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### **Infection Control:**

Photographic evidence of the nappy bin was submitted to the Inspectorate.

#### **General Safety:**

Documentation evidence of the memo issued to staff was submitted to the Inspectorate.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have adequately addressed the non-compliances found on inspection.

### Part VI - Safety

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

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

#### Compliance Information

Each children attending the service is checked in and out by relevant staff member . The service uses a childcare management software where each staff member electronically signs in and out each child and a record of same is automatically saved on the system.

### Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

#### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-*
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
  - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there was a complaints policy in place in the service.
- The complaints policy stated;
- (a) the procedures to be followed by a person who wished to make a complaint about the service,
  - (b) the processes for dealing with the complaint,
  - (c) the way the person who makes a complaint will be kept informed of how their complaint is being dealt with.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that:
- (a) A written record was kept of any complaint made to the registered provider in respect of the service.
  - (b) That complaints were dealt with in accordance with the complaints policy.
- (3) Written records referred to in (2):
- (a) Included the nature of the complaint and the way the complaint was dealt with.
  - (b) Were made available to the authorised persons.