

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN048
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Name of Service:	St. John's Pre-School Ltd
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Address of Service:	Lecarrow, Knockcroghery, Co. Roscommon
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Eircode:	F42 HC83
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Name of Registered Provider:	Breda Keenan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	05/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon. Co Roscommon
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy and L. Costello
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 detached premises is on the national school grounds, in the village of Lecarrow, Co Roscommon. An Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme and sessional care programme is offered, from 9.30hrs to 13.00hrs. The pre-school caters for a maximum of 22 children at any one time, for children aged between 2 years and 8 months and 6 years, from Monday to Friday. A play-based pre-school curriculum focusing on emerging interests is provided.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. There are two staff employed in the service and a relief person is available to cover in event of staff absence. The staff members 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.

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 regulations 9,10,11,16(k), 19,23, and 32 The inspection may also focus on other regulations 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

The inspection has been triggered by receipt of information to the inspectorate.

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, 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.

(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The person in charge was 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.

The files for the three staff, were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) Six of the six validated written references on file in respect of the three staff, were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the three staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Documentary evidence indicated that one of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years, and had the required police vetting.

(4) The three 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

(7) The registered provider did not demonstrate that they had taken all reasonable measures to ensure that all employees and unpaid workers were provided with supervision and appropriate information. On discussion with the person in charge, it was stated that regular meetings take place however, no record of these meetings were documented.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted a written response to state that the service has reviewed the staff support and supervision policy. This includes the service approach to implementing a support and supervision policy and procedure. The update has been shared with the staff team. This will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

The staff handbook will reflect the support and supervision policy and procedure of the service.

The voluntary management committee and service manager will ensure that reviewing the policies, procedures and statements is implemented to ensure the service is being well governed. This will include the following:

- Documented evidence of the staff supervision policy being implemented.
- Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the staff supervision policy.
- Relevant staff have received in service training and are familiar with the staff supervision policy.
- Regular staff meetings are being held and recorded in the staff meeting book.
- Staff have completed a staff support document and will continue to do this on a regular basis to cover all issues and concerns.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted the following to the office of the early years inspectorate:

- (1) Updated support and supervision policy and procedure.
- (2) Dates for staff and support supervision meetings to include staff names / Manager/Person completing support and supervision, record on file, signed and dated.
- (3) Staff Support Documents.
- (4) Staff meeting book.
- (5) Staff meeting record.

Summary Comment

The early years inspectorate has assessed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to address the non-compliance under Regulation 9 (7).

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Non-Compliance Information

The following policies were reviewed and found to require additional information:

(b) The policy on comments and complaints advises that the Leader or Chairperson will note comments in the Comments Book, along with any action taken. However, It was advised by the person in charge that there is no comments book in the service.

(e) The policy on managing behaviour did not outline the procedures for the protection and welfare of children and did not outline what supports are offered to staff on how to support children’s behaviour and emotional needs.

(j) The policy on accidents and incidents did not outline how incidents are documented and stored in the service. The policy also did not outline how risk assessments procedures are taken after an incident occurring in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted a written response to state the service has carried out a review on the implementation of policies to include:

Complaints and Comments Policy and Procedure.

- The procedures to be followed when a person makes a complaint in relation to the service.
- The policy specifies how complaints are responded to, managed, investigated, progressed, recorded, including appeal processes and closed.
- The policy outlines how the complainant will be kept informed throughout the process.
- Updated complaints policy and procedures are shared with staff and parents.
- We have acquired a comments book to log all comments and complaints.

The service will revise the policies and procedures on an annual basis or as needs be. Parents/guardians will be informed of the complaints policy procedure firstly during registration and then they will be informed that the policy can be viewed at any time during the year. The Manager and staff will ensure the policy and procedures are followed and implemented. The Manager will complete a daily check of the log to ensure its implementation. The written record of a complaint is available on the premises for inspection by the Early years inspectorate.

Managing Behaviour policy

The service has reviewed and updated the policies and procedures on Managing Behaviour This includes the staff team being familiar with requirements and having a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on managing behaviour.

The service will ensure that staff are supported on how to support children's behaviour and emotional needs and the staff would like to avail of training on child development and behaviour management, as soon as training becomes available.

The staff are also supported to help children's social and emotional wellbeing by ensuring they take the time to help the children express their emotions by naming them and using flash cards to emphasis their emotions and support good behaviour.

Service to revise the policies and procedures on an annual basis or as needs, ensuring that the guidelines as per Tusla Regulations are implemented. Staff handbook to include the service policy and procedure on managing behaviour. Staff will be trained and supported in implementing policy and procedure. This will be signed off by all staff in the service.

Accident and incident policy

The accident and incident policy and procedures have been updated. This includes an accident and incident form to ensure all accidents/incidents are recorded and signed off by the staff team.

The policy and procedure include the following updates:

- How incidents are documented and stored in the service.
- How information is shared with parents.
- Updated risk assessment form of area/object on procedure taken after an incident/ accident occurring in the service.
- In service training for staff on implementing updated policy and procedure has been carried out.

The Manager and voluntary management committee will ensure the updated accident and incident policy is implemented and followed by the staff team. The accident and incident policy and procedure is included in the staff handbook and policy and procedures of the service. Staff are to sign off on understanding and implementation of the accident and incident policy and procedure.

The manager of the service will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out and action will be taken to address any findings recorded.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted the revised comments and complaints policy, behaviour management policy and accident and incident policy.

Summary Comment

The early years inspectorate have reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to address the non-compliances under Regulation 10 b, e, and j.

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) 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. On the morning of the inspection, there were 18 pre-school children present. All children were aged between 2 years and 8 months to 5 years. There were two staff directly caring for these children and from 12:30 to 13:00hrs there were 11 preschool children present with two staff directly caring for these children.

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

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(k) Nine documented incidents were recorded over a twelve-month period in the service. All records included evidence of the incident and evidence of the parent or guardian being informed by way of parental signature.

Non-Compliance Information

(k) Contrary to the service policy on accidents and incidents where it states that all accidents and incidents are recorded 'even minor ones'. The person in charge confirmed that two incidents occurred in the service were not documented.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted a written response to state The accident/incident report for the two incidents have been written up and signed off by the parent. A risk assessment has been reviewed referring to these two incidents. The manager of the service will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out and action will be taken to address any findings recorded.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted the accident and incident report for the two incidents.

Summary Comment

The early years inspectorate have reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to address the non-compliance under Regulation 16(k).

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

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

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

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

- Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snacks without being rushed. The atmosphere during snack time 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 toileting.
- The 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. On the day of inspection, all children were toilet trained.
- There was a designated nappy changing area in the staff sanitary accommodation.

- 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.
- The children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment both indoors and outdoors.
- The service supported the children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with staff.

For example, by:

- 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;
- Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snacks without being rushed. The atmosphere during snack time 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.
- 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.
- Visual aids (picture and word reminders) and instructions were displayed and used with the children to support their learning.
- The indoor and outdoor environments were comfortable, inviting, and laid out to meet the needs of the children. The children had access to a wide variety of materials at eye level. Materials and equipment were arranged so that they were readily accessible to promote independent access by children.
- The playroom was designed to meet the needs, ages, and stages of children development. Quiet rest areas were provided with soft seating in the form of three couches. Materials and equipment were grouped together into themes including a kitchen house area, musical instruments, board games, puzzles, stairs, rods, dressing frames, towers, sorting bears, geometric shapes, spindle boxes, threading, sandpaper number and letters. There were transport vehicles, art and craft materials, playdough, colouring materials, chalk, water, toy animals, dolls and dress up clothing.

- On the day of inspection, children engaged in playing house / kitchen / shop, matching cards, connecting, at construction, stacking, building, and at puzzle making. There was also circle and story time. The staff and children counted 1 to 10 in Irish and English.
- The children from the adjoining primary school visited the preschool service to mark world book day and the children were given the opportunity to describe their outfit.
- Staff encouraged children to interact and to engage with a range of materials, activities, equipment in the outdoor environment, based on the child's needs, choices, interests and age and stage of development. The outdoor environment provided children with activities and opportunities for fresh air, discovery, relaxing (e.g. planting opportunities, digging, sand play), releasing energy (e.g., playing chase, enjoying the swings), physical exercise and play (e.g., jumping, running), exploring, engaging, and experimenting with nature (e.g., plants, bugs, insects, and leaves),
- In the outdoor area, the children were observed on the swings, chasing, climbing the bridge, using the slide. The children enjoyed running, chasing, climbing tyres, building, riding on bicycles / tractors and at sand play.

(1)(b)

- Staff adjusted the level of support provided to children depending on the child's abilities, allowing for children's partial participation and participation with support.
- The children were supported to be confident about their identity and to have a strong sense of belonging each day while in the service.
- The staff listened to children in a caring, gentle way when they expressed emotions, and reassured them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions at times. The staff acknowledged and accepted children's feelings (positive and negative) and the relationships between children's actions and other's responses. The staff supported children to enter social groups, and to learn to help and positively engage with other children. The staff encouraged and praised children for specific, positive, and appropriate behaviours. The children were given choice on what to do next.
- The programme of care was flexible and guided by the children's choices. Children were supported by the staff during periods of individual and group-based activities, the staff sensitively supervised and intervened when necessary.
- The staff supported children in developing their interactions and friendships with other children by providing individual and small group activities and play leading to co-operation, collaboration, and a sense of belonging.

- 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
- The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences.
- 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 open ended 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 voice of the child, their choices, interests, and preferences were considered. The care was child led.
- The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried. Throughout the inspection, the child and their age and stage of development were considered. The children were given positive alternatives, rather than just being told ‘no’. Children were supported to recognise, express and cope positively with their emotions. Children spoke to staff naming feelings happy, sad, upset, or feeling hurt. The 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:

- The entry to the premises and the staff only areas – the hall, storage areas, kitchen and adult sanitary area were secure and thereby inaccessible to a pre-school child.
- The external outdoor play area was secure so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area.
- Fire doors were unobstructed.
- There were visibility strips on the clear glass door from the playroom onto the national school outdoor play area, as a precautionary measure.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were secured and or inaccessible to prevent any trips or strangulation hazard.
- The playroom temperatures were thermostatically controlled, and maintained between 18°C to 22°C.

- Thermostatically controlled warm water not exceeding 43°C to facilitate hand washing was available to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
- Heavy equipment and furnishings were anchored appropriately.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- There were no pits or ponds in the outdoor areas to cause any risk of injury to the pre-school child.
- The staff clearly identified to the early year's inspectors, the drop off and collection procedures for children.

Infection Control:

- The children were observed washing their hands after toileting, after messy play, after outdoor play and prior to their snacks.
- The playroom was kept adequately ventilated with the doors left open whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels.
- Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with disposal paper towels and disinfectant spray.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playroom.
- The service had cleaning templates and schedules.

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.

Fire Safety:

- All exit routes from the service were free from obstruction during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The pedal was broken on the foot operated pedal bin in the preschool room and could pose a risk of injury to a child.
2. The inspectors observed a disinfectant spray left by a staff member on the table and low-level shelf which could pose risk of injury to a child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider submitted a written response to state

1. The bin has been replaced in the preschool room. The service has updated cleaning sheets to include toys/equipment check. This will be signed off on a daily basis by the staff team/ member responsible. Equipment that needs replacing will be removed and replaced by the manager. We are aware of the hazards/injuries that can be caused by broken toys and equipment, so all staff will be reminded that if they come across any broken toys or equipment on a daily basis, they must be disposed of straight away and replaced or repaired promptly. Also risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis to ensure all outdoor equipment is checked to safeguard children's safety.
2. The spray was removed straight away and is now stored in a press away from where children have access to it. The Service will review Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare Policy, which specify the procedure for managing hazardous sprays for example - always keep them out of the reach of children etc. Staff have been informed of the Health and Safety Policy to prevent it from happening again.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence was submitted of the replaced bin in the preschool room.
2. Photographic evidence was submitted of the disinfectant spray stored out of child reach.

Summary Comment

The early years inspectorate have reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to address the non-compliances under Regulation 23.

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.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with.

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) (b) The person in charge demonstrated that they had a complaints policy in place which outlined the procedure for making a complaint and the manner in which the complaint would be dealt with.
- (c) The complaints policy does outline that the manner in which the complainant will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint.
- (2) (a) (b) The person in charge confirmed that no complaints have been received by the service in the previous two years.
- (4) The person in charge is aware of the statutory requirement to retain records of complaints for two years as set out in regulation.