

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY087
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Name of Service:	Bluebells At Ayle
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Address of Service:	Ayle NS, Ayle, Monard, Co Tipperary
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Eircode:	E34 YF98
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Name of Registered Provider:	Amanda Alam
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	22/01/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary, E91RF38
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Inspection undertaken by:	A McNamara
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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	N/A
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Description of service

This private early years service was established in 2010 and provides part time and sessional care to children aged 3 to 6 years old. It is located on the grounds of Ayle National School in county Tipperary. The service operates as an outdoor early years service. A school aged childcare service is also provided on site.

Staffing

On the day of the inspection there were four staff working in the service. The registered provider is the designated person in charge and works directly with the children. All staff employed held qualifications at a level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework in Early Childhood Care 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 the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and recruitment,

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels,

Regulation 15 (1) (a-i) Records in relation to a pre-school child,

Regulation 20 Facilities for rest and play

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of the child,

Regulation 25 First aid,

Regulation 28 Insurance.

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 inspector wishes 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 registered provider is the person in charge and oversees the operation of the childcare facility. One deputy was identified.
- (b) The person in charge was present when the unannounced inspection commenced and facilitated the inspection process.
- (2) Recruitment records in respect of the four adults whose files had not been assessed previously were reviewed and the following information was obtained:
- (a)(b) All required written and validated references were present for each staff member.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the four staff.
- (d) Police vetting was available for all staff members working at the service, who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The adults employed to work directly with children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education and copies of the corresponding certificates were available.

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) There were adequate staffing levels to respond to the children’s needs on the day of inspection.

(2) The person in charge ensured that the adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the day of inspection. The service exceeded the minimum child to adult ratio required under the regulation.

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.*

Compliance Information

A sample of completed registration forms were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

(1) The registration forms contained the required information as detailed under parts (a) to (i) of this regulation.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The indoor space was divided into three areas, the main classroom, a rest area and a craft room. There was low-level shelving with jigsaws, a range of toys, and materials. The furniture was suitable to the age and stage of development of the children attending the service. There were child sized tables and chairs for tabletop activities such as puzzles and eating at snack time. The craft room had a range of art and craft material. Additional craft resources were available on open shelving at the children’s level to access freely.
- The outdoor space was surrounded by a wooden fence. There was grass, bark mulch and all-weather surfaces and there were partially covered areas. Distinct areas of interest provided children with opportunities to engage in a range of play activities. There was a well-developed and resourced mud kitchen, a covered sandpit, swings, ride on toys and a range of open-ended resources were available for use by the children. A wide variety of outdoor seating was located throughout the outdoor environment, these included picnic tables, large tree stumps, timber benches and plastic chairs. Children had access to play as they wished in both indoor and outdoor areas.
- (b) A floor bed was available to children if they want to rest. Children also had the opportunity to rest on the couch if they pleased. A covered veranda outside of the cabin allowed for transition from the outside environment to the inside environment. This area had labelled storage for the children’s coat and wellies.

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 outdoor play areas were secured to prevent children leaving unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area. A staff member was present in the outdoor area at all times.

Infection control:

Children were observed washing their hands had warm running water, soap and paper hand towels for hand drying. Tissues were available both indoors and outdoors for the children to use as required. There were designated children's toilets available, which contained an adequate number of toilets and sinks for the children attending the service.

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) There were staff trained in first aid responder (FAR) available to the children attending the service.

(2)

(a)(b) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An in-date insurance certificate was available for inspection to demonstrate that valid insurance was in place.