

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX077
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Name of Service:	Bright Smiles Preschool
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Address of Service:	C/o Ballygarrett Community Hall, Ballygarret, Gorey, Co. Wexford
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Eircode:	Y25 W089
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Name of Registered Provider:	Charlene McKay
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	02/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Ryan
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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

Bright Smiles Preschool is a privately operated preschool offering a play-based programme of care to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service operates from a part time service and can accommodate up to 35 children. The service is in the parish hall in the rural village of Ballygarret, county Wexford. It consists of an entrance hall, a large hall, divided into two playrooms, a kitchen, a dining room, children's toilets and storage space. Outside is a secured garden and play area designated solely for the pre-school children.

Staffing

There are six staff working in the service. The registered provider is the designated person in charge and works directly with the children attending the service. Five of the staff working directly with the children held the minimum level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education. A sixth staff member works in the kitchen.

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.

Regulation 9(1)(2)(4) – Management and Recruitment,
Regulation 11(1)(2) – Staffing Levels,

Regulation 19 - Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of the Child,
Regulation 25 – First Aid,
Regulation 26 – Fire Safety and
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, 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge of the service on the inspector's arrival. There was a second named staff member available to deputise as needed.

(2) The files for all staff were reviewed on the day.

(a)(b)

There were validated references for each of the employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were not required as none of the staff had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

There were certificates of qualification for five staff members working directly with the preschool children available on file.

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)(2)

During the inspection, there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children.

During the morning there were 4 staff caring for 31 children.

During the afternoon there were 2 staff caring for 6 children.

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

The following observations and discussions with staff reflected the children's experience within the service on the day of inspection:

1(a)

The children were playing in smaller groups on the inspector's arrival and were engaged in a variety of play and activities. Some of the children were outside, some engaged in free play, and some were beginning to have their morning snack. The children had begun to make snow globes as part of their Christmas art and craft activities which they enjoyed telling the inspector how they made them.

The children who returned indoors for their mid-morning snacks were helped by staff to wash their hands before eating.

Most children had their snacks in their new dining room, and a small number of children enjoyed their snacks in the playroom. The new dining room was located off the kitchen, and the children had named it “The Lunchroom”. Parents supplied the snacks for the children’s mid-morning snack, and these were stored in the fridge. The service provided a second snack to the children who attended for part time care and a menu of the food provided were displayed in the entrance hall for the parents to see.

The snack time was relaxed and unrushed. The staff helped the children with opening their lunches and they talked about the plans for after snack.

Staff set up activities for the children to play with throughout the morning. These included gluing, painting, cutting, bowling and the children choose what they wanted to engage with. The staff interactions with the children across the rooms were respectful, kind and positive with the staff observed checking in with the children at points during the day. Simple rules were discussed in circle time with the children to reinforce positive behaviours such as taking turns and asking children if they would like to join in group activities.

Parents spoke to staff during drop off and collection times, providing an opportunity for staff to share information with parents. An information board was displayed in the entrance hall with relevant information for parents.

The service consisted of a large hall which was sub divided into two playrooms, all with easy access to the outdoor play area and toilets.

The rooms were equipped with a wide variety of play materials, which were suitable for the age and stage of development of the children. Open shelving had boxes of materials such as blocks, magnetics, puzzles and jigsaws which allowed children to access materials independently during free play. On the day of inspection some of interest areas were being changed for Christmas with the children excited to put up their decorations.

The staff were currently engaged with the Better Start Quality Development Service for the early years and were working on their curriculum and physical environments.

Children’s identity and belonging was fostered through the display of their works of art and their recent learning, birthday walls, local community map, family photographs and individual hooks for their coats and bags.

Nappy changing took place as needed throughout the day and children who were toilet trained were encouraged to use the toilet independently.

The outdoor area consisted of an enclosed area directly accessible from the hall. The area had a covered space with concreted area for ride on toys, a playhouse, and a messy area with sand pits and digging areas.

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 was a person trained in a first aid responder course immediately available to the children attending the preschool service. There was evidence on file that an additional staff member working directly with children was trained in paediatric first aid.

(2)(a)(b)

There were suitably equipped first aid boxes stored in an easily accessible position on the premises which were available to the children attending the preschool 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)

Fire drills were completed monthly. The last fire drill completed was recorded on the 02 November 2025.

(b)

A record was maintained when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system were serviced in September and October 2025.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a valid certificate of insurance for a part time service for 36 children.