

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX090
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Name of Service:	Bright Beginnings
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Address of Service:	Elderwood, Castlebridge, Co. Wexford
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Eircode:	Y35 EC90
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Name of Registered Provider:	Aidan Farrell
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Service type:	Full Day
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Dates of Inspection Day 1:	07/12/2023
Day 2:	11/12/2023

No of pre-school children:	AM	64	PM	46
	AM	53	PM	NA

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspector 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 Beginnings is a privately operated service offering full day care, part-time, sessional and afterschool care to children aged 6 months to 12 years of age. The service operates from 7.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday. The service offers a play-based pedagogy. The service operates from a house in a residential estate designed for the sole purpose of providing an preschool service. The building consists of five playrooms, two sleep rooms, sanitary accommodation, a kitchen, staff room and an office. An outdoor garden play area was available to the rear of the property which the children have direct access to. The Blue Butterflies room cares for babies, the Red Robins room cares for wobblers, the Yellow Tigers room cares for toddlers and the Leona Oraiste room and Purple Panthers room cares for preschool aged children.

Staffing

There were 20 staff working with the children on the day of inspection. The childcare manager is the designated person in charge and supernumerary to the staff. All the staff working directly with children in the service held the minimum of level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education. The service employs two chefs and one cleaner.

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:

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

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels

Regulation 19 (a) Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child

Regulation 22 Food and drink

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child

Regulation 25 First aid

Regulation 26 Fire Safety

Regulation 28 Insurance

Regulation 29 Premises.

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)

On the day of the inspection there was a designated person in charge of the service. The registered provider arrived at the service at 11am and remained on premises for the remainder of the inspection.

(b)

There was a designated person in charge for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

The staff files for 20 staff working in the service were reviewed on the day.

(a)(b)

Validated references for all employees were kept in each staff member's file.

- (c)
Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service.
- (d)
Police vetting disclosures were on file for staff who had lived outside the state for more than six consecutive months.
- (4)
Certificates of qualifications for all staff members working directly with the preschool children were 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)
Throughout the period of the inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children attending the service.
- (2)
Day 1
In the morning:
- **Blue Butterflies room:** There were 5 babies in the care of 2 staff. (1 aged between 0 and 1 years and 4 aged between 1 and 2 years).
 - **Red Robbins room:** There were 9 children in the care of 2 staff. (7 aged between 1 and 2 years and 2 aged between 2 and 4 years).
 - **Leona Oraiste room:** There were 21 children in the care of 4 staff. (All aged between 3 and 5 years).

- **Purple Panthers room:** There were 19 children in the care of 4 staff. (All aged between 3 and 5 years).
- **Yellow Tigers room:** There were 10 children in the care of 2 staff. (8 aged between 2 and 3 years and 2 aged between 3 and 4 years).

In the afternoon:

- **Blue Butterflies room:** There were 5 babies in the care of 2 staff. (1 aged between 0 and 1 years and 4 aged between 1 and 2 years).
- **Red Robbins room:** There were 9 children in the care of 2 staff. (7 aged between 1 and 2 years and 2 aged between 2 and 4 years).
- **Leona Oraiste room:** There were 21 children in the care of 4 staff. (All aged between 3 and 5 years).
- **Purple Panthers room:** There were 19 children in the care of 4 staff. (All aged between 3 and 5 years).
- **Yellow Tigers room:** There were 10 children in the care of 2 staff. (8 aged between 2 and 3 years and 2 aged between 3 and 4 years).

Day 2

In the morning:

- **Blue Butterflies room:** There were 5 babies in the care of 2 staff. (1 aged between 0 and 1 years and 4 aged between 1 and 2 years).
- **Red Robbins room:** There were 9 children in the care of 2 staff. (7 aged between 1 and 2 years and 2 aged between 2 and 4 years).
- **Leona Oraiste room:** There were 21 children in the care of 4 staff. (All aged between 3 and 5 years).
- **Purple Panthers room:** There were 19 children in the care of 4 staff. (All aged between 3 and 5 years).
- **Yellow Tigers room:** There were 10 children in the care of 2 staff. (8 aged between 2 and 3 years and 2 aged between 3 and 4 years).

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

(1)(a)

The following observations and discussions with staff reflected the children's experience within the service focusing on the areas of basic needs and supporting relationships on the day of inspection.

The routine of the children in the Blue Butterflies room was led by the needs of the child. Children's sleep routine was based around their home pattern and nappies were attended to regularly throughout the day. Children were cuddled and held after their sleeps. Children had freedom of movement within the room, with younger children observed gravitating towards the room's cosy corner. Staff engaged children in sensory/tactile play using an activity tray on the floor using tinsel, baubles and cones. Attention to personal care was observed, with staff cleaning children's hands and faces after eating.

The Red Robbins room was well laid out and resourced. Interest areas were well developed with open ended and natural materials freely available to the children. The staff were down on the floor, playing and chatting with the children during the day. The children enjoyed making snow for their sensory play, and staff brought in wrapping paper which the children spent time wrapping and unwrapping toys from the playroom. Nappy changing was managed with respect and sensitivity, with the staff talking and telling the children it was nappy changing time and asking the individual children if they were ready. "Are you ready for your nappy to be changed?".

Staff sat with the children in the Yellow Tigers room playing hairdressers during the morning. The staff made playdough which the children enjoyed playing with. The atmosphere in the room was relaxing, with dimmed lighting, fairy lights and classical music playing. The children had made a Christmas tree during art and crafts activity which was displayed proudly on the wall. The staff brought the children outside in smaller groups which allowed for staff to engage in some small group work with the children in the room.

Leona Oraiste room was a lively room, with children busy and engaged in various activities during the day. The staff set up tables as invitations to play around the room, each with different activities which the children could then freely move between. The staff sat with the children chatting and engaged in play and learning at the various tables. For example, tables were set up for children to do a Christmas craft activity, a table was set up with waterplay, playdough, colouring station, puzzles and jigsaws. The children were seen to move between the tables including the cosy rest area, where they looked through books and talked with their friends. The children had made a post box for their Santa letters.

In the Purple Panthers room children enjoyed reading a book in circle time during the morning. The staff had set up a Christmas activity which included making reindeer food with kitchen ingredients and putting it in bags to take home. The children were freely able to engage in the activity when they wished to during the day. The children told the inspector how they made the reindeer food. Children were provided with plenty of opportunities to enjoy sensory, messy and imaginative play. For example, staff made snow using cotton, which some children enjoyed gluing the snow to cards and others putting it on the floor to roll in pretending they were snow angels. The room was bright and spacious with well-developed and resourced areas. The staff had created a sensory corner which consisted of a cordoned off area, with blankets, fairy lights, family photos and books.

Throughout the service, rooms had the children's artwork, birthday walls and family photos displayed. The transitions between activities were calm and smooth, showing that the children were familiar with their daily routines and well settled in the service. Minor episodes were managed calmly, and children were cuddled and comforted when needed. The staff told the inspector that the service engaged in a secret reader programme with parents. Parents from all rooms were invited to join the programme, and the children enjoyed the surprise of whose parent came to read to them. Children had access to outdoor play areas, and wellies and wet gear were available.

Non-Compliance Information

Basic needs of the children:

Feeding practices in the baby room were not in line with good practice and the following was observed:

1. A child was left unattended during morning snack which posed a risk of aspiration.
2. A young child upturned their food while in the feeding chair and the food taken away by a staff member.

The staff was not observed to pick up cues from the child who required help and did not offer any help with feeding to the child.

3. Staff were not observed to sit at the child's height during feeding which was a missed opportunity for developing social and feeding skills.
4. There was insufficient seating available for feeding all children. A child was left waiting for food at dinner time and wandered around the room and missed out on eating with his peers.

Outdoor play provision:

5. Babies in the Blue Butterflies room were not provided with opportunities for outdoor play. Staff stated they did not bring babies and young children outside. The age range catered for in the baby room was 6 months to 18 months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action:

1, 2, 3 and 5:

The team engage in regular support and supervision and have never observed this practice before. On speaking with the staff at the time, there was extreme nerves on the day of inspection, and it wouldn't reflect daily typical practice. Taking this on board we have implemented the following measures:

- Provided in house training with a more experienced member of staff.
- All staff have been re-issued with the following Policy and Procedures: Outdoor Policy and Healthy Eating and Eating Policy.
- These are also now displayed within all the classrooms.

4.

Small table and chair have been purchased and added to Blue Butterflies Room.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Healthy eating policy, outdoor play policy. Receipts and photographs for the table and chairs.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted a response that was satisfactory to meet the requirements of the regulation.

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

The service promoted healthy eating and all the foods and snacks were supplied and cooked on the premises by the service's chefs.

On the first day, for the morning snack, children ate freshly chopped fruit. The dinner was served at mid-day and consisted of baked ham, carrots and mashed potatoes. Mid-afternoon children received ham sandwiches and teatime was freshly baked banana muffins. On the second day, the morning snack was crackers and cheese. The dinner was freshly cooked chilli con carne and rice. Afternoon snack was potato croquettes and teatime were freshly baked scones.

Children who arrived early to the service were provided with breakfast which included a variety of cereals and toast. The meals were served in the rooms with the staff helping children to wash their hands and set the tables. Water was freely available to drink. There was plenty of food available, with staff observed offering and providing extra portions to children at meals times if the child wanted some extra.

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 entrance to the premises was secured with an electronic keypad system. Visitors to the service were required to sign the visitors book on arrival and exit to the premises. The staff room and kitchen were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

There was warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels readily available for hygienic handwashing. The service was clean and well maintained. The bed linen was sent to a laundry for cleaning at the end of each week.

Safe Sleep:

The service had two designated sleep rooms, one located within the Blue Butterflies and the second room located in the Red Robbins room. Both sleep rooms were equipped to meet the needs and ages of babies and young children. Both sleep rooms had cots, dimmed lights and calming music playing. Individual bed linen was available, which was changed between children as needed. In the Yellow Tigers room, young children were settled to sleep on sleep beds in the room after dinner. Children who did not wish to sleep were provided with alternative activities such as reading in the library area upstairs, tabletop activity or outdoor play.

Staff who spoke with the inspector, were aware of safe sleep practices for example, how often a sleeping child is physically checked, recording of the observations such as colour, position and breathing rate and the optimum sleep room temperature. The staff stated they remain in the rooms with the children till they settled to sleep and carried out physical sleep checks every 10 minutes as per the service policy on safe sleep.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

1. Formula bottles did not come into the service pre-prepared in line with safe food guidelines which poses a risk of contamination.
2. Nappy changing mats in the Red Robbin and Yellow Tigers rooms were torn, which poses an infection control risk as the mats cannot be adequately cleaned.
3. Sweeping brushes were left stored in the baby room and accessible to crawling children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response to address the non-compliant findings:

Corrective and Preventive Action:

1. All parents within the Baby room have been sent the Bottle Formula Policy. This policy is also now displayed within the room. The bottles will be checked upon arrival by staff to ensure they are made up.
2. All mats have been replaced. The Red Robin's mat was replaced on the day of inspection once it was noted there was a tear by a spare that we have. Yellow Tigers was replaced on 8 December. Extra changing mats were purchased and are on-site now as spare in the event a tear in a mat.
3. Sweeping brush has been removed from the room and hanging on secure hook just outside the door out of reach of children

Supporting documentation submitted:

Bottle making policy, photograph of sweeping brushes and receipt for changing mats.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted a response that was satisfactory to meet the requirements of the regulation.

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 for children available to the children attending the preschool 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 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 firefighting 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)

Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill was carried out on the 4 October 2023.

(1)(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were serviced. The last maintenance carried out in the service was recorded as having taken place in September 2023.

(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

An insurance certificate was available to demonstrate that insurance was in place.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

The service was clean, warm and well maintained. A cleaner was employed by the service who came in the evening. There was sufficient toilets and nappy changing units to accommodate the number of children and staff in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General maintenance and upkeep were required:

- (d)
Flooring in the Purple Panthers toilet was unfinished, with no cleanable/wipeable flooring. The edges in the sink units in the Purple Panthers room were unfinished, which poses as infection control risk as it cannot be cleaned.
- (e)
One of the toilets in the Leonie Oraiste room was broken and out of order.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response to address the non-compliances:

Corrective and Preventive Action:

- (d)
Bathroom is being measured and replacement of flooring will then be installed.
Sinks are being replaced and edges will be completed, and all the area will be furnished and boxed in.
- (e)
The toilet has been fixed and cistern lid replaced.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Photograph from toilet in Leonie Oraiste. Email from flooring company and sink company.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted a response that was satisfactory to meet the requirements of the regulation.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School