

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016DY018
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Name of Service:	Best Start Preschool & Afterschool DonnyCarney
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Address of Service:	Our Lady of Consolation School, Collins Avenue East, Our Lady of Consolation School, Dublin 5.
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Eircode:	D05 RW80
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lina Ivanovaite
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	28/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 7th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	L.A Webster
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).

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Description of service

Best start Preschool and Afterschool is a privately operated service located in a prefabricated building to the rear of Our lady of consolation school in Dublin 5. The service operates a sessional service from 9am-12:30pm Monday to Friday 38 weeks per year during the school term in line with the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. A registered school aged service operates in the afternoon and during school holidays. The service consists of two care rooms with additional sanitary facilities, a kitchen and an office. There is a secure outdoor area towards the front and side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider works within a supernumerary capacity and employs eight staff members to work within the service. On the day of inspection, there were seven staff members present including the person in charge, a support manager and five early years practitioners working directly with the children.

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.

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

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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 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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.*

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(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 had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) A review of the roster evidenced that either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and this was further evidenced through discussion with staff.
- (2) A review of paperwork and discussion with the person in charged showed that there are currently seven staff employed by the registered provider to work within the service. The files of the registered provider and six new staff who had commenced employment following the previous inspection on the 03 October 2023 were reviewed. Garda vetting disclosures were reviewed for two existing staff that are currently employed within the service.
- (a) There were eleven written and validated references available from past employers.
 - (b) There were three written and validated references from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the registered provider and eight staff members. However, the service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for five adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that all seven adults who worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification that is deemed of equivalence by the minister

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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.*
- (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) On the day of inspection, there were 33 children being cared for by six adults in morning. Additionally, the person in charge was available to provide support in the care rooms as needed.
- (3) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children within both care rooms.

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:

- Daily routines and activities were displayed to give a sense of structure and comfort for children during the day.
- Transitions were observed as smooth and considerate during handwashing times. Children were gently prepared prior to moving from outdoors towards the sanitary area.
- Adequately sized tables and chairs were available to the age and developmental stage of children who wished to sit or engage in tabletop activities.

Supporting Relationships:

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- Staff were observed to be kind, caring and respectful with their interactions towards the children, which maintained the happy and relaxed atmosphere of the room.
- Staff consistently communicated with the children through low and calm tones, offering direction to the children when needed. Additionally, staff ensured that comfort was provided to children when needed through gentle touch, a hug or sitting with the children

Physical and Material Environment:

- Both care rooms were spacious and decorated with various forms of arts and crafts.
- There was a clearly designed family wall and birthday wall with pictures of the children's families displayed.
- Play areas were clearly designated including a cosy corner to relax, kitchen area, construction area and art and craft area.
- Toys were documented as developmentally age appropriate for the children and in good condition.
- Children were observed to play independently with the materials and sought support from staff when needed.
- Outdoor equipment was observed to be in good condition and provided fun learning experiences for the children.

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 service was appropriately secured upon the inspector's arrival. The service entrance remained securely locked to prevent children from leaving the service unsupervised and restrict any unauthorised access to the service. Additionally, the outdoor area was securely fenced and gated.
- The care rooms were in good condition, with no visible hazards or trailing wires observed.
- Blind cords were securely attached to the wall and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely and locked away out of reach of children.
- Shelving units were firmly anchored to the wall to ensure stability and safety.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to children and the door remained closed throughout the inspection.

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Infection Control:

- Upon arrival, it was observed that the service was clean and hygienic and up to date cleaning schedules were available and observed within the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and wall mounted paper towels were available for appropriate hand-washing practices. Both staff and children were observed to show familiarity with routine handwashing after nappy changing, dinner time and after free play
- Foot operated pedal bins were in use for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities. These were observed to be in good working order.
- An ambient temperature of 16-22°C was maintained in the care rooms, and the windows were open to allow fresh circulation of air.

Fire Safety:

- All fire emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This helped ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for one adult; however, this disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was applied for immediately for the adult. We have put in place both a hard copy and an online tracking system to monitor Garda vetting and all key staff documents. Management will regularly check that all Garda vetting is up to date and keep records updated to ensure renewals are completed on time.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Documentary evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

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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) The person in charge was trained in First Aid Response (FAR), expiry date of September 2026 and was immediately available to the children attending the service. Additionally, the registered provider ensured that the deputy person in charge held up to date FAR certification, were rostered onsite during the operational hours of the service and were immediately available to the children as needed.

(2) (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, and unobstructed if needed to access quickly.

(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available at all times to the adults caring for children attending the 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) The records available demonstrated that fire drills are held monthly within the service and the service conducted a fire drill on the 08 April 2026.

(b) A record was available detailing the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm systems in the premises.

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- Records demonstrate that the firefighting equipment had been serviced annually, with the last service taking place on the 06 June 2025.
- Records demonstrate that the smoke alarms have been serviced on a quarterly bases with the last service taking place on the 04 December 2025.

(4) A visual notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was consistently displayed around the service.