

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016SO003			
Name of Service:	Réalta Beaga Pre-School			
Address of Service:	Rockfield, Coolaney, Co. Sligo			
Eircode:	F56 WN29			
Name of Registered Provider:	Aolish Gormley			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	19/03/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	n/a

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	L. Costello
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

Description of service

Réalta Beaga is a private sessional early years' service. The service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years, operating from 9:30am to 12:30pm five days per week, 38 weeks per year. The service operates from a designated room in a residential dwelling, in the village of Rockfield Co. Sligo. One playroom, sanitary accommodation and an outdoor area to the rear of the building is available for the children's use.

Staffing

The registered provider operates the service single-handedly working directly with the children. There is a named emergency person available as required.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 23, 25, 26, 27 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 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) (b)

There was a person in charge and an emergency contact person available if required.

(2) (a) (b)

The records of the two adults working in the service were reviewed. Three validated references from a past employer and one validated reference from another source were available for the two adults employed.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the two adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)

International police vetting was available for the one adult who had resided outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.

(4)

One adult had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1)

There was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children on the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service.

(3)

The minimum ratio of adults to children were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service. One adult worked directly with nine children in a sessional service.

(8) (c)

The service is operated single handedly. A second person, familiar with the operation of the service is available to support if required and is in a close distance to the service.

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.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1) (a-i)

Ten records of the children attending the service were reviewed. The required information including the authorisation to collect the child, the details of illness or special needs of the child, emergency contact and record of immunisations were fully completed for each child.

(3) (a)

The records in writing were available for inspection by the early year’s inspector.

(4)

The registered provider is aware of the statutory requirement to retain these records for a period of one year.

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 main door was secure on the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service.
- The perimeter of the service was secure with wooden fencing and locked gates.
- Waste bins were stored in an area inaccessible to the preschool child.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the preschool child.
- Windows were risk assessed with the necessary restrictors in place.
- Toys and equipment appeared maintained and in good working order.
- Flexes and cables were secure and out of reach of the preschool children.

Infection Control:

- Resources and materials were observed to be clean.
- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available for safe hand hygiene.
- Preschool children were observed to wash their hands prior to snack times and after using the toilet or messy play.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for the two staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

In a written response the Registered Provider stated:

1. The process of getting Garda Vetting updated for staff has been started. I will ensure Garda Vetting is checked and updated regularly.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence of application submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the Registered Provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

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 registered provider ensured that an adult trained in first aid for children is available at all times to the preschool children.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) (b)

The first aid box available in the service required updating and restocking as some of the equipment have an expiry date of 2021.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the Registered Provider stated:

A new first aid box has been purchased. The first aid box will be checked and restocked regularly as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic evidence of proof of purchase submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the Registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

- (c) an authorised person.

(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

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the care room.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a)

At the opening meeting the registered provider informed the inspector that fire drills have not been completed. Therefore, no records are available.

(1) (b)

A record of the maintenance of fire equipment and smoke alarms could not be sourced on the day of inspection.

(2) (c)

These records were not available on the day for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) (a) A fire drill log has been created, and fire equipment will also be tested and logged on this form.
- (1) (b) No response submitted.
- (2) (c) Records will be available going forward on the log.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of log submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider in relation to (1) (a) and (2) (c) has been accepted. Regulation 26 (1) (b) remains outstanding.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The service operates out of a small room where children always remain in sight of the adult. On the day the person in charge was observed to supervise the children at all times. In the care room the person in charge participated in play with the preschool children, encouraging them, ensuring inclusion and promoting learning while supervising the children throughout. At mealtimes the person in charge sat alongside the children promoting independence and offering support and assistance with opening yoghurts and peeling fruit if children were having difficulty.

The bathroom is situated just off the main room and children are in ear shot at all times, ensuring that they are responded to if required while maintaining dignity and promoting independence.

The outdoors is a large secure space with a variety of play equipment for the children to explore. The person in charge ensures supervision by sight by moving around the space, completing head counts and ensuring all children are in sight.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider provided an insurance certificate for 11 children in a sessional service up until the 27th of March 2025.