

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019CC008
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Name of Service:	Bright Beginnings
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Address of Service:	Dromleigh National School, Dromleigh, Dromleigh, Kilmichael, Macroom, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P12DY26
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Name of Registered Provider:	Patrice Ring
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	3/12/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM	7
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurranabraher Cork T23X440
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher
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

N/A

Description of service

Bright Beginnings first opened in 2019 and is a registered early years part time day care and sessional service that caters for children from aged two years and six months to six years and attending the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE). The opening hours are from 9.30am to 2pm each day Monday to Friday. The service operates from one classroom located in Dromleigh National School, Co Cork. There are designated children's toilets and one adult toilet within the school building. The children attending have access to a designated outdoor play area beside the classroom within the grounds of the national school.

Staffing

A total of five adults are currently attached to the service, one of whom is employed in the afterschool service. This includes the registered provider, who works 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 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*
- (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.

(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 has ensured that a designated deputy in charge was assigned to the service.
- (b) The registered provider was on duty when the inspector arrived at the service.
- (c) There was clear evidence on inspection of the management structure in places and the specific roles of each staff member.
- (2) Recruitment records of all 5 staff working in the service were assessed for compliance. The following information was noted:
- (a) From a total of 10 written references, 8 had been provided by a past employer and 6 have been validated.
- (b) A further 2 validated references were from a source other than an employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 5 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Documentary evidence indicated that 2 staff members lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months, while over the age of 18 year. Thee required police vetting's was obtained and on file.
- (4) Records demonstrated that 4 of the adults had achieved at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies were reviewed and were found to meet the necessary requirements.

- Policy on administration of medication
- Policy on Infection control
- Policy on outdoor play

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.

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

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

- (1) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at all times.
- (2) Minimum adult to child ratios were maintained in the service, over the duration of the inspection.

Morning:

Room name and age range of the children	Number of children present	Number of Adults present
Pre-school room	15	4

Afternoon:

Room name and age range of the children	Number of Children present	Number of Adults present
Pre-school Room	7	3

(8) (a) The service operated with at least two adults present at all times. This was observed on the day of inspection and was evident through examination of the staff roster.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 10 records of early years children attending the service were reviewed. These were found to contain all the particulars inclusive of (a) to (i) referred to in paragraph 1.

(3)

(c) The records of the early years children in the service were furnished to the inspector and were open to inspection.

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) On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff.

Basic Needs:

- All food was prepared by parents or guardians and stored in the refrigerator. It was observed to be healthy and nutritious. Examples of food were oranges, cut up grapes, ham sandwiches crackers and cheese bagels. The service kept additional food if needed.
- During snack time, the staff sat with the children and assisted as required. The children were afforded sufficient time to enjoy their food and conversation was encouraged by staff.
- Water was stored on an accessible shelf of a storage unit and was readily available throughout the day.

- The layout of the room supported the children to move freely within the environment and to actively engage in their chosen tasks.
- Outdoor games and activities were promoted and observed at the time of inspection with the children, digging, climbing, painting and playing hide and seek games. A roofed outdoor area allowed outdoor play at all times of the year.
- A child was seen to be assisted by staff to blow his nose and encouraged to dispose of the tissue and wash his hands.
- The adults working with the children were seen to be sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviour. This was seen when a child became upset over the number of children in the cardboard house due to the noise level. Staff discussed this with all the children involved and they agreed on using a timer to take turns so a small number of children were in the house at each time. Children were praised for their ability to listen.
- Children was seen to access the sanitary facilities independently with the supervision of staff.

Supporting relationships:

- During snack time, the staff sat at the same level with the children at the tables and engaged in social conversation with the children promoting a relaxed atmosphere.
- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children as they were heard by the inspector using soft and gentle tones in conversations with the children for example discussing the dress a child was going to wear for a wedding.
- Staff supported children to encourage positively with one another promoted an ethos of friendship of working together This was seen by the inspector when children were hand printing a Christmas tree and making gingerbread men.
- The service used a software technology application (an app) to provide information to the parents in relation to updates on the children day at the service, providing photos and written information. Text messaging is also used as a means of communication.
- Each child had a key worker assigned to each child and to link with the parents.
- Many children demonstrated a sense of pride in their success during the day and were observed calling on the staff to share their achievements. Children were seen displaying pictures to staff that they had created with pride and discussing these.

- Staff were heard singing a tidy up song along with children before going outdoors. This encouraged responsibility and independence in the children.
- A large range of books were available, and a staff member read to the children outdoors encouraging them to interact in the storey.

Physical and material environment:

- The room was clean and well maintained. The indoor area was well laid out to facilitate sensory experience through arts and crafts, fine motor skills through jigsaws and gross motor development through climbing outdoors.
- The room had a range of play based equipment to offer stimulation, exploration and imagination. Some toys were positioned at an accessible level which nurtured independence, facilitating choice and encouraging curiosity, spontaneous play and movement.
- Children’s artwork was displayed on the wall.
- The outdoor play area provided an alternative change of environment for the children allowing the children to run, dig, play in sand and paint. Opportunity was available for challenges such as climbing.

Programme of Activities:

- A programme of activities was displayed on the wall showing the weekly plan with the children.
- The children were also facilitated to make their own choice in selecting play equipment and activities that they wish to engage in. Taking turns and sharing was promoted and this was evident by many children working collaboratively together, unprompted.
- Children’s language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection.
- Staff made a book of each child artwork, showing their creativity while attending the service.

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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, the entrance door was secured. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and helped to prevent the risk of children exiting while unsupervised.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition and were free from pinch and crush points.
- The blind cords were secured by tension devices and not accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children, with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towel. Children were observed to wash their hands before food and after using the toilet.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground on wall hooks.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the storage of waste.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed to be administered on the day of inspection.
- The inspector observed that a child was prescribed emergency medicine. The child had signed parental consent for medication administration and an action plan was stored on the wall for the staff caring for the child. Staff informed the inspector that they had felt competent on the administration of these medicines.
- Temperature reducing medicine was stored out of reach of children and was in date.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The inspector noted that the water in the sink in the playroom and toilets which the children had access to range from 43.7°C to 44.3°C. Water accessible to the children needs to be maintained below 43°C to avoid a risk of scalding.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The hot water temperature gage has been reduced and staff will check the thermostat in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. A photograph of the thermostat setting and the boiler.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The insurance certificate indicated that adequate cover was in place for part time day care and the policy was valid until 27th of March 2025.