

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022DS001
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Name of Service:	Réaltaí Beaga
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Address of Service:	81 Rossmore Lawns, Templeogue, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D6W XC93
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Name of Registered Provider:	Dee Maher
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	30/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	10
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland
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

Realtáí Beaga is a sessional service located in a residential area in Templeogue, Dublin 6W. Opening hours are Monday to Friday 08:30 am to 11:30 am and 12:00 pm to 3:00pm for 38 weeks of the year. Care and education through the Irish language is provided for children aged between 2 years and 8 months and 6 years.

The service operates from a single-story extension attached to the registered providers domestic dwelling. The building comprises of one care room, a kitchenette, sanitary accommodation, an office and an outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are currently five adults employed in the service including the registered provider and an office administrator. On the day of inspection there were four adults present working directly with the children for the morning session and three adults working directly with the children in the afternoon.

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

This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 (1) (a-c), (2) (a-d), (3), (4) Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1), (3), –Staffing Levels

Regulation 19 (1)(a) – Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 21 Equipment and materials

Regulation 23– Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25(1), (2) (a-b) First Aid

Regulation 26 (1), (a), (b), (2)(c), (4) –Fire Safety Measures

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*
- (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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 when required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.
- (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that two new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. One of the new staff members work directly with the children. Documentation required under Regulation 9(2), (3), (4) was reviewed in respect of the adult working directly with the children as detailed below. The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) relating to Garda Vetting was reviewed for all adults employed to work in the service.

- (a) Two written and verified references were available from a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for five adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the adult who work directly with children attending the service held a qualification approved by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

- (d) Police vetting was not available in relation to one adult who previously lived outside of the state for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2)(d) had not been carried out prior to the adult commencing employment in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Police vetting has been obtained for the staff member. The registered provider has put measures in place to ensure the necessary steps are followed in the event of a staff member requiring police vetting.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of police vetting submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (2) (d) and (3) has been adequately addressed.

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 an adequate number of adults working directly with the children to meet their care needs. There were 4 adults available to 18 children in the morning and 3 adults available to 10 children in the afternoon.
- (3) The required adult to child ratio was maintained for the duration of the 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

Compliance Information

Children's lunches were provided by the parents and contained a variety of healthy options in line with the services healthy eating policy. Children were encouraged to take an active role in the mealtime routine by handing out lunch boxes to their peers. This practice promoted autonomy and gave the children a sense of responsibility. Drinking water was available and accessible to children throughout the inspection. Children were observed to use

the toilet independently and staff remained close by to provide assistance if required. Staff were observed to encourage children to develop personal care practices, such as washing their hands after using the toilet, before meals and following outdoor play. Smooth transitions were observed; children were assigned jobs each week, one of which was to ring a bell to signal a change in activity was approaching. Staff also provided advanced notice of transitions throughout the day, ensuring children were well prepared. An area with child size armchairs and cushions was available for children should they need to take a break from activities.

Warm and playful interactions were observed between staff and children. Staff engaged children in conversation through English and Irish, joined in their play and responded with encouragement. These interactions supported children’s sense of belonging and enjoyment within the service. Children demonstrated a sense of pride in their success during the inspection and were observed calling staff members to share their achievements. The staff members readily acknowledged and encouraged children’s efforts and accomplishments. For example, one of the children received a kindness card as a reward for showing kindness to another child during the morning. The staff members were observed to work well as a team, collaborating and communicating with each other in relation to the activities and children’s needs.

The indoor area was laid out with a variety of equipment to facilitate children’s learning and development. Fine motor development was supported with puzzles, crayons and pegboards. Gross motor development was supported with climbing equipment and balls in the outdoor area. Dress up materials and a home corner were available encouraging imaginative play. Mark making materials were available offering opportunity for self-expression. Small world materials such as animals, cars and dolls provided children with the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the world around them. Materials were positioned a children’s level which facilitated choice and fostered independence. Ongoing observations were documented and used to inform planning for the curriculum. On the day of inspection, the children were facilitated to make their own choice in selecting play equipment and activities they wished to engage in. Turn taking was promoted, this was evidenced by children working collaboratively unprompted.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The pre-school was well resourced with a wide variety of age-appropriate play and learning equipment and materials that provided a stimulating and curious learning environment for the children.
- Equipment and materials were observed to be clean and well maintained.
- Low level storage supported independence and encouraged children to make choices autonomously.
- Tables and chairs were child size and laid out to allow children to access them comfortably during play and mealtimes.
- The materials were labelled with text and images to support children to independently find and return items of interest with ease.
- The outdoor play area had a range of resources to support exploration, discovery and physical development.

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 service was secured by a high gate to the side and a locked door with a keypad entry system to the front, both of which were closed and ensured the safety of the children and prevented unauthorised access to the service.
- Cleaning materials and medication were stored in a safe and secure way and were inaccessible to children.
- Daily documented risk assessments for the indoor and outdoor area were available for review.
- Staff demonstrated clear understanding of the requirements of children with allergies and care plans were readily available.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water, single use paper towels and foot pedal operated bins were provided in the children's sanitary area.
- Staff encouraged and supported children to follow effective hand washing practices.
- The premises and equipment were visibly clean and documented cleaning schedules were available for review.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated awareness of the procedure to follow when administering medication to a child.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit was unobstructed for the duration of the inspection and fire exit signage was provided above the door.
- A sign for the fire assembly point was located next to the exit of the outdoor area.
- Staff demonstrated knowledge of the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service if required.

Outing:

- The service had an outings policy and the registered provider reported that on occasion the children are taken on walks outside of the service. Evidence that a risk assessment was carried out for the most recent outing was available for review. Additionally, documentation was available to demonstrate parental consent.

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 evidence to show that two adults hold certification in First Aid Responder training, and both were available for the duration of the inspection.

- (2)
- (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible position on a shelf in the care room.
 - (b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the 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.
- (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

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on 12 September 2025. In addition, there was evidence to show that practice fire drills are carried out at different times during the morning and afternoon sessions.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was up to date. Fire extinguishers were serviced 30 April 2025 and smoke alarms were checked on 12 September 2025.
- (2)
- (c) The above records were open to review by the inspector.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed next to the emergency exit.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service is adequately insured for the type of service provided and the number of children in attendance. The service is ensured for 22 children and the insurance is valid until 27 March 2026.