

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022KE001
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Name of Service:	Bright Beginnings Brownstown
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Address of Service:	Brownstown Manor, Brownstown, Curragh, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	R56 HX09
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Name of Registered Provider:	Audrey Lynch
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	06/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	40	PM	30
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Suite 7, Tusla, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co Kildare
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty
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 Brownstown is a privately owned full day care service and one of three services operated by the registered provider. The service is located in Brownstown, Curragh, Co Kildare. Care and education are provided to children aged between two and six years and the operating hours are from Monday to Friday between 7.00am and 6.30pm. The service operates from a purpose-built property which comprises of four care rooms and associated sanitary accommodation, an office, kitchen and a staff room. The children have access to an outdoor area to the rear of the premises with varying surfacing.

Staffing

The service currently employs eleven staff members including a cook and the centre manager. Twelve adults were present on the day of inspection including two staff who arrived following the inspectors arrival from another branch and the area manager who arrived for the closing meeting. The registered provider does not work directly in the service.

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.

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

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11 - Staffing Levels.

Regulation 16 – Information and records.

Regulation 19 – Health, Welfare and Development of the Child.

Regulation 23 – Safety.

Regulation 25 – First Aid.

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety.

However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16, Information and Records.

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 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

(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

(2)

Documentation was assessed under Regulation 9(2)(4) for all fifteen adults employed to work in the service or present on the day of inspection. Regulation 9(3) was assessed for eight adults who had commenced employment in the service following the last date of inspection on the 19th December 2022. The following records were available:

(a)(b)

Of the thirty references that were required, twenty were available from a past employer and ten were available from a reputable source.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all adults.

- (d) International Police vetting was available for three adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were completed prior to all staff members commencing in the service.
- (4) There was evidence that all adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were forty children attending the service being supervised by eleven adults on the day of inspection.
- (8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A written record was available in the care rooms detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
 - (i) Details of a staffing roster was available in the service and accurately reflected the staff in attendance on the day of inspection.
 - (j) Records of the administration of medication was available in the service and a sample reviewed on the day of inspections detailed signed parental consent.
 - (k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed documented necessary details.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place during the inspection. The children moved freely – exploring their environments, playing and engaging with staff and each other. The children were provided with the opportunity to play outside and were appropriately dressed to the weather in coats and hats and wet suits. Older children used the toilet independently with assistance provided from staff where needed, and children wearing nappies were changed regularly and when required. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

Regular meals and snacks were provided to the children throughout the inspection, including a hot lunch. Staff and children sat together during mealtimes and staff assisted children with feeding where needed. Staff were observed promptly changing children who became wet or whose clothes were soiled. Drinks of water were always available within the care rooms and were offered to the children regularly and with meals. Children were assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times.

Children who required sleep were afforded an opportunity to sleep after lunch in Room 205. The sleep room was calm and conducive to sleep. Soothers were offered to children who used them when they were being placed to sleep. Staff provided the children with reassurance and comfort where required when they were settling them to sleep, speaking gently to them. Areas were provided within the care rooms where children could rest or take a break from activities as desired.

Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed children by name and interacted with them in a positive manner using gentle tones and positive language. The staff comforted children promptly if they became upset, offering reassurance and cuddles.

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 premises was appropriately secured, and adults could not enter without permission. The main entrance door to the building remained locked and was only openable from the inside. The outdoor play area was secured by perimeter walls. The main cleaning products and equipment were securely stored in locked cupboards. Cleaning products in regular use during the day were safely maintained out of children's reach. The play equipment and play materials both indoors and outdoors in use on the day of inspection were noted to be in good working order and free from hazards.

Infection Control:

The pre-school rooms and adjoining sanitary facilities were in a clean condition. Up to date cleaning schedules outlining appropriate cleaning methods and the various areas to be cleaned within the playrooms and sanitary accommodation were available. Staff members were observed sweeping the floors and cleaning the tables after meals and messy play. The wash hand basins were equipped with liquid soap and warm water to support effective handwashing. Children were observed to wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the inspection including after toilet/nappy change, before meals and after outdoor play.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspector and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance. Sleep logs were maintained whilst children slept. Individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position every ten minutes. Low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's ages and developmental needs.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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) A person with current first aid responder training was available to the children at all times.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous position.

(b) The first aid box was available for use at all times.

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.

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 had taken place on the 17th February 2025.
 - (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on the 26th July 2024 and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had taken place on the 21st January 2025.

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

Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
- The service was not maintained as required as detailed below:
- The floor covering in Room 220 was missing at the door leading to the outdoor area. An accumulation of dirt and debris was visible. The surface could not be cleaned effectively.
 - The floor covering in Room 220 had evidence of mould growth underneath the surface and could not be cleaned.
 - The floor covering in Room 206 had evidence of mould growth underneath and was unable to be cleaned.
 - A large hole was present in the wall outside Room 220.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d)
- A mat has been placed over this area. Area is cleaned twice daily. Room flooring to be replaced Easter 2025. Ensure that all maintenance issues are recorded on daily risk assessment sheets.
 - Floor is now mopped twice daily. Flooring to be replaced Easter 2025. All flooring issues to be recorded on daily risk assessment sheets.
 - Floor is now mopped twice daily. Flooring to be replaced Easter 2025. All flooring issues to be recorded on daily risk assessment sheets.
 - The area on the wall outside 220 has been filled and repainted. Any maintenance issues to be recorded on daily risk assessment sheets.

Supporting documentation submitted

(d)
Photos submitted of maintenance works completed and mat put in place.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents were reviewed by the inspector and were deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 29.

This will be reviewed on the next inspection.