

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2024CC009				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Bright Start ELC Ltd.				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	North Monastery Primary School, North Monastery Road, Co. Cork				
<b>Eircode:</b>	T23 VY17				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Aleah Cronin				
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/12/2024				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>20</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	20	PM	N/A
AM	20	PM	N/A		
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	13 Market Square, Mallow, Cork. P51 DD5Y				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Friel				
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Bright Start ELC Ltd is a play based sessional service which opened in September 2024. While registered to accommodate children aged from 2 – 6 years the service currently caters for children aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years of age. A morning session is available from 9:00 to 12:00 which incorporates the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. A school age service is in operation from 13:30 until 16:30.

The service operates from two ground floor classrooms within North Monastery Primary School in Cork City. There are two children’s toilets provided within each care room and adult toilets are available in the building. A large, secure, outdoor play area is located to the front of the Pre-School service to which the children have shared access.

### Staffing

There are six staff currently employed in the service who work directly with the children, including the registered provider.

### 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 announced 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 reoccurring. 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, deputy, 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.*

*(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 register provider was the designated person in charge and a named person was available to deputise, as required.
  - (b) The registered provider, deputy, and additional named persons were observed working in the service while the pre-school children were on the premises.
  - (c) The management structure was available on the notice board in the service. In conversation, staff stated were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Recruitment files of all six adults were reviewed;
- (a) (b) There were twelve validated references available; nine from past employers and three from sources other than a past employer.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all six adults which evidenced compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) The curricula vitae of the six adults indicated that no international police vetting was required.
- (4) There was evidence that all six adults working directly with the children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education between Levels 5 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in both classrooms on the morning of inspection.
- (3) The adult/child ratios were met at all times. There were eight children in attendance with three adults in Room 1 and twelve children in attendance with three adults in Room 2.

## 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 eleven children's pre-school records were reviewed, all eleven pre-school records were noted to

include the information listed from (a) to (i) above.

(3)

(c) The children’s pre-school records, furnished to the inspector, were available on the premises.

## 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:

- Children were observed eating mid-morning snack at 10:45 which was noted to consist of filled sandwiches, fruit, vegetables, cheese strings and yogurt. Staff stated parents/guardians are asked not to send sweets or crisps, which was noted in the healthy eating policy. Food that does not align with the service’s healthy eating policy was stated as being returned in the children’s lunch boxes.
- Individual water bottles were available throughout the morning from an accessible shelf on top of the children’s cubby houses.
- On arrival children were observed in the outdoor play dressed appropriately for the damp, chilly weather, with their hats, coats, boots and shoes.
- The rest areas were furnished with soft mats, cushions and blankets. These were located away from noisy activities. Books were available for the children to read while sitting/resting.
- Children’s individual needs were accommodated. Staff members in the outdoor play area were observed listening to and following the children’s requests for toileting and a drink of water.

##### SUPPORTING CHILDREN’S RELATIONSHIPS:

- The inspector observed staff supporting children to communicate their needs; a child who wanted a turn of a piece of physical equipment, which was in use by another child in the outdoor play area, was accompanied by a staff member who demonstrated how the child could ask for a turn.
- Children’s individual needs were accommodated with staff facilitating children in both individual and group activities.

- Various forms of communication were stated as being in use to inform and exchange information with parent's/guardians. Examples included verbally at drop off and collection times, texting and phone calls.
- Reminders were given by staff during the morning to prepare the children for transitions. Examples included a clean-up song which alerted the children to the transition from play based activities to getting ready to go home.
- Children's behaviour was consistently managed in a positive manner by staff, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement.

#### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The outdoor play areas provided alternative play environments for the children who were observed playing on the artificial grass area and in the covered shed.
- Each room was laid out in clearly defined areas with resources and toys which were observed to enhance the learning needs of the children across all developmental areas.

#### PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES:

- Ongoing observations linked to Aistear, the curriculum framework, were furnished to the inspector. These documented the children's interests and development and informed the planning of the curriculum in 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:

- The inspector observed that staff ensured that the large metal gates in the outdoor play area were secured when the children were playing outdoors. These safety measures prevented unauthorised adults from entering the area and children from leaving the area unsupervised.
- All doors were secured to prevent unauthorised adults from entering the classrooms and children leaving unsupervised.
- Window openings were located above adult height therefore not accessible by the children, preventing any accidents.

- Blind cords were secured with hooks, placing them out of reach of the children.
- Handrails were available on the stairs to the outdoor play area facilitating children to navigate their way up and down safely.
- The perimeter of the outdoor play area was secured with concrete walls, high metal fencing and high metal gates.

### Infection Control:

- The sinks in use by the adults and children in the sanitary and classroom areas were supplied with thermostatically controlled hot water, ranging from 32.7°C to 42.5°C, dispensing soap, paper towels and hand dryers. Pedal operated bins were available for the disposal of paper waste.
- Handwashing was observed before and after toileting, the serving of food and coming in from the outdoor play area.
- The windows in the care rooms were open aiding the circulation of fresh air.
- Single use gloves and aprons were available for changing children in pull-ups who were toilet training.
- Staff in both classrooms were observed sweeping the floor after snack time and sanitising the tables before and after the serving of food. These measures ensured that the areas were kept clean and hygienic.
- Perishable foods were stored in the fridges in each classroom, preventing the food from spoiling.
- Coats in each classroom were stored on individual hooks and belongings, including bags, were stored in cubby houses, off the floor area.

### Administration of Medication:

- Temperature reducing medications were stored in original containers which were located on high shelving which was inaccessible by the children.
- Medications were available in the event of an emergency for children for whom they were required.

### Safe Sleep:

- No children were observed resting on the day of inspection.

### Fire Safety:

- Firefighting equipment was secured with brackets on the walls in the school corridor, outside the two classrooms.
- The fire assembly point was visible on a wall of the outside play area, a safe distance from the classrooms.
- The emergency fire doors were unobstructed facilitating the quick and safe evacuation of the children and adults in the event of an emergency.

### 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 furnished evidence that two staff members had completed First Aid Responder (FAR) training, and two additional staff had completed paediatric first aid. The staff roster indicated that a staff member with FAR training was available at all times, while the pre-school children were on the premises.

(2)

(a) (b) Each classroom had a well-equipped first aid box which was easily accessible to the adults at all times from a high shelf above the adult sink in each classroom.

### 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 firefighting 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) Written records of the fire drills that took place in Room 1 were furnished to the inspector. The last date recorded was noted as 13 November 2024 with previous monthly drills recorded as 18 October and

29 September 2024.

(b) Written records were available of the servicing of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms. The firefighting certificate was dated Dec 2024, and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 10 September 2024.

(2)

(c) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were available on the premises for review by the inspector.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed on the notice board in the care room.