

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK107
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Name of Service:	Lios Na Si Broadford Community Childcare
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Address of Service:	Broadford Community Childcare, Broadford, Charleville, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	P56 RX25
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Name of Registered Provider:	Marie O'Donnell
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	17/09/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	58	PM	35
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2 nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Street Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan, D Quinlan
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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).

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Description of service

Líos Na Sí Broadford Community childcare is a community based childcare service located in west Limerick. It provides care for pre-school children from birth up to six years of age. Operating Monday through Friday from 7.30 am to 5.00 pm, the service runs out of a spacious, purpose-built, single-story facility. The well-equipped building features six pre-school classrooms, three dedicated sleep rooms, sanitary facilities, a kitchen, and administrative office space. Additionally, children of all age groups benefit from direct access to excellently resourced outdoor play areas designed to support their development.

Staffing

The registered provider is the Chairperson of the pre-school committee. There is a designated person in charge appointed to manage the facility. There are an additional 17 staff appointed to work at the preschool. All staff hold a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education. There are an additional 2 staff employed to prepare, cook and serve food at the facility each day.

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

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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

(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*

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(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 had appointed a designated person in charge who manages the service each day and the manager along with the deputy manager were present on the day of the inspection. There were also people available who were able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the manager was present, and the staff roster indicated that a person in charge was always available at the service.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee working at the facility.

All staff records were reviewed and the following findings were documented.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all staff employed at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from reputable sources available.

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

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 new staff who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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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.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-

(a) a sessional pre-school service, and

(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that at all times there was an adequate number of qualified staff working at the service.

(2) On the morning of the inspection there were 58 pre-school children present with 12 qualified staff members. In the afternoon there were 35 preschool children present with 10 qualified staff members. The written staff roster demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in all areas of the service.

The following demonstrates the numbers present on the day of the inspection.

Morning:

Caterpillar Room: There were 3 children (1-2years) and 1 staff present.

Ladybird Room: There were 5 children (1-2 years) and 1 staff present.

Rainbow Room: There were 8 children (2-3 years) and 2 staff present.

Seomra Bumbóg: There were 15 children (2-3 years) and 3 staff present.

Seomra Reálta: There were 16 children (3+ years) and 3 staff present

Seomra Feiléachán: There were 11 children (3+ years) and 2 staff present

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Afternoon:

Caterpillar Room: There were 3 children (1-2years) and 1 staff present.

Ladybird Room: There were 5 children (1-2 years) and 2 staff present.

Rainbow Room: There were 6 children (2-3 years) and 1 staff present.

Seomra Bumbóg: There were 6 children (2-3 years) and 2 staff present.

Seomra Realta: There were 10 children (3+ years) and 2 staff present.

Seomra Feileachán: There were 5 children (3+ years) and 2 staff present.

Additional staff were available to cover for staff breaks, office management and kitchen duties.

(4)(a) The adult child ratio was correct each morning while the sessional ECCE programme was in operation.

(b) When the sessional service was ended, the adult/child ratio relevant to full day care and part time care were maintained as specified under the regulations.

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:

The service met children's basic needs daily through a strong focus on healthy eating, exercise, play, and rest.

Kitchen staff prepared nutritious hot meals and snacks regularly, with menus shared via a digital app and the main hallway notice board. Childrens drinking bottles remained easily accessible to them throughout the day.

Conveniently located sanitary and nappy changing facilities were fully stocked with toiletries, hot water, soap, and paper towels, alongside available changes of clothes when needed. For rest, children under two used standard cots in dedicated sleep rooms. Older children used low beds, and all sleeping children were closely monitored with documented checks maintained. For those not requiring a sleep period, soft furnishings with comfortable rest areas were provided in each room, facilitating children with a quiet area away from active play spaces when tired. Children spent extensive time outside in age-specific, sheltered spaces equipped with bikes, scooters, messy play areas, and gardening zones that supported outdoor learning in all weather conditions.

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PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The Caterpillar room was well laid out with lots of soft flooring in place to encourage floor play for the younger age groups. Low level seating for children to rest, and comfortable areas for staff to sit and hold children were also provided. Equipment included lots of age-appropriate toys stored on low level, easily accessible, open shelving. Push-and-pull toys encouraged walking and climbing, while stationary toys assisted with standing and gross motor development. An outdoor area located next to the room provided a safe sheltered area for children to use regardless of the weather.

The Ladybird room offered generous floor space with lots of well-established interest areas developed. A home corner with kitchen units, utensils, dolls, and prams supported opportunity for imaginative play. Construction materials, open-ended play items, puzzles and sensory materials were easily accessible on low level shelving units. Quiet areas in the room facilitated rest and relaxation spaces for children to respite in if tired. Childrens artwork and birthdays were exhibited on the walls. Children spend long periods on the day of the inspection playing outdoors in wet gear and wellies.

The Rainbow room, Seomra Bumbóg, Seomra Réalta and Seomra Feiléachán were each well designed and equipped, tailored to individual needs, providing sensory materials, building blocks, imaginative play materials and lots of art and craft supplies. Children's artwork and educational posters were displayed at eye level in all rooms. Room layouts were periodically adjusted based on children's evolving interests and developmental stages. The many and various interest areas in the rooms supported small group activities, large group projects and individual engagement between staff and children.

Outdoor play areas were directly accessible from all areas of the service. The playgrounds were safely secured with high walls and secure fencing enclosing all spaces. Lots of climbing equipment was located on grassed areas, with impact absorbing rubber matting under all structures to minimise injury risks. Various ride-on toys, low-level slides, swings, and jungle gyms promoted gross motor development.

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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:

All external doors at the facility were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access to the building, while all fire emergency exits remained completely unobstructed and clear.

An assessment of the environment confirmed that all toys and equipment were safe for the target age groups, well-maintained, and free from pinch points, crush points, exposed bolts, or sharp edges.

Waste management practices were compliant, with all refuse properly disposed of in foot-pedal-operated, lidded bins. All cleaning equipment and chemical cleaning agents were safely stored in a secure location which was inaccessible to children.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1.Out of the 16 cots provided for children's sleep, 7 cots were found to have mattresses lacking waterproof coverings. To reduce the risk of cross-infection within the sleeping area, all cot mattresses must be fitted with intact, waterproof protectors to ensure surfaces are non-porous and easily cleanable.

Administration of Medication:

2.The service maintained a practice of storing all service medicines in locked presses within each individual room. However, medication required by a child was stored in their personal bag for transit convenience between home and the facility, leaving the bag in an unlocked location. This practice presented a safety risk as unsecured medicines increase the risk of unauthorised access by children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1.New waterproof covers were purchased by the services management and applied to all the required mattresses within the facility. A regular check of all sleep equipment within the facility will be carried out.

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Administration of Medication:

2.All medications held in the service for use by a preschool child were relocated to a locked press to ensure safe storage at all times. A regular audit on the storage of all medicines will be completed by the services management.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1.Invoice receipts for the purchase of the required mattress covers were forwarded to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified have been adequately addressed.

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) All staff have on site first aid responder training. The most recent training took place in March 2025 all certs are due to expire in March 2027.

(2)(a) A well-equipped first aid box was accessible in each area of the facility.

(b)The first aid equipment was at all times quickly available to staff and children attending the service when playing both inside and outside the premises.

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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) Records were available to show that fire drills were carried out monthly. The most recent fire drill took place on the 24th of August 2026.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises with the most recent service having been completed in January 2026.