

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX016
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Name of Service:	Bright Start Creche
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Address of Service:	Star Lane, Clonard, Wexford, Co. Wexford
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Eircode:	Y35 WR86
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Whitney
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	14/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	37	PM	40
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Cullen
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).

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Description of service

Bright Start Creche is a privately operated preschool service which opened in its current location in 2003. It offers full day care, part time and sessional service and it registered to cater for up to 62 children from 0 to 6 years of age, however, currently accepts enrolments from 1 year of age. The service operates from 7.30am to 6.00pm and is open 51 weeks per year. Operating from a residential house in Wexford town and it consists of five classrooms, a designated sleep room, sanitary accommodation, and kitchen in the main building and two modular classrooms. A large outdoor garden and play area is available to the rear and side of the property which is fully enclosed. The red and ECCE 2 rooms were closed on the day of inspection.

Staffing

The service employs 19 staff who work directly with children attending the service. The registered provider and manager work daily in the service and assist across the rooms as needed. All the staff in the service held the minimum of level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education.

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

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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 – Management and Recruitment, 11 – Staffing levels, 15 – Record of a pre-school child, 16 - Record in relation to pre-school service, 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, 25 - First Aid, 26 – Fire safety measures, 27 - Supervision, 28 – Insurance. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, 16 and 27. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the baby, green, blue, ECCE 1 and ECCE 3 rooms.

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, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

(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) Through review of records, and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that seven staff members had commenced employment since the last inspection and files required review. To assess compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years, twelve vetting disclosures were also identified as requiring review:

(a)(b) Two validated references were available for each staff member from either a past employer, or from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff were working directly with the children at all times. There were 37 children with 9 staff members directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection and 40 children with 9 staff members during the afternoon. The registered provider, service manager and a cover staff member were available throughout the day to provide cover in rooms as required.

(2) On the morning of the inspection, the staff to child ratios were maintained as follows throughout the service:

- The baby room, there were 6 children aged 12 to 18 months old being cared for by 2 staff.
- The green room, there were 5 children aged 18 to 24 months old being cared for by 2 staff.
- The blue room, there were 4 children aged 2 to 3 years old being cared for by 1 staff.
- The ECCE one room, there were 12 children aged 4 to 5 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- The ECCE three room, there were 10 children aged 2.5 to 3 years old being cared for by 2 staff.

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;*

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- (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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) – (i) Prior to a child commencing in the service, all parents and guardians were issued with a child registration form. This registration form contained all of the required information for parents and guardians to complete.

A sample of ten child registration forms were reviewed on the day of inspection, and all were completed in full with appropriate declarations signed by parents and guardians.

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)(i)(j)(k)

The registered provider ensured that all relevant information was accessible and available for inspection by authorised persons. Staff rosters were available and each early years room was responsible for maintaining records of attendance, administration of medication and any accident or incident records.

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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:

The premises was secured to prevent unauthorised persons gaining entry or children exiting unsupervised. The kitchen and staff areas were inaccessible to children. All cleaning agents were stored safely and out of reach of children.

Risk assessments were completed for each room to ensure equipment and materials used in each of the rooms were appropriate for use by the age range of children using them. All blind cords were securely mounted out of reach of children.

All highchairs, tables and chairs used by children were in good condition and suitable for use by the age range of children using them. Equipment and materials used in each of the rooms were appropriate for use by the age range of children using them, for example small items which may pose a risk of choking were not observed in room occupied by younger children. The outdoor play area was maintained to a good standard and free from hazards.

The service had several measures in place to ensure the safety of children during the high temperatures present on the day of inspection. Children were observed in the outdoor areas for a large portion of the morning utilising shaded sections of the garden. Several sun parasols were placed strategically over frequently used items such as sand trays and benches to provide shade. Water and fresh fruit such as melon and berries were freely available for children. Staff were observed to encourage children to drink fluids across the day. Staff members informed the inspector of their sunscreen application protocol and frequency.

Infection Control:

The service was clean and well maintained with cleaning schedules maintained daily by staff. Children were observed washing their hands before eating, after outdoor play, toileting, and nappy changing. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand washing throughout the service. Tables and

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equipment were cleaned prior to food being served to children and appropriate safe food storage and preparation was observed.

During nappy changing processes observed, staff adhered to the services nappy changing policy. Staff ensured that they wore gloves and aprons during the nappy changing process and both child and staff hands were washed after nappy changing had taken place. Cots and low-level beds used for sleep were spaced the required 50cm apart. Each child had their own assigned bedlinen and cot/bed.

Administration of Medication:

Medication record books documented the details of any medications which had been administered in the service. Medications supplied by parents were stored securely and inaccessible to children.

Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with best practices in safe sleep and carried out physical checks on individual sleeping children, recording individual children's sleep positions, colour and breathing. A staff member remained in the sleep room while children were sleeping on floor beds. The sleep room temperatures were continually monitored by staff, with thermometers located in each sleep room. Staff were familiar with the services sleep policy which was displayed in the sleep room.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Records of accidents and incident in the service were incomplete, of the seven records reviewed four were not signed by a parent/guardian to confirm they had been informed of the accident/incident.

Administration of Medication:

2. On review of medication record forms, the template required parental signatures to demonstrate parental notification and staff signatures to confirm a second person witnessed the medication being administered. Several records were incomplete in these areas.

Safe Sleep:

3. The temperatures of the three rooms used for sleep on the day of inspection exceeded the required 18-22°C for children over the age of one year. The temperatures ranged from 23.4°C to 24.8°C while children were sleeping. It is acknowledged that children appeared comfortable as the staff and management had

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several measures in place to mitigate the temperatures, including the use of fans for air circulation, blankets were removed and additional sleep checks were being completed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

All unsigned records of accidents and incidents were reviewed and action was taken to get signatures from parents and staff spoken with.

One designated senior person in charge of accident and incident books, it is their responsibility to oversee these books and confirm all required signatures are obtained. All accident/incident books are also kept in a designated place at the front door, so they are easier and quicker to get. A staff meeting was also held shortly after this inspection and the importance of reporting incidents/accidents was spoken about, including informing parents and obtaining signatures.

Administration of Medication:

All unsigned administration of medication records were reviewed and action was taken to get signatures from parents and staff spoken to.

One designated senior person (with FAR) in charge of medication records. It is their responsibility to oversee these books and confirm all medicine is given as appropriate, parents signatures obtained and witnessed by another staff member (with FAR). All accident/incident books are also kept in a designated place at the front door, so they are easier and quicker to get. A staff meeting was also held shortly after this inspection and the importance of keeping full records was spoken about, including informing parents, witnessed and obtaining signatures.

Safe Sleep:

We ensured all windows and doors in rooms were opened to get a good air flow through the rooms, extra fans were gathered to ensure the rooms could be cooled down, curtains and dark blinds were used to minimise the sunshine. All staff were spoken to regarding how important it is to ensure cool temperatures in all rooms. It was also ensured that all children sleeping had minimum clothing and coverings on. An industrial air conditioning unit was sourced as soon as available.

New temperature thermometers were sources for all rooms to ensure they are reading properly. An air conditioning unit has been placed in the sleep rooms (mobile so can be moved from room to room). Extra fans are in place which can be used in sleep rooms or any room as needed. The importance of keeping children cool and dressing them appropriately has been discussed with all staff individually and in a whole service staff meeting.

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Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

None

Administration of Medication:

None

Safe Sleep:

Photo of air conditioning unit.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified has been adequately addressed and implementation will be reviewed on next inspection.

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 were five staff members trained in first aid response available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in each early year room and available for the use of the children attending the early years service.

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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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) There was a record of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 15 June 2026.
- (b) There was a record available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 05 February 2026 and the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 20 March 2026.
- (4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed beside each emergency exit door on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

There was appropriate supervision of children for the duration of the inspection. The layout of the early years rooms, sanitary accommodation and outdoor area allowed for clear lines of sight of the children. In older rooms staff supported children to toilet independently and were within hearing distance of children. Younger children were observed to be escorted individually to the toilet area by a staff member when required. Staff sat with children during snack and mealtimes, ensuring appropriate supervision while food was being consumed.

All staff were suitably qualified, and the registered provider had over 30 years experience working directly with children. The child staff ratios exceeded the requirements for care needed under the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

There were established protocols with parents and guardians for children transitioning to and from the school and this varied from room to room. The pick-up arrangements were observed where parents and guardians entered

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the building at the entrance dedicated for their child's room. Each child was handed over individually to their respective parent or guardian.

The outdoor play space was subdivided into smaller play spaces for each group with interest areas dispersed to facilitate small groups of child led play. The inspector observed that while children were outdoors the staff were strategically positioned to support and supervise play and learning.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service demonstrated insurance cover for a full day care for 65 children. The insurance policy commenced 28 March 2026 and will expire 27 March 2027.