

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY039
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Name of Service:	Bridie Corcoran
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Address of Service:	Gortadubha, Claregalway, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 XN8K
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Name of Registered Provider:	Bridie Corcoran
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Service type:	Childminder
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Date of Inspection:	11/07/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	4
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway,
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Nic Dhonnacha
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

This childminding service is located on the outskirts of Claregalway village, Co. Galway. The service operates from the registered childminders home in a detached premise and is open from Monday to Friday, between 7.30hrs to 17.30hrs. A service is provided to children aged between 0 to 6 years. On the morning of the inspection, 5 preschool children were present and in the afternoon 4 preschool children were present on the day of inspection. The children have access under supervision to a designated playroom, the living room, kitchen / dining area and a sanitary area. There were designated sleep rooms with 3 cots. Quiet rest areas were available for children to rest or opt out of an activity if he/ she wishes to do so. There was a designated outdoor play area to the rear of the premises for children's outdoor play, activities, and exploration.

Staffing

The childminder was present on the day of inspection and directly caring for the children. A named support person lives in the home, is nearby and is capable of knowing what to do without instruction, provides additional support in case of emergency. The registered childminder held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of a Level 5, in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. The childminder has evidence of on-going training and education. The registered childminder was present on the day of inspection.

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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,12,15,18,19,20, 25, 26 and 28.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, (Record of a pre-school child).

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 childminder 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

(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

(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

- (1)(a) The childminder was the designated person in charge and there was a named person available within a close distance in the event of an emergency.
- (b) At all times during the period of inspection, the childminder was on the premises.
- (2)(a) & (b) Four written validated references were available on file for the adults in the service who were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures was available in respect of the two staff members.
- (d) Documentary evidence indicated that no staff had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years therefore did not require police vetting.
- (4) The registered childminder held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of a Level 5, in Early Childhood Care and Education. A copy of the qualification was on file for the childminder.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(8)(b) The registered child-minder ensured that there was a second adult on the premises or close by at all times, who could be called upon if required in an emergency.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

(a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,

(b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and

(c) there is a working telephone on the premises.

(2) A childminder may have more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time where all such children are siblings of each other.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) On the morning of the inspection, there were 5 preschool children.

(b) All the children were aged between 19 months to 5 years of age, on the day of the inspection.

- 1 child was aged 12 months,
- 1 child was aged 19 months,
- 2 children were aged between 3 years and 4 years,
- 1 child was aged 5 years,

Additionally, there was 1 school aged child a sibling of a pre-school child in the service on the day of inspection.

(c) There was a working mobile phone with good coverage on the premises.

(2) On the day of inspection, 1 child arrived on the premises for a settling in period, this child was 12 months of age and remained for an hour.

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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.*

Compliance Information

A sample of 5 of 8 enrolment forms for children that are currently attending were reviewed by the inspector. The details relating to (1) (a) to (j) were documented on each record.

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Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

A copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations was available on the notice board and available for parents, guardians, employees, unpaid workers, contractors, and authorised persons.

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

Basic Needs

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service.
- Adequate nutritious snacks and meals were provided by parents and guardians.
- At snack and mealtime, the atmosphere was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and childminder.
- There was a water station for children to self-serve and access their sip bottles / drinks throughout the session.
- The childminder encouraged and supported the children to be independent.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilet and did not have to wait to use the toilet.

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- The children's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. A child used the toilet independently under supervision, as the toilet had a 'step up stool' for ease of access.
- The childminder supported the privacy and dignity of each child having their nappy changed. There were two children wearing a nappy, on the day of inspection.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.
- All the children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment, both indoors and outdoors.

Supporting Relationships

The childminder supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships by

- Listening to the voice of the child as they communicated their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures, and body language,
- Encouraging children to think critically, ask questions and respond to them in a way that promotes sustained shared thinking.
- Using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact.
- Working with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life, and any other concerns.
- On speaking with the childminder, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the preschool including the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times by phone calls and by email if necessary.
- The childminder was observed helping children find solutions, supporting them, and talking to the children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, and commentating, extending a child's activities and initiating games and activities.
- The childminder advised that all children had the opportunity for outdoor play on a daily basis. Children were observed playing with basket balls, footballs, riding on scooters, tractors and playing in the playhouse.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The indoor play area space was designed and arranged to:-
- Maintain a space that was clean, organised, and free of clutter,
 - Accommodates the play need of the children,
 - Give all children access to the same facilities and play opportunities, to promote their welfare and development.
 - The play equipment and materials that were specific to the children attending were freely available and accessible to these children.
 - The designated playroom had soft seating, a wide variety of toys and play materials which including a role play kitchen, which included pots, pans, play food which encouraged imaginary play, conversation, and interactive play.
 - A range of books, puzzles and games were available which supported children's language development.
 - Fine motor development was supported with the use of shape sorters, crayons, paper to draw on and jigsaws.
 - There was an area with vehicles, stations, and motor cars, along with dolls, buggies and cots, these toys afforded opportunities for interactive play and the development of social skills such as communication and turn taking.

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- Displayed on the walls were posters, visual aids children's artwork, themes, and schedules. Items included – handprints, the alphabet, birds and ponies.
- The children had open access to the outdoor area on the premises. The children had plenty of opportunities for outdoor play.

(1)(b)

- A rest and quiet area was provided in the childminders living room in the form of a child size couche, with cushions and matting to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he or she chose to. The children attending the service used the designated sleep rooms for rest and sleep provision.

(3)(a)

Outdoor play

- Children accessed the outdoor space to the rear of the premises, on a daily basis.
- The childminder balanced the need for safety with the need to provide physical, challenging experiences.
- The equipment and materials available provided children with play, movement and exploration opportunities that were exclusive to the outdoors.
- Fencing and walls prevented access to streets and other dangers, such as pits, and traffic hazards.
- The ground surface of the outdoor areas was covered with tarmacadam, concrete paths and a grass surface area
- There was a variety of play equipment and materials in the outdoor areas.
 - Items included tractors, ride on toys, scooters, bouncers, bicycles, and adult and child size chairs, a playhouse, basketball hoop and balls.

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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 service provided evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. The childminder had current training in first aid and documentary evidence advised that a childcare module was included in the training.
- (2)(a) There was a first aid box in the playroom living area which was easily accessible and in a conspicuous position.
- (b) The childminder demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the preschool 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (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 record in writing of fire drills indicated that the last fire drill was conducted on the 16/06/2023.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that firefighting equipment was checked annually last dated February 2023.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire was available on file and was displayed in the lobby and each playroom of the service.

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Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) A annual maintenance certificate for the smoke and fire detection system was not available. The maintenance record for the smoke and fire detection alarm system in the service dated 22/12/2021.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

On the 25/07/2023 the registered provider advised of the following.

Corrective and Preventive Action

Maintenance was carried out on the smoke and fire detection alarm system on the 24/07/2023.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the annual maintenance certificate for the smoke and fire detection alarm system dated 24/07/2023 was submitted.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted to date has met the regulatory requirements under this part of the regulation.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service's insurance with an expiry date 18/01/2024 was for a childminding service for up to 6 children and included the following -

- public liability insurance.
- insurance against fire and theft.
- buildings insurance.
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.