

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY060			
Name of Service:	Darndale/Belcamp Integrated Childcare Service Ltd.			
Address of Service:	Darndale/Belcamp Village Centre, Dublin 17, Co. Dublin			
Eircode:	D17 YY96			
Name of Registered Provider:	Ciaran Mulhall			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date 1 of Inspection:	18/05/2026			
Date 2 of Inspection:	19/05/2026			
No of pre-school children:	AM	98	PM	44
Day 2	AM	97	PM	N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5, The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K			
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne & E Hosford			
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

Darndale Belcamp Integrated Childcare Service is a full day care service located in a residential area of Dublin 17 and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 157 children aged 0 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.00pm.

The service operates from the ground floor of a mixed-use building. The service has 11 care rooms, eight of the care rooms are located in the main building premises: Little Stars, Rug Rats, Teddy Bears, Clever Cats, Honeybees, Twinkle Toes, Wizards and Garden Room along with a cot room, a kitchen, two offices, indoor play area, a sensory room and a soft playroom. In the secondary prefabricated building within walking distance of the main building premises, there are three care rooms: Pixie Room with a cot room and kitchen, Active Learners room with a sensory relaxation room and a kitchen and Little Explorers room with a kitchen.

There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area in the main building, and a play area to the front of the prefabricated building. The service also uses an enclosed public playground which is within walking distance of the premises

Staffing

Darndale Belcamp Integrated Childcare Service directly employs a total of 68 staff. This includes the person in charge and two assistant managers who manage the oversight of the service, one full time pedagogical leader, one parttime pedagogical leader, a CE supervisor, a cook, one relief admin person, one maintenance man and one cleaner. Forty-seven staff work directly with the children - two of whom are currently on statutory leave and eleven who are employed through the Community Employment (CE) scheme, work in the service and are undergoing training. A student attends on work experience but was not present on the day of inspection. The registered provider does not work 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

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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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,15,16,19 and 23; 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 15(1),16(1)(j)(k) and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Pixies room, Little Explorers room, Twinkle Toes room, Wizard room, Garden Room, Honeybee room, Teddy Bears room, Rugrats room, the Bounce room and the Wobbler hall. It did not include Active Learners Room, Clever Cats room or Little Stars room.

Regulation 11 was inspected across all 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on each day of the two-day 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

It was confirmed by the person in charge that eight childcare staff and three staff employed under a Community Employment (CE) scheme had been employed in the service since the last inspection on the 15 April 2025.

The files of these eleven new staff were reviewed on Day 1 of inspection. Garda Vetting disclosures for 9 staff and one external contractor whose files were reviewed on the last inspection, were also reviewed on this inspection.

(2)

(a) Six written and validated references were available from a past employer.

(b) Sixteen written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 21 adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was not required as the 11 adults had not lived outside of the state for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the seven adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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Non-Compliance Information

(4) Documentation was not available to show that the one adult who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) A transcript of results for the staff member for their degree was obtained and is on file. Once graduated a copy of the final certificate will be placed on file. A tick list attached to all staff files showing that all relevant paperwork is in each personal file. This is checked by the deputy manager.

Supporting documentation submitted

(4) Copy of the transcript of results.

Summary Comment

The Inspector has reviewed the evidence and actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 has been adequately addressed.

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,

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Compliance Information

- (1) On Day 1 and on Day 2, the registered provider ensured that at all times, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service on Day 1 and announced to the service on Day 2 and throughout the two days of Inspection with a breakdown as follows:

Day 1 Morning

In the main building:

- Rug Rats - Three adults to 5 children aged between 1-2 years old.
- Little Stars - Three adults to 6 children aged 1 years 6 months to 2 years 6 months old.
- Teddy Bears - Three adults to 7 children aged between 1 years 6 months to 2 years 6 months old.
- Clever Cats - Three adults to 9 children aged between 2 years 6 months to 3 years 6 months.
- Honeybees - Three adults to 8 children aged between 2 to 3 years old.
- Twinkle Toes - Four adults to 12 children aged between 2 to 3 years old.
- Wizards - Four adults to 13 children aged between 3 to 4 years old.
- Garden Room - Four adults to 8 children aged between 3 to 4 years old.

Prefabricated Building:

- Pixies - Four adults to 7 children aged between 6 months to 18 months old.
- Active Learners - Four adults to 14 children aged between 4 to 5 years old.
- Little Explorers - Four adults to 9 children aged between 4 to 5 years old.

Day 1 Afternoon

In the main building:

- Rug Rats - Three adults to 3 children aged between 1-2 years old.
- Teddy Bears - Three adults to 6 children aged between 1 years 6 months to 2 years 6 months old.
- Honeybees - Two adults to 3 children aged between 2 to 3 years old.
- Twinkle Toes - Three adults to 7 children aged between 2 to 3 years old.
- Garden Room - Three adults to 6 children aged between 3 to 4 years old.

Prefabricated Building:

- Pixies - Four adults to 8 children aged between 6 months to 18 months old.
- Active Learners - Three adults to 11 children aged between 4 to 5 years old.

Day 2 Morning

In the main building:

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- Rug Rats - Three adults to 4 children aged between 1-2 years old.
- Little Stars - Three adults to 6 children aged 1 years 6 months to 2 years 6 months old.
- Teddy Bears - Three adults to 6 children aged between 1 years 6 months to 2 years 6 months old.
- Clever Cats - Three adults to 10 children aged between 2 years 6 months to 3 years 6 months.
- Honeybees - Three adults to 8 children aged between 2 to 3 years old.
- Twinkle Toes - Four adults to 11 children aged between 2 to 3 years old.
- Wizards - Four adults to 12 children aged between 3 to 4 years old.
- Garden Room - Four adults to 7 children aged between 3 to 4 years old.

Prefabricated Building:

- Pixies - Four adults to 8 children aged between 6 months to 18 months old.
- Active Learners - Four adults to 12 children aged between 4 - 5 years old.
- Little Explorers - Five adults to 13 children aged between 4 - 5 years old.

(8)(a) The person in charge and two assistant managers ensured that two adults were present on the premises at all times.

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-

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(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (i)

(a)(b)(c)(d)(e) (g)(h)(i) On review of the documentation relating to a sample of 20 children's files within the service, the required information and detail was available and complete.

(f) Details of illness, disability, allergy or special need of children attending the service, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention for the children were required, were clearly described in care plans available.

(3)(c) The children's records were open to inspection as requested by the inspector as an authorised person.

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)The service maintained accurate attendance by each preschool child on a daily basis.

(i)The service maintained a weekly staff sign in roster to reflect the staff present in the service.

(j) On review of ten medication administration records all the details were completed on each record.

Non-Compliance Information

(k) On review of 45 accident and incident forms the date of the parent's signature was missing from eight forms to confirm the day they were made aware of the accident/ incident.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

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Corrective and Preventive Action

(k) A memo was sent to all staff reminding them to check that the parents signature date is recorded on all accident/incident reports. Staff reminded to check parents' signature has a date. Ongoing reminders will continue and staff meetings.

Supporting documentation submitted

(k) Copy of Memo and copy of memo signed by staff.

Summary Comment

The Inspector has reviewed the evidence and actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 16 has been adequately addressed.

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 provided freshly cooked meals and snacks, cooked in the service kitchen, at regular intervals. On Day 1 of inspection, the inspectors observed a hot meal served between 11.45am and 12.00pm in the care rooms, which was breaded chicken, vegetable rice and curry sauce and on Day 2, it was veggie burger, mashed potato and beans. Between 2.30pm and 15.00pm, afternoon tea, on Day 1 was served which was bundy pizza with potato wedges and on Day 2 it was sausage rolls with fruit. Water was available in each care room for the children to drink.
- Mealtimes were observed to be a relaxed and sociable events, with children given time to sit at low tables appropriate to their age. Children were observed to eat independently, but staff were on hand to help as required, supporting independence and wellbeing.
- Nappy changing and toileting were respectful and positive experiences for the children, and staff were observed to encourage the children to be independent in managing their personal care such as handwashing.

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- The transitions between activities such as nappy changes, sleep time, mealtimes, free play, play in the Bounce room and wobbler hall and outdoor play were observed to be calm and relaxed with staff available to care for the individual needs of the children.
- All children in each room were observed to enjoy outdoor play during the inspection.
- Children's need for sleep and rest was met through the provision of comfortable rest areas available. Cots and low beds with individual bedding were available to the children who required sleep.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed to be engaged with and sit with the children during mealtimes providing a sociable and relaxed environment with children and staff having good interactions through conversation.
- Staff were observed to have respectful, warm and responsive interactions with the children through the use of soft tones and positive non-verbal communication strategies such as being at the children's level play time. They were responsive to the children and were observed to give them choices regarding their play activities.
- All care rooms had 'need to know' information or support and care plans available about the children to include details on their likes, dislikes, preferences, care needs, allergies, food preferences and strategies required were displayed to assist staff in the consistent provision of care needs.
- Staff members work well together supporting each other in the provision of care to the children.

Physical and Material Environment

- Low level shelving and child sized furniture supported children's independence.
- The materials and equipment provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment available to them. Care rooms had identifiable areas of interest, play kitchens, doll houses and sensory play had supporting equipment accessible and available, toys were stored in organised labelled boxes.
- Cosy areas were present in all rooms with books available, offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day.
- The outdoor play environment to the rear of the main building was fully enclosed, the surface of which was covered with artificial soft ground. There was an overhead shelter to enable the children to access the outdoor area during inclement weather. The outdoor toys were suitable and available and included a climbing frame, a playhouse, picnic table, large wobble see saw, balance bikes, scooters, trikes, ride on bikes, seesaws, wooden boat and wooden train.

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- Behind the prefabricated building were fully enclosed, the area used by the children in the Pixie room was laid with artificial soft ground and grass and had climbing walls, wooden bus, balls and sit on rockers.

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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors on Day 1 and announced arrival on Day 2, the entrance to the main building had an electronic automatic door system in place, which was operated and managed by reception staff and the internal doors throughout the premises had key code entry or handles and latches up high out of reach of children. The entrance to the prefabricated building had an electronic door release system, which was managed and operated by staff in care rooms and the internal doors are secured with doorbells and keycode entry for entry. Both appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The outdoor play space to the rear of the main building and to the rear of the prefabricated building were fully enclosed.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- Eighteen cot mattresses had safety labels and washable wipeable covers.
- No trailing flexes were observed, and cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, soap and paper towels and lidded pedal bins were available for handwashing.
- Handwashing was observed before and after mealtimes. after nappy changing, bathroom visits and outdoor play.
- Nappy changing facilities were available for the children and nappy changing was completed for the children, at set times or when required in accordance with the service policy.
- During sleep time, cots and low floor mats were positioned with the recommended 50 centimetres between each child.

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- Soothers were stored in individual labelled boxes.

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep needs for children under 2 years of age, were facilitated with access to cots for sleep and for children over two years of age were met through the provision of low floor mats and low stackable beds.
- Ten-minute sleep checks were completed on the children for colour, breathing, position while children slept, with the temperatures of the cot room and care rooms documented and maintained between the recommended temperatures of 18-22 °C while children over 1 years old slept and during the day.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for all staff. However, in relation to four adults, their vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Four Garda vetting applications were resubmitted to update and received for four CE staff members. Meeting held with CE supervisor and reminded to keep CE files up to date, including Garda vetting. Copy of CE files now kept with general staff files and on Deputy managers check list also to prevent non-compliance from reoccurring in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Four renewed Garda vettings, Signed supervision meeting with the CE Supervisor

Summary Comment

The Inspector has reviewed the evidence and actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23, has been adequately addressed.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Non-Compliance Information

(c) In the sanitary facility of the Honeybee room, mechanical ventilation was not active leading to a strong odour being present.

(d) In one of the sanitary facilities of the Twinkle toes room, the hot tap was ceased and difficult to turn on.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) The air vent of the mechanical ventilation in Honeybees required cleaning for it to work correctly. This was completed.

(d) A new part was put onto the tap by the maintenance team to ensure the tap was easier to turn on for the children.

The air vents and taps will be monitored by adding them to the daily health and safety list, to ensure that they remain in working order

Supporting documentation submitted

(c) (d) Photographic Evidence, Copy of daily health and safety check list

Summary Comment

The Inspector has reviewed the evidence and actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 29, has been adequately addressed.