

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

IssuingTUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL023
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Name of Service:	Barnardos Early Years' Service Mulhuddart
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Address of Service:	Church Road, Mulhuddart, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D15 T886
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Name of Registered Provider:	Martin Hannigan
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	18/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15/D15CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne
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

Barnardos Early Years Service, a community-based service, is located in Dublin 15. The premises is on the ground floor of a mixed-use building. It provides part time care to children from 2 to 6 years from 9am to 13.15pm, Monday to Thursday. The premises consists of 3 care rooms – the Junior Group room, the Art room and the Tús Maith Preschool room. There are two sanitary facilities available and a sensory room. The service has an enclosed outdoor play area to the front of the service, and which can be accessed from the Tús Maith Preschool room.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 14 adults to include the person in charge, the deputy person in charge, seven childcare staff, two staff employed under the Access Inclusion Model (AIM), a bus driver, a receptionist and a cook.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 record in relation to a preschool child , regulation 23 safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. Regulation 11 was assessed across the three care rooms. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the three care rooms and the sensory room.

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.

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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) It was confirmed by the person in charge, that one new staff member has been employed in the service since the last inspection on the 24 June 2024. Garda Vetting disclosures for six staff members whose file was reviewed on the last inspection were reviewed on this inspection.

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

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the seven adults. 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 one adult who had 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 one adult who worked directly with children attending the service had a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children Disability and Equality.

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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.

(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.

Compliance Information

(1) There was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as follows :

There were 6 adults working with 16 children in the morning.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection as follows:

- Junior Group Room - 2 adults to 6 children aged from 2 years to 3 years.
- Art Room - 1 adult to 4 children aged from 2 years 10 months to 5 years.
- Tús Maith room - 3 Adults to 6 children aged 2 years 10 months to 5 years.

(8)(a) The designated person in charge ensured there was 2 adults 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;*

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- (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

- (1) On review of a sample of 12 children registration forms, the following particulars were recorded.
 - (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
 - (b) The date on which each child first attended the service.
 - (c) The records had a section for documenting the date when children ceased attending the service.
 - (d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service.
 - (f) The documentation available supported the recording of specific illnesses, allergies, disabilities, and dietary preferences for children.
 - (g) The name and telephone number of the child's medical practitioner.
 - (h) Parents had indicated which immunisations their children had received.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) On review of a sample of 12 children registration forms, the following information was not available :
 - A written record was not available for 12 children attending the service with
 - (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency. It is acknowledged that permission was present for the 12 children to administer anti febrile medication.
 - For one child, the record available was not complete and did not have the details for the
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) (i) Parental / guardian consent has been requested to give appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency and will be sought and documented for the children going forward.
- (e) The service has updated the details for collection for the one child and will make sure going forward all children will have their Authorisation for collection completed on the form.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2) Documentation requesting actions to be completed.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 15 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-
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) The following care practices were observed:

- Staff described how the children are provided with snack and dinners each day prepared by the cook in the service. This was further evidenced by a review of the three-week menu plan and routine, observation of snack and dinner time in the care rooms. Snack was watermelon, apple, oranges with grated cheese and dinner was chicken goujons, mashed potato, carrots, cauliflower and peas. Meals were accompanied by jugs of water which were available in the care rooms.
- Staff were available to support children during toileting and handwashing, whilst facilitating privacy and independence.
- Staff were observed to be aware and familiar with the needs of the children and responded to their needs in a timely manner. This was further facilitated by documented care plans for those children who required additional strategies to assist them to engage in the daily experiences in the service.

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- Children were observed to have access to child-led indoor play experiences on the day of the inspection that were suitable to their age and stage of development, and this was scheduled into the daily routine. Activities available to the children were placing stickers on plant pots and then planting plants, sensory play experiences of sand and water play, play dough, reading books, playing in the home corner.
- All of the children were observed to access outdoor play on the day of the inspection.

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 main service entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured and monitored by reception, to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the early years' service.
- A weekly roster reflected the staff present in the service.
- Attendance records demonstrated that children were recorded into the service and in their rooms.
- The outdoor area to the front of the service was secure with locked gates.
- Cleaning agents, blind cords and flexes were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children during the inspection.

Infection Control:

- The service was observed to be clean and well maintained with cleaning schedules in operation within the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided to support hand hygiene in the sanitary accommodation in the service. Pedal bins were provided for the disposal of wastepaper in the sanitary facilities.
- Handwashing was observed after bathroom visits, after play activities and before mealtimes.

Administration of Medication:

- There were clearly documented procedures available for one child who required emergency medication, and staff reported they received training and were aware of these procedures.
- Medication was stored appropriately, clearly labelled and out of reach of children

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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.*
- (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 was available detailing fire drills carried out in the service. The most recent fire drill was dated 21 May 2026.
- (b) A record was available showing the number and type of firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm in the service. Records showed that maintenance was carried out on the firefighting equipment on the 10 July 2025 and the smoke alarm in 27 May 2026
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered providers ensured adequate insurance was in place for the part time care service for preschool children up until 31 March 2027.