

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MO025
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Name of Service:	Breaffy Crèche & Pre-school
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Address of Service:	Clogher, Breaffy, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
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Eircode:	F23 AK46
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Name of Registered Provider:	Margaret Cresham
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	30/04/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM	19
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Farrell
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

Breaffy Crèche & Pre-school is a registered full day care service located in a rural area near Castlebar in Co Mayo. The service provides full day care, part-time and sessional services to children aged between one and six years from 08:00-18:00hours. The premises was purpose built for childcare service provision. There are three playrooms, a sleep room, sanitary facilities, dining area and kitchen provided. Outdoor play areas are available to the rear of the premises directly accessible from two of the playrooms.

Staffing

There are seven adults working in the service including childcare staff and a cook/cleaner. The registered provider works directly with the children in the service. One adult was employed through the Access and Inclusion Model scheme at the time of the 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

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 sections of regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25 and 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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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 registered provider, 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*

(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.*

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(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 was the designated person in charge in the service and there was a named adult to deputise in her absence.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premise throughout the inspection.
- (2)
- The inspector was informed by the registered provider that no new staff had started working in the service since the last focused inspection of the 17 October 2023.
- (a) and (b)
- The references for the seven staff in the service had been reviewed on previous inspections and found to be compliant with the regulation.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all seven staff. 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) Review of staff vetting records on previous inspection had found that international police vetting had been obtained for staff where required.
- (4)
- Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available on file for all the staff members who worked directly with the children.

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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 inspector's unannounced arrival to the service there were 5 adults including the registered provider working directly with 23 children in the service
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratios were adhered to on the day of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:
- Baby room: One staff cared for four children aged between two and three years of age during the day.
- Full day care room: Two staff cared for eight children aged between two years and six months and five years of age in the morning. Two to three staff cared for two children aged two years of age and thirteen children aged from three to six years of age attending full day care services in the afternoon.
- Preschool room: 2 staff cared for 11 children between 3-5 years of age attending a morning session from 9:00 to 12:00 hours. The preschool playroom was closed in the afternoon with the children availing of full day care services cared for in the Full Day Care playroom.

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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

(1) (a)

- There were three playrooms in the service. The Baby playroom catered for the younger children and the Preschool and Full Day Care playrooms catered for the older children. Activities in the service were arranged to suit children's needs. Mealtimes were observed to be appropriately spaced out over the day. A morning snack of chopped apples and bananas followed by crackers with butter and jam was observed to be provided and eaten by the children in the Full Day Care room. The service provided a warm main meal for the children of mashed potato, baked beans and chicken goujons on the day which was eaten by all children in the dining area. Extra helpings of food were given to children who wanted them. The staff sat with the children to supervise them during meals, chatting with them and encouraging conversations. The cook informed the inspector that an afternoon snack of pizza with cheese was planned that day. Individual bottles containing drinks were accessible to the children at drink stations in the playrooms. Bibs were worn by the younger children in the Baby playroom to protect their clothes when eating.
- The children rest/sleep needs were individually managed according to their needs. Two children slept in the Baby sleep room after dinner. The sleep room was beside the Baby playroom with a half door between the rooms allowing staff to hear children and view them from the doorway. Standard cots were provided, and the sleep room was darkened to facilitate rest but adequately lit to allow staff view the children when carrying out sleep checks. Rest areas were provided in each playroom and the children were observed to use them at times during the day.
- Older children who were able to use the toilet independently were supported by the staff to do so but were within earshot of staff if they needed help. Children's nappies were changed regularly and when needed by staff who were observed to chat with the children and involve them in the process. The staff prompted the children and supervised them when washing and drying their hands at appropriate times.

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- Children moved around freely in the playrooms without restriction. At one stage some of the children in the Full Day Care playroom formed a “choo choo” train and moved around the room together. Children in the Baby playroom enjoyed physical play in the small crawling tunnel and ball pond in the playroom.
- There was a variety of play equipment and materials available to the children in low level accessible storage systems in the playrooms allowing opportunities for child-led play. At one stage children in the home/kitchen area of the Full Day Care playroom made a “birthday cake” and spontaneously sang happy birthday to one of the children. The staff organised group activities with the children in consultation with them for example a group activity with playdough in the Full Day Care playroom. The staff sat with the children at a table and made the playdough including all the children in the activity adding in spoons of flour to a bowl. The children chose the colouring to be added to the mixture. The activity was used to help children to count and as an opportunity to show them how to take turns. The staff told the inspector that the messy play activities with the water table area and coloured rice box in the Full Day Care playroom were favourite activities with the children. Children in the Preschool playroom enjoyed a group painting activity after their snack. This activity was followed by free play with children choosing to play in the well-equipped shop area using recycled packets and jars and a group of children played with transport toys. One staff member sat at a table and read books with a child in response to their preference.
- The interactions between the staff and children were observed to be positive and warm. Staff used positive methods to manage behaviour using redirection techniques when needed. At collection and drop off times, parents/guardians were observed to be greeted warmly by staff with exchanges of information relating to the children. The staff told the inspector that information was given to parents verbally at drop off/collection times and using electronic applications. Staff recorded observations of the children at regular intervals including photographs of them engaging in different activities. These observations were kept in individual books for the children that also contained samples of artwork. The children’s parents were given regular opportunities to look at their child’s books according to the staff. The registered provider advised the inspector that a graduation ceremony had been arranged to take place in the service in the coming weeks with family members to be invited. This was in preparation for some of the older children’s upcoming transition from the service to primary school.

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Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a)

1. The children from the Baby and Full Day Care playrooms did not play outdoors during the inspection. Staff informed the inspector that the children were not always provided with opportunities to play outdoors daily.
2. Children aged over two years of age in one of the playrooms were placed in highchairs to eat their meals. The children were developmentally ready to sit at the low chairs and tables provided in the dining room.
3. There were a limited number of books available to the children in the Full Day Care playroom and some of them had torn or missing pages limiting their use.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) (a)

1. All children now go outdoors during the day. All children have wellingtons and waterproof clothing, so they are able to go outdoors in bad weather.
2. The children two years and over are now sitting at the table for snacks and lunch. Staff have been made aware that children aged two and over should not be sitting in highchairs.
3. The library has been restocked with books. Staff will check the library regularly and restock it when necessary.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of the additional books were submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Inspectorate and been deemed to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

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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:

Measures were in place to allow staff control access to the building and prevent children from leaving unnoticed. The main entrance door was secured when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and remained secured apart from when parents arrived to drop off or collect children from the service. The side entrance door via the Preschool playroom was also secured with staff controlling access. The blind cord on the window in the sleep room had a securing mechanism in place securing the blind cord. The cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children. The play equipment in use in the playrooms on the day was in satisfactory condition and suitable for the age and developmental stages of the children using it.

Infection Control:

The staff prompted the children to and supervised them washing their hands using warm water, liquid soap and drying them with paper towels at key times. Separate containers were available to store soothers. The cot linen in the Baby sleep room was laundered on a regular basis. The staff cleaned down surfaces regularly such as tables after activities. Aprons and gloves were provided for staff in the nappy change area and used when changing children's nappies.

Administration of Medication:

The staff informed the inspector that no child required medication to be given to them whilst in the service at the time of the inspection.

Safe Sleep:

The staff recorded written observations made of sleeping children's positions, colour and breathing patterns when they carried out physical checks of the sleeping children at ten-minute intervals. The air temperature of the sleep room adjacent to the Baby room was monitored to ensure that it remained between the required limits and recorded by staff. Cellular blankets and clean linen were provided for the children who slept in standard wooden cots with safety mattresses.

Fire Safety:

The were no obstructions observed to the emergency exits during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

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General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for five staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. The door to the heating boiler in the outside area had rusted and was not fitted correctly in place with the potential for a child to access the boiler and controls. It is acknowledged that the registered provider refitted the door prior to the inspector leaving the service.
3. The securing mechanism on the gate leading to a section of the outdoor area no longer in use by the children was broken and required repair/replacement.

Infection Control:

4. There were rips/tears in the soft seating in the rest area in the Full Day Care playroom exposing the foam posing difficulties for effective cleaning leading to a potential infection control risk.
5. The waste bins in the Preschool playroom and Preschool sanitary areas were not the required foot pedal operated waste bins.
6. A cot used for a child to sleep in had a stained cot mattress and did not have a waterproof cover in place.
7. Cleaning records for the main children's sanitary area had not been completed by staff since the 16 April 2024.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting renewals have been applied for the staff members. The service is still awaiting return of garda vetting renewals for two staff members. The registered provider will forward email copies of the renewals soon as they are received. The staff will regularly check garda vetting to ensure that it is in date for all staff.
2. The door on the boiler has been refitted and has been painted with rust proof paint. The staff will regularly inspect the outdoor area for wear and tear and respond as needed.
3. The gate leading to the small outside play area has been repaired. The staff will regularly inspect outdoor area for wear and tear and respond as needed.

Infection Control:

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4. The soft seating that was ripped in the Full Day Care playroom has been removed. The staff will regularly inspect indoor area for wear and tear and respond as needed.
5. The waste bins in the Pre-school areas have been replaced with pedal bins. The staff will make sure all bins in the service are pedal operated bins.
6. The mattress in this cot has been removed. The service has not replaced it as the cot is not now being used. The staff will replace the mattress with a new mattress if in time it is needed to be used cot again. The staff will carry out regular check all cots for stains and make sure they are fitted with mattress protectors.
7. Cleaning records are up now up to date. The staff will check that cleaning sheets are filled out every evening before closing.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copies of garda vetting renewals and photographs were submitted.

Infection Control:

Copies of cleaning checklists and photographs were submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Inspectorate and found to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on 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.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) A review of children's and staff attendance found that there was not a person with First Aid Responder (FAR) training immediately available to the children at all times.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

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Corrective and Preventive Action

One of the two staff members with FAR training will be present in the service until closing time. The staff will make sure that a person with FAR training is in on the premises between 5 and 5.30pm.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of sample of staff attendance record.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Inspectorate and been deemed to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Certification of insurance for a maximum of 31 children was available with an expiry date of the 27 March 2025.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

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Regulation 29 - Premises

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

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required

Non-Compliance Information

(d) Sections of the paintwork in the Baby playroom, children's sanitary area and dining area were peeling from the walls and required maintenance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(d) The bathrooms have been painted. The painting of the other areas is in progress. The registered provider will submit evidence of the remaining painting work when completed.

In future, the paintwork in the building will be checked on a regular basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of completed painting work.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and been found to have addressed the non-compliance under this regulation on inspection.