

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO003
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Benbulbin Crèche Ltd
-------------------------	----------------------

Address of Service:	College Road, Summerhill, Sligo, Co. Sligo
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	F91 T384
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Maureen Walsh
-------------------------------------	---------------

Service type:	Full Day
----------------------	----------

Date of Inspection:	12/06/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	37	PM	36
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate TUSLA Child & Family Agency Markievicz House, Barrack St Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Killeen
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Benbulbin Crèche Ltd. is a privately operated full-day-care service for children aged between 0 and 6 years. The early years' service is registered to provide full day care to children attending the service. The age range of children catered for in the service is from 0 – 6 years of age.

Staffing

The service employs eleven adults, including the registered provider. The registered provider participates in the daily operations and was present on the day of inspection. Eight staff work directly with the children. The cook operates in a dual capacity and is available to cover staff breaks. The Person in charge is supernumerary but is also available to cover lunch breaks and rooms when required.

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 9,10,11,15,16,23,26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Record of a pre-school child and regulation 16 Record in relation to 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 provider, person in charge, 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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) The registered provider ensured that.

- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.**
- (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises for the duration of the inspection. On a review of staff attendance records the person in charge or deputy person in charge was always present in the service.**
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service. A governance chart displayed the lines of accountability in the service. On discussion with staff members, they were aware of their roles and responsibilities. Room leaders were assigned in each of the three care rooms.**

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that two new adults had been employed since the previous inspection on the 10/04/2025. The two new staff members worked directly with the pre-school children. A total of two files were reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for three staff members whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.
- (a) Three written validated references were available from past employers for two of the adults.
 - (b) One written validated reference was available from reputable sources for one of the adults.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for twelve staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another state was not required for the two staff files reviewed.
- (4) Evidence of completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent was on file for two staff.

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) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.
- (2) On the day of inspection when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service at 09.43am the following preschool care rooms were in operation, namely:
- Montessori room: There were 20 preschool children aged 3-5 years present with 3 staff members.
 - Toddler room 1: There were 7 preschool children aged 2-3 years present with 2 staff members.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- Toddler room 2: There were 10 preschool children aged 3-5 years present with 2 staff members.

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-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) (a-i)

Twelve records of the preschool children attending the service were reviewed. The required information including authorisation to collect the child, details of illness or special needs of the child, emergency contact and details of the child's general practitioner, were fully completed for each child.

(3) (c)

The records in writing were available for inspection by the early year's inspector.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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:*

- (a) *the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) *details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) *details of the adult: child ratios in the service;*
- (d) *the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) *the facilities available;*
- (f) *the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) *the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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.*

(3) *A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) (a)-(k)

On the day of the inspection, it was found that the service kept a record of the required information as outlined below.

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and employees were available.
- (b) The class of service and age profile of the children for which the service is registered for was 0-6 years.
- (c) Details of the adult to child ratios were available on the daily attendance records.
- (d) The type of care programme provided.
- (e) The facilities available were full day care.
- (f) The opening hours and fees were displayed in the hallway of the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- (g) The policy book was reviewed, and the service was found to keep a record of the policies, procedures and statements required under Regulation 10.
 - (h) Daily attendance records containing the time of the children's arrival to and departure from the service were observed in a sample of records reviewed on the attendance register.
 - (i) The staff roster detailed staff attendance.
 - (j) There were medicine administration records on file in each care room.
 - (k) Records of accident or incident forms were kept on file in each care room.
- (3) The person in charge made the records available to the inspector on request in the service.

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 arrival to the service the external doors were secure to prevent an unauthorised person entering the service and children from exiting the service unnoticed. A buzzer system was in place to facilitate admission to the service. All internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas store cupboards containing hazardous objects and materials were secured and out of children's reach.
- Risk assessments on indoor and outdoor play areas were completed daily and noted to be maintained up to date. There was no evidence of hazards in the indoor or outdoor areas, toys and play equipment appeared in good repair and all electrical flexes and cables were in good condition and out of children's reach.
- The outdoor area was secured with tall walls and a bolted gate to prevent children from exiting unsupervised.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children attending the service.

Infection Control:

- The pre-school rooms and adjoining sanitary facilities were in a clean and hygienic condition. Up to date cleaning schedules outlining appropriate cleaning methods and the various areas to be cleaned within the playrooms and sanitary accommodation were available.
- Staff members were observed cleaning play areas and frequently touched surfaces after children's use and prior to snack time and dinner.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- Handwashing was supervised by the adults to ensure all hands were cleaned effectively.
- Soothers were stored individually with children's names on them.
- The care rooms and sanitary accommodation was adequately ventilated by way of openable windows or mechanical ventilation in cases where no window was available. The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available within the service for safe disposal of waste.
- Aprons and gloves were available and observed in use by staff when changing of a child was required.
- Soap was readily available to children to wash their hands prior to eating, after both toileting and nappy changes. Child friendly handwashing posters were placed beside the sinks. Handwashing was supervised by the adults to ensure all hands were cleaned effectively.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff described how they were familiar with the administration of medicines policy and had signed the policy to ensure familiarity, which were observed by the inspector. The inspector reviewed a sample of administration of medication records and found that these had been completed in adherence to the service policy.

Safe Sleep:

- The service had a designated sleep room with appropriate cots available to children.
- Sleep checks were observed to occur every ten minutes.
- Standard cots were available for babies under two years of age.
- Stackable floor beds were available for children over two years of age.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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 procedure was in place to practice and record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated the 15/05/2026.
- (a) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the service was on file. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated 16/02/2026.
 - (b) The records for the smoke detection system indicated the last service occurred in 30/03/2026.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) was available and open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (4) On the day of inspection, a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were observed to be displayed in a conspicuous place within the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured adequate insurance was in place for the full day care service for 46 children up until 31/08/2026.