

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL050
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Name of Service:	Butterflies Creche & Montessori
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Address of Service:	Lusk House, Station Road, Lusk, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K45 N529
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Name of Registered Provider:	Cathy Crinigan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	27/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	23
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2nd Floor, Unit 4/5, the Nexus Building, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Ballycoolin, Dublin 15.
Inspection undertaken by:	Y Kelly & AM Coyle
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable.
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Description of service

Butterflies Crèche & Montessori has been operating as an early years service since 2010 and is registered to accommodate pre-school children from 0 - 6 years on a full day care, part time and sessional basis. The service operates from 7.30am to 6.00pm each weekday for 51 weeks a year, closing for one week over Christmas. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) with starting times scheduled for 9.00am and 9.15am, staggered for ease of parking and to reduce traffic movement in the vicinity of the service. The service also caters for school aged children up to 9 years of age. The service is conducted from a converted coach house and adjoining prefabricated units located on the grounds of the registered provider's family home situated on the outskirts of Lusk village in north Co Dublin. Four care rooms are operated from the converted coach house, namely the Busy Bees full day care room and the Busy Bees Playschool room located on the ground floor, and Montessori Room 1 and Montessori Room 2 located on the first floor. The Wobbler Room and the Toddler Room are conducted from an adjoining interconnecting prefabricated building, while the Pre-Montessori Room is conducted from an additional adjoining prefabricated unit. Two enclosed outdoor play areas are provided in the service, one to the rear of the service which is used by the children attending the Wobbler Room and the Toddler Room, and an enclosed area to the front of the service, designated for use by children attending the remaining care rooms.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 14 staff members comprising of an operations manager and a creche manager and a further 12 staff members. One of these 14 staff members are appointed as assistant managers (of whom one prepares and cook the food provided on a daily basis, in addition to providing relief cover in the care rooms when required) and 1 of these 14 staff members is employed to work with school aged children only. Two staff members are employed in the service to reduce the adult to child ratio and if necessary to work with children with additional needs, posts which are funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme. The operations manager engages in administrative duties and is not allocated to a care room on a daily basis but provides support across all care rooms when required. The registered provider was not present in the service during the inspection and does not work directly with the children attending the service.

Methodology

Tusla 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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the regulations 9, 11, 19, 20, 23 and 26. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobblers Room, Toddler Room, Pre-Montessori Room (ECCE), Busy Bees 1, Montessori Room 1 and Montessori Room 2.

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 operations manager, the creche manager, 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-

- (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*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The operations manager is the designated person in charge of the service and the creche manager deputises as the person in charge as required.

(b) The operations manager and creche manager were present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service at 09:00am.

(2) Garda vetting was reviewed for 15 adults including the registered provider and the person in charge, and the following was recorded:

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the registered provider and all 14 staff members. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory

Notice requiring service to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

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) On the day of the inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced at the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In the Wobbler Room there were 3 children aged 1 year 4 months to 1 year 10 months being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In the Toddler Room there were 5 children aged 2-year 1 month to 2 year 3 months being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In Pre-Montessori Room there were 10 children aged 3 years 3 months to 4 years 5 months being cared for by 3 staff members.
- In Busy Bees Room 1 there were 4 children aged 2 years 8 months to 2 years 11 months being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In Montessori Room 1 there were 4 children aged 4 years 3 months to 5 years being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In Montessori Room 2 there were 7 children aged 4 years to 5 years being cared for by 2 staff members.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present in the service at all times. This was confirmed by the staff roster and sign in records.

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) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Children's meals were cooked by the chef following a weekly menu plan. Morning snack consisted of fruit including mandarins and grapes and yoghurts and dinner consisted of 'chilli con carne', minced meat, kidney beans and rice. There were alternative food options available for children with additional dietary requirements or preferences. There was information about children's dietary requirements displayed in the rooms.
- The children's personal care needs were attended to promptly. Nappy changing took place at scheduled times in the care rooms and more frequently as required throughout the day.
- Children's water bottles were accessible to the children and children were observed getting drinks of water independently.
- Children under two years of age slept in cots in the sleep room and the toddler room at their scheduled sleep time after they had their dinner. The children aged over 2 years in the service who required sleep slept on stackable beds set up in the Pre-Montessori room after dinner.
- All of the children attending the service were given the opportunity to spend time in the outdoor area during the inspection.

Supporting relationships

- Staff demonstrated warm and caring interactions with the children. There is a key person approach implemented in the service.
- There was a welcoming atmosphere in the service. Children were comforted when upset and children received praise and encouragement from staff.

- During transition to sleep, staff were available to assist the children in getting ready and helping them to settle.
- Staff communicate with parents through use of a digital software application to share information about children's care needs and observations of children's learning and development.

Physical and material environment:

- There was age-appropriate furniture with small child sized chairs and tables for children to sit whilst they played or for mealtimes.
- In the Wobbler room and Busy Bees room 1, play resources that were available were stored on low level shelving for the children to access.
- The Pre-Montessori room contained defined areas of interest including a home area with a kitchen and a variety of supportive play materials, construction resources, transport toys in addition to a range of jigsaws and tabletop materials. A tuff tray containing rice provided the children with the opportunity for sensory play, a family wall allowing the children to bridge the gap between the service and home was located alongside the rest area. Arts and crafts materials were available, and the children's artwork was displayed in the room.
- There were two outdoor areas in the service, one of which was located to the rear of the service and designated for use by the children attending the Wobbler Room and the Toddler Room. This area was surfaced with impact-absorbent material and contained two low-level slides, a playhouse, small rockers and a selection of ride on toys. A narrow lean-to structure provided shelter along the boundary wall. The outdoor area to the front of the service, designated for children attending the remaining care rooms, was also surfaced with impact-absorbent material. This area contained a large plastic climbing frame, 2 small slides and a dome shaped climbing frame, a range of ride on and push along toys. Two outdoor kitchens were located beneath a wooden canopy.

Programme of Activities and its Implementation:

- Children's learning and development is documented through observations of the children. These are shared with the parents through a digital software application.
- Throughout the care rooms transitions were observed to be well managed and children were involved in tidy up time. A staff member read a story to the children whilst they were sitting in the cosy corner relaxing after dinner time and before sleep time.

- The daily routine was displayed on the wall in the rooms, and the routine was reflected in practice. There was a daily routine timeline with pictures displayed in the Busy Bees room 1. Routines provided for predictability and comfort for young children.

Non-Compliance Information

Physical and material environment:

- There was limited interest areas developed for the children to initiate or sustain child led play experiences in the Wobbler room, Toddler room, Busy Bees room 1. Due to the room layouts, there was minimal opportunity for child-initiated activities and opportunities for children to engage with a range of materials in the environment based on children's choices, interests and preferences this resulted in the activities being predominantly adult led.
- There was a lack of sensory or wooden materials available for the children to use, there was no sand, water or other materials provided for the children to enjoy hands on sensory play experiences in the Wobbler room, Toddler room or Busy Bees room 1 or in the outdoor area of the service. Therefore, this did not provide opportunities for children to engage with materials that stimulated children's senses and or to enhance children's learning and development experiences.
- The play resources in the Toddler room were not easily accessible to the children which did not support child led play, for example the dress up materials were stored in a box which was difficult for the children to retrieve, and the children's books were stored in a box on a shelf which were not easily accessible to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Physical and material environment:

- The physical and material environments in the Wobbler Room, Toddler Room, and Busy Bees Room 1 have been thoroughly reviewed and restructured to support child-led learning and development. Dedicated interest areas have been developed in each room to encourage self-initiated play experiences based on children's individual interests and emerging preferences. Staff have been trained and reminded to maintain child-accessibility standards daily and to rotate resources based on observation of children's interests.
- Open-ended, natural and sensory materials including wooden toys, sand and water trays, and textured sensory boards and boxes have been introduced across all three rooms and the outdoor area.

3. In the Toddler Room, all play resources, including dress-up clothes and books, are now stored at child-friendly heights and in open shelving units or shallow trays that allow for independent access. Staff have been trained and reminded to maintain child-accessibility standards daily and to rotate resources based on observation of children’s interests.

Preventive Action

1.2.3. Ongoing audits will be conducted monthly to ensure that materials remain accessible, appropriate, and reflective of the children’s interests. All room leaders are now responsible for documenting interest areas and sensory provision in their weekly planning. Regular photographic evidence will be collected to monitor compliance.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances under Regulation 19 have been addressed.

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-
- (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.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) The sleep room which adjoined the Wobbler Room contained 5 standard cots and there were cots available for four children sleeping in the toddler room ensuring that all children aged less than 2 years had access to a standard cot on a daily basis. A sufficient number of stackable beds were available in the service for the children aged 2 years and older.

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:

- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of the children.
- The outdoor play area was fully enclosed and secured and was mainly surfaced with an impact absorbing surface in both outdoor play areas.
- Grapes were observed to have been cut into small pieces at snack time.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and dispensed handtowels were available in the sanitary facilities.
- Pedal operated bins were available for waste and disposal of contaminated items.
- Windows were open for air circulation in sanitary accommodation.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of the inspection.
- Children's health care plans were displayed in the rooms and signed by parents. Staff had knowledge about children's health care plans.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed conducting physical checks of sleeping children every 10 minutes which was recorded on an electronic application and shared with parents.
- The ambient temperature in the sleep room adjoining the Wobbler Room was 19°C at 12.20pm, 19.7°C in the Toddler room at 12.28pm and 20.8°C at 12.35pm in the Pre-Montessori room where children were sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were unobstructed in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- There were fire drill procedures displayed in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The front gate and entrance doorway into the premises were found to be unsecured on the inspectors' arrival to the service at 9.00am and at 1:40pm. This posed a risk to a child to leave the service unsupervised, or an unauthorised person could gain access to the service.
2. Garda vetting was available for the registered provider and 14 adults. However, two vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Infection Control:

3. Ineffective handwashing practices were observed which increase the risk of cross contamination and reduce infection control as evidenced by the following:
 - Wipes were used to wash children's hands and faces after the children had finished eating dinner in Busy Bees room 1.
 - The children attending the Toddler room did not have their hands washed following nappy changing.
 - The children in the Toddler room were provided with a communal bowl of water to wash their hands in before they ate their morning snack, children should have their hands individually washed with warm water and soap.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

General Safety:

1. The current gate arrangement remains in line with fire safety instructions issued by the Fire Officer, which require that the gate be able to freely open and close to ensure a safe emergency exit. However, additional measures have been put in place to ensure child safety and to control unauthorised access: Children have no access to the courtyard or front entrance area once inside the building, as internal doors remain secured and children are always under supervision. Security cameras are installed and actively monitoring all entry points around the crèche grounds and Lusk House, including the front gate and entrance doorway. Staff are fully aware of their responsibility to question and verify any unexpected persons entering the premises.
2. Garda vetting has now been renewed for the two individuals in question. All adults working in the service, including the registered provider, now have up-to-date Garda vetting disclosures dated within the past three years, in full compliance with the requirements of EYI-RN12.3.

Infection Control:

3. All staff have been reminded of and retrained on correct hand hygiene procedures in line with HSE and Tusla guidance. The following actions have been taken:
 - Children's hands and faces are now washed with warm water and soap at sinks following all meals.
 - Handwashing is now carried out for each child after every nappy change in the Toddler Room.
 - The use of a communal bowl for handwashing has been discontinued. All children now wash their hands individually at a sink using warm water and soap before meals and snacks.

Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The crèche will continue to comply with fire regulations while also maintaining high standards of security. All staff have been reminded of access control procedures and are expected to remain vigilant throughout the day. CCTV footage is regularly reviewed, and a visitor log is maintained. Should fire regulations change, the manager reported that the service is prepared to install an alternative secured entry system in compliance with safety and fire guidelines.
2. Staff files will be reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure everything is up to date.

Infection Control:

3. Room leaders will monitor hand hygiene practices daily, and management will carry out monthly audits to ensure compliance with infection control procedures.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Evidence of Garda vetting.
- Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances under Regulation 23 have been addressed.

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 of fire drills was available on the premises with the last fire drill dated as having been carried out on the 22 May 2025.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available. Firefighting equipment was last serviced on 27 August 2024 and the smoke alarms were serviced on the 10 March 2025.
- (4) Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the service.