

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KE024
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Busy Fingers Creche
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Corbally, Newbridge, Co. Kildare
<b>Eircode:</b>	W12 X579
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Mary Burke
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
<b>Day 1 of Inspection:</b>	28/05/2025
<b>Day 2 of Inspection:</b>	29/05/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	145	PM	111
<b>Day 2</b>	AM	140	PM	108

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Naas, Co Kildare
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F Carty and R Brien
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

Busy Fingers Crèche is a privately owned childcare facility. The service is registered to accommodate children aged 0 to 6 years. An option of sessional, part time and full day care is available. Sessions are provided from 9.00am to 12.00pm daily, over a 38-week annual period, in conjunction with the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The service is open from 7.15am to 6.30pm.

The service is located in a rural area of Newbridge, Co Kildare and operates from a purpose build premises. The service comprises of twelve care rooms, three designated sleep rooms and four separate outdoor areas. On the days of inspection all twelve rooms were open to preschool children.

### Staffing

There are currently forty-three staff employed by the service including the registered provider, a manager and deputy, two cooks, an auxiliary staff member, administrator and thirty-six adults who work directly with the children. Present on the days of the inspection were the registered provider, manager, two cooks and thirty-three adults working with the children. The registered provider works in the service managing oversight of 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

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, information and records, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 – Staffing Levels

Regulation 16 – Information and records

Regulation 19 – Health, welfare and development of the child

Regulation 23 – Safety

Regulation 25 – First Aid

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the following rooms:

Baby 1 room

Baby 2 room

Baby 3 room

Baby 4 room

Toddler 1 room

Toddler 2 room

ECCE 3 room

Regulation 16 (1)(i) and (k).

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 registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on both days of inspection.

### 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.*

*(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.*

*(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

Documentation was reviewed in respect of all adults who worked in the service. Regulation (9)(3) was reviewed in respect of nineteen staff members who commenced employment since the last inspection dated 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(9)(2)

(a)(b)

Seventy one written and validated references from a past employer and fifteen from a reputable source were available for review for all adults employed in the service.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults who worked in the service. The registered provider also demonstrated compliance with the regulatory notice to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International Police vetting was available for four adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months.

(4)

The required minimum qualification or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Minister was available for thirty seven adults who worked directly with the children.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(d)

International Police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(3)

Eight references for four staff members were not checked prior to the staff commencing work in the service. Seven Garda vetting checks were not received or reviewed by the registered provider prior to the adults commencing work in the service.

(4)

There was no evidence available to demonstrate that one adult held the required qualification or an equivalent as deemed by the Minister.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d)

The staff member has tried numerous times to get an appointment with the country's embassy, they received confirmation that they got an appointment for 3rd July 2025 at 11am. Please note the staff member is not on the premises for the summer months. We have added a line to our interview questionnaire to remind us when interviewing to ask potential employee about international vetting if applicable.

(3)

Our normal procedure when educators commence in Busy Fingers, we induct the educators for training the week (not included in ratio of staff to children when been inducted) previous to the Educators actual commencement date to work in the rooms. Throughout the week the manager would usually check out the references and ensure

the educators staff file is in order. We have added a mandatory step to the recruitment checklist, reference checks completed, date and signature. A designated compliance officer is now responsible for verifying completion of all staff files.

(4)

Required qualification was later found on file.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

(2)(d)

Photo of email confirmation of Embassy appointment.

(3)

No supporting documentation submitted.

(4)

Copy of a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children.

### **Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents submitted by the registered provider were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 9. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

## 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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 145 attending the service being supervised by 34 adults on the first day of inspection and 140 children being supervised by 34 adults on the second day of inspection.

(8)(a)

The roster demonstrated that there were always two adults on the premises.

## 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 attendance of each preschool child was recorded accurately on a software application and available for inspection.
- (i) A staff roster was furnished to the inspectors on their arrival and accurately reflected the staff compliment on the day of inspection.
- (j) Twenty-medication administration records were reviewed and contained the relevant information and parental signatures.
- (k) Nineteen accident and incident reports were reviewed. All contained the required information.

### 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 inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection. The service had a healthy eating policy in place and the registered provider reported that all meals are provided by the service for children who attended on a full and part time care basis. Children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner as required. Drinking water was available in the care rooms at all times. Bibs were provided for younger children when eating.

Older children all accessed the toilet independently during the inspection and staff supported younger children where required. Children requiring nappy changes were changed regularly and when required. Staff demonstrated kindness and warmth during interactions observed by the inspectors and were engaged with the children throughout the inspection. Comfort was offered to children promptly when required. The children appeared happy and content at their play throughout the inspection and were provided with freedom of choice in the materials they wished to use. Children were observed to access the outdoor area on the first day of the inspection.

Staff showed good knowledge of the children's likes and dispositions and were empathetic when speaking of the children especially those who required additional comfort and reassurance. Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Staff were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour management policy. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed.

There was a designated nap time in the Toddler rooms. The individual sleep needs of the children attending the Baby rooms were met with children being put to sleep when they were tired or as their routine dictated. Staff provided comfort to the children when they were settling to sleep, using soft tones and offering reassurance where required.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using an online application detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities. Staff were observed engaging with parents during drop off and collection when staff shared information about the children with their parents at these times.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. During dinner time in the Toddler 2 room, children were not offered more food. Staff were observed giving an additional portion to one child who requested more, however a second child who requested more was told by staff that no more was available. Staff stated to the inspector when asked that there was no more available.
2. In Baby 4 room some children were not given the opportunity to self-feed. A staff member was observed to feed 4 children at the same time whilst they were sitting in highchairs with the bowls out of reach. At times some children appeared to be frustrated that the food was not coming quick enough. Three other children in the room were given an opportunity to self-feed with help from a staff member. All children were approaching 2 years of age. The independence of all children was not supported.
3. Staff did not wipe children's noses in a timely manner in the Baby 1 room despite staff facing them and having them sit on their lap. The personal care needs of all children were not met in a timely manner.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. We wish to clarify that there is always sufficient food available on site, as our in-house kitchen can provide additional portions upon request. In this instance, staff should have contacted the kitchen to arrange for more food to be brought up. We have reminded staff of the correct procedure to ensure that all children's needs are met promptly in the future.
2. We acknowledge the concern raised about children not being given the opportunity to self-feed, and the observation of a staff member feeding multiple children at once with bowls out of reach. We understand that this practice does not promote children's independence or support best practice in early years settings. We spoke with the staff on the importance of promoting self-feeding, offering support only as needed. Placing food and utensils within children's reach so they can choose and try feeding themselves. Ensuring feeding is unhurried and responsive to each child's pace and cues. Sitting with children at their level, engaging in positive social interactions during mealtimes. Our actions going forward will include reviewing and updating our mealtime policy to promote self-feeding opportunities for all children. Staff will receive refresher training on supporting children's independence during meals, including how to

balance supervision and encouragement. We will regularly monitor mealtime practices to ensure these standards are maintained. We are committed to creating a mealtime environment that supports children's independence, choice, and social development.

- All staff were reminded immediately following the inspection that children's noses must be wiped promptly to maintain hygiene and comfort. The staff members involved have been individually spoken to about expectations for attentive supervision and responsive care. We have conducted a refresher training session for all staff on infection control and responsive care practices. A new hygiene monitoring checklist has been implemented to ensure staff regularly check and attend to children's needs, including nose wiping. Management have started spot checks throughout the day to ensure standards are maintained consistently. This expectation will be added to our induction training for all new staff so they are aware of best practice. We are committed to continuous improvement and will ensure this issue does not recur.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

1-3 No supporting documents submitted.

### **Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 19. This will be reviewed on the next 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**

The inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered providers had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

#### **General Safety:**

The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. A key fob system was in place for parents and staff. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored safely out of reach of children. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.

### Infection Control:

Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Soothers were appropriately stored before and after use.

### Administration of Medication:

A medication policy was in place in the service. Care plans were in place for children attending the service who required emergency medication.

### Safe Sleep:

Standard cots were provided for children under two years to sleep in and low-level sleeping beds were provided for children over two years to rest on as required. Staff were aware of safe sleep guidelines and checked on children every ten minutes.

### Fire Safety:

Regular fire drills took place in the service and all emergency exits were kept free from obstruction.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. A number of hazards were identified in the outdoor area posing a risk to the safety of children as follows:
  - In the yellow slide garden, the area under the slide had broken wooden panels which had sharp edges.
  - In the Astro Garden the wood belonging to the blackboard was chipped in places and there were exposed sharp edges.
  - In the Astro garden the number plate on the tractor was broken in two, the broken edges were sharp.
  - In the Tractor garden there was a large hole in the wooden climbing structure.
  - In the Asphalt garden the wood on the side of the play house was chipped in places. The wooden anchor on the boat was water damaged and breaking away, the portholes on the wooden play boat also had visible water damage in place.
  - In the Bark garden there was a hole in the small black and blue climbing frame.

#### Infection Control:

2. A number of handwashing practices posed a risk of cross contamination as follows:
  - Staff in the baby room 4 and Toddler 2 did not wash their hands after wiping children's noses or after nappy changing.
  - Children attending Baby 1, 4 and Toddler 2 rooms did not wash their hands prior to meals.

- Staff in Baby 4 room and Toddler 2 did not wash the children's hands following nappy changing.
- Children were observed mouthing toys in the Baby rooms these were not removed from circulation, children were observed to have runny noses in these rooms.
- Three mattresses were not protected with waterproof covers.

This was found non-compliant on the last inspection dated 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

The preventive and corrective actions submitted by the registered provider did not prevent this non-compliance from re-occurring.,

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. All hazards identified were repaired immediately. Staff were spoken to, to ensure all risk assessment are carried out and management is notified immediately.

#### Infection Control:

2. Hand Washing: We immediately retrained all the staff on hand hygiene, we sent out our policy on hand washing to all educators. We ensured all posters on how to hand wash were displayed at nappy changing areas and also in all the classrooms in the creche. We also resent out the video again on nappy changing to all the Educators. Supervisor has been checking nappy changing and toileting times. We have instructed staff to wash hand frequently throughout the day and to ensure the children do the same.

Mouthed toys, we removed all mouthed toys from circulation immediately for thorough cleaning and disinfection. Retrained staff to identify and remove mouthed toys immediately after use. Runny noses, we ensure that tissues are always accessible to staff and children to ensure noses are wiped promptly. Three mattresses were not protected; I purchased new protectors immediately.

#### Handwashing

We now have hygiene refresher training for all staff. We have included food safety and hand hygiene in our staff induction training. We also have added hand washing before meals as a mandatory step in our daily routine check list.

#### Mouthed toys

We have a clear protocol for managing mouthed toys (we have a container in each room labelled to be cleaned) this is used to collect all the mouthed toys rather than the toys staying in circulation for play.

#### Runny noses

We have reinforced regular health checks throughout the day. We have encouraged a culture of accountability where staff remind each other of procedures.

### Mattress protectors

Staff were advised when washing the sheets and mattress protectors weekly to ensure they are put back on the cots.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Photos of the repairs and removal of hazards in the garden area.

#### Infection Control:

2. Invoice showing purchase of new mattress protectors.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23. This will be reviewed on the next 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.*

*(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-*

*(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and*

*(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

There were two adults trained as First Aid Responders who were available to the children at all times.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box available to the adults caring for the children at all times. These were available in a conspicuous position in each care room in the service.