

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KY024
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Buddies Crèche & Childcare Facility
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Benmore, Ballyduff, Tralee, Co. Kerry
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V92 A7VC
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Anthony O'Carroll
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	29/07/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	30	PM	08
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	N. Reidy
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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>	N/A
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### Description of service

This community-based purpose-built early years service is registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day care to children aged between 0 and 6 years. The service is open between the hours of 07:30 am and 6:00 pm Monday to Friday.

There are 4 care rooms in the building, a sleep room in the baby/ wobbler room and sanitary accommodation located in each of the care rooms. The children attending the service have access to designated outdoor play areas located to the rear and to the side of the building.

### Staffing

There are currently 19 adults attached to the early years service, 17 of whom are involved in the direct care of the children. The registered provider is not service based and does not work directly with the children who attend the setting and there is a designated adult working in the kitchen.

### 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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the

registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

## 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.*

*(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 service had a designated person in charge and deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection. In the event the person or deputy person in charge were not on the premises, a named person able to deputise was available.
- (b) The person in charge and the named deputy person in charge were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.
- (2) The staff files for each of the 19 adults attached to the service were inspected.
- (a) Of the 38 references required, 26 validated references were available from past employers.
- (b) Of the 38 references required, 12 validated references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures has been obtained for all 19 adults. 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) Police vetting was available for 1 adult who lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months required it.
- (4) The adults working directly with children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least 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.

### 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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The baby room was not in operation on the day of the inspection. The required adult to child ratios were observed in the 3 care rooms in operation on the day as follows:

Morning:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Creche (1 year to 2 years)	8	3
Junior Pre-school (2 to 3 years)	7	3
Senior Pre-school (4- 11 years)	15	3

Afternoon:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Creche	2	1

(1 year to 2 years)		
Junior Pre-school (2 to 3 years)	4	1
Senior Pre-school (4- 11 years)	2	1

(8) (a) The registered provider did ensure that a minimum of two adults were always on the premises during the hours of operation.

### 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)

#### Basic Needs:

- The children's toileting and hygiene needs were attended to regularly during the day. The staff supported and encouraged the children with self-toileting as was needed.
- Nappy changing was carried out as required during the day. The children were spoken to and interacted with by the staff during nappy changing.
- The mealtimes observed were relaxed and unhurried.
- Roll over snack was observed in practice in the Junior pre-school whereby the children were facilitated to eat food that was provided by the parents as they requested to during the morning.
- The service offers a main hot meal each day to the children that is cooked each day in the main kitchen in the Resource Centre as well as providing food for some of the snack times.
- A designated adult is employed in the kitchen in the service to prepare all the food that is served to the children and distribute it on a trolley to each of the care rooms.
- The children were offered additional food as observed at the morning snack in the Junior pre-school.
- The food observed on inspection included cereal with milk, buttered toast, grated cheese, sliced kiwi, oranges, turkey, vegetables, gravy and mashed potatoes with water to drink.

- The kitchen was well stocked with a variety of fresh and dried food items for example fruit, yogurts, cheese, bread and crackers.
- The rest areas provided in the 2 pre-school rooms were furnished with low level seating and a range of matting and cushions.
- The children were observed to use these rest areas, opting out of activities and talking to their friends.
- Children that were transitioning between the rooms were supported by the staff on the day. The staff were observed to be kind, caring, patient and nurturing to the children in their care.
- The staff were observed to comfort children as needed, sitting them on their laps whilst sitting on the adult chairs, putting a blanket around them and reading a story.

### Physical and Material Environment:

- The children in each room enjoyed freedom of movement within the rooms and they spent time in the outdoor play areas.
- The service informed the inspector that further plans to develop a construction play area in the outdoor area are planned.
- A variety of natural and artificial grass areas and tarmac surfaces were underfoot.
- The play equipment in the outdoor areas included for example, a fixed activity unit that was re-positioned on the grassed area with moveable soft mats since the last inspection, football goals posts and balls, swings, cars, sand and water play tables.
- The rooms were furnished with an adequate number of child sized chairs and tables.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

#### Basic Needs

1. There was no rest area provided in the creche where children to opt out of an activity or rest as they wished to during the day.

#### Physical and Material Environment:

2. The creche did not an adequate amount of play materials and equipment readily available and accessible to the children on inspection.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Seating and a cozy area for rest time was added immediately.
2. Additional play materials that are readily available and accessible at all times were added.

All staff were informed that at all times seating will be available to the children and that a variety of play materials are to be accessible at all times to the children.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

1. Photographs of additional seating, mats and cushions provided.
2. Photographs of accessible toys in place.

### **Summary Comment**

The requirement for this regulation is met.

### **Part VI - Safety**

#### **Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child**

*A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.*

### **Compliance Information**

#### **General Safety:**

- The outdoor play area secured with fencing and gates to prevent the children gaining unsupervised access to the roadway.
- The internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas.
- The external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access.

#### **Infection Control:**

- Children were observed washing their hands after returning from playing outdoors and after using the toilet with the staff members on hand to provide assistance as needed.
- The nappy changing unit, the vinyl changing mat and its surrounds were clean and dry.

#### **Administration of Medication:**

- The inspector was informed that no child attending on the day of inspection was in receipt of medication.

### **Non-Compliance Information**

#### **General Safety:**

1. The swing unit located on the natural grass area outdoors was not secured posing a risk of injury to children.
2. There was an unsecured folded table tennis unit on wheels stored in the outdoor play area under the canopy posing accessible to children posing a risk of injury.

- Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 19 adults attached to the service. However, one vetting disclosure were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EY-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

**Infection Control:**

- An uncovered unused bottle of milk was not stored in the fridge in the creche room posing a risk of spoilage.
- Not all children's hands were washed after nappy changing was carried out posing a risk of cross contamination.

**Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

**Corrective & Preventive Action**

**General Safety:**

- The swing unit was removed.
- The table tennis table unit is now stored in the shed.
- Vetting was completed for the staff member.

**Infection Control:**

- The milk bottles are stored in the fridge and when finished are washed and sterilized.
- All staff were reminded to wash their hands and the children's hands after nappy changing using the correct hand washing procedure.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**General Safety:**

- A photograph of the outdoor area where the swing unit was removed.
- A photograph of the table tennis unit stored in the shed.
- The Garda vetting for 1 adult was received and a list of renewal dated for each of the adults.

**Infection Control:**

- The statement is accepted as evidence.
- The statement is accepted as evidence.

### Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has been met.

#### 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) It was evident from the staff rota that there was at least one staff member trained in First Aid Responder available on the premises at all times.

(2)(a) First aid kits were stored up high, out of reach of children and clearly identifiable in each of the care rooms.

(b) The first aid kits were suitably stocked for the number of children attending the service. These were available for staff to attend to the children if required.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

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

*(b) safe and secure,*

*(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*

*(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

*(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

### Compliance Information

(b) The premise was secured with appropriate security systems in place to protect the premise from any unauthorised entry and unsupervised exit of children from the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

(c)

1. The 1 light positioned over the wash hand basins in the lobby of the creche sanitary accommodation was not in working order. This light was the only source of lighting in the area.

- (d)
2. A number of the window blinds were broken in the care rooms rendering them not suitable for use.
- (e)
3. There were 2 toilets and 1 wash hand basin in the Senior pre-school sanitary accommodation for the 15 children attending. The requirement is 1 toilet and 1 wash hand basin for 11 toilet trained children.
  4. There was 1 toilet and 1 wash hand basin provided for the 14 staff on the premise. The requirement is 1 toilet and 1 wash hand basin for 8 adults.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

- (c)
1. The light has been replaced and is now in working order.
- (d)
2. All the broken window blinds were removed. A quotation was obtained, and the blinds will be installed over the next 4 weeks.
- (e)
3. An additional sink will be installed in the senior pre-school room sanitary accommodation within 4 – 6 weeks approximately.
  4. The service has access to additional toilets within the building.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

- (c)
1. A photograph of the light in working order.
- (d)
2. A quotation for the replacement window blinds.
- (e)
3. A quotation for installation of the additional wash hand basin.
  4. A photograph of the additional adult toilet.

### Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has been met. The above will be inspected as part of the next inspection.