

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY025
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Name of Service:	Budding Explorers
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Address of Service:	Lisloose, Tralee, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 FTX8
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nicola Barry
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	02/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>19</td> <td>PM</td> <td>None</td> </tr> </table>	AM	19	PM	None
AM	19	PM	None		

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy
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	N/A
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Description of service

Budding Explorers is a private early years service, it is registered to provide sessional care for children aged between the age of 2 years and 6 years. The service is operating between the hours of 08:50 am and 11:50 am Monday to Friday. The service operates from a purpose-built structure located adjacent to the registered provider's private residence. The children attending the service have access each day to a spacious, well developed outdoor play area.

Staffing

There are three adults employed in the service of whom one is the registered provider. Each of the three adults are involved in the direct care of the children.

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 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.*

(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 is the designated person in charge and there two named deputies who can deputize as required.
- (b) At all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the registered provider and the named deputy is on the premise.
- (2)
- The registered provider confirmed that three adults were employed in the service. The recruitment records in respect of these three adults were the subject of the inspection.
- (a)
- Six written references and validations were on file from a past employer.
- (b)
- Not applicable, the six references were supplied by past employers.
- (c)
- The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in respect of each of the three adults.
- (d)
- Police vetting was on file for one adult who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 5 and above

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) Throughout the period of inspection, the registered provider did ensure that there was an adequate number of adults caring for the children attending the service.

(3) There were 2 adults caring for 19 children aged between 3 to 5 years attending the service on a sessional basis. The adult child ratio was correct.

(8)(c) Not applicable as the service does not currently operate single-handedly.

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) There was a record for each of the 22 children enrolled in the service. A sample of 11 records were the subject of inspection. Each of the 11 records had the required detail as per(a) to (i).
- (3) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection on the premises.

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

Basic Needs

- The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their individual level of independence, for example removing the outdoor protective clothing on returning from playing outside.
- The service encouraged an awareness of healthy habits in children for example the availability of boxes of tissues within the reach of the children, encouraging hand washing after playing in the outdoor area and after using the toilet.
- The service had pictures and instructions displayed to support the children's effective hand washing.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop self-help skills for example by the provision of individual coat hooks with their photographs over each in the playroom, this facilitated access and independence.
- The parents supplied the food consumed at the mealtime during the inspection.
- The children washed their hands after playing outdoors prior to eating. The children choose where they wished to sit: - some sat on the low-level chairs at the low-level tables and some on the low-level stools at the low-level bench.
- The registered provided ensured the playroom temperature was within the recommended range, it was recorded at 18 degrees Celsius.
- Each of the children had enough time to eat and enjoy their food without being rushed in any way.
- The atmosphere at the mealtime was relaxed, both adults read a story to the children during this time.
- The food observed included wraps, crackers and a variety of fruit and water to drink.
- When finished eating the children independently placed their lunch bags on the allocated stand in the playroom.

Physical and Material Environment

- The children moved about freely in the spacious outdoor area and in the playroom.
- The registered provider informed that children attending the service have opportunities to be outside as often as is possible. On arrival to conduct the inspection the children were playing in the outdoor area and remained there for a long period of time before going indoors to the playroom for mealtime and additional playtime prior to going home.
- The toys, equipment and materials in the outdoor area supported the children’s play, movement and exploration providing many opportunities exclusive to the outdoors.
- On inspection the children were observed for example chasing rainbow fairies in between the mature trees, observing tadpoles in the small pond, playing in the spacious covered structure with the mud kitchen area that was well resourced with pots, pans and various utensils, playing with the playdough made in the service that morning and in the spacious sand pit area.
- The equipment and materials provided included a wide variety of natural and artificial materials that included for example planting areas, digging areas, wood, wood bark, a variety of mature trees and shrubs, a spacious covered structure with a child sized bench, chairs, adult seating, a mud kitchen and associated utensils and a large sand pit with a variety of tools and toys to play with and a chalkboard and chalks.
- An additional seating area furnished with picnic benches surrounded by planting boxes are used for table tops activities and for mealtimes.
- The staff were observed to be kind, caring and attentive towards the children they were caring for. They reminded children in respect of taking turns when playing and they comforted and re-assured children as needed.
- The playroom was bright, spacious and colourfully decorated with a sample of artwork the children had completed.
- The children’s individual record folders with for example artwork, fire safety week photographs of the children playing with fire engines, dressed in firefighting costumes and a description of the activities and a home exercise that entailed the children identifying and record the location of the fire fighting equipment and the escape routes in the home.

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

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider furnished the inspector with an individual child's record for administration of medication. The said labelled medication was stored securely in a high-level cupboard.

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 3 adults working with the children had current First Aid Responder (FAR) training, the certifications in respect were furnished for inspection.

(2)

(a) The suitably equipped first aid box was stored in a high-level cupboard in the playroom.

(b) The first aid box was accessible to the adults and out of the reach of the children.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certification was furnished for inspection.

The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- the contact details for the insurance provider.
- the name and address of the service insured.
- the category of insurance cover for the service was sessional.
- the number of children covered by the insurance was for 22 children.
- The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27/03/'25.

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

Compliance Information

(b) The premise was observed to be safe and secure.

(e) The indoor playroom had 2 toilets and 2 wash hand basins. There was thermostatically controlled hot water, the temperature did not exceed 43 degrees Celsius.