

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK029
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Name of Service:	Busy Kids Creche
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Address of Service:	Ballycummin Village, Raheen, Co Limerick
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Eircode:	V94PX06
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Name of Registered Provider:	James Moore
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	27/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	69	PM	58
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

Busy Kids Creche is a private childcare service near Limerick city, catering to pre-school children aged 0-6 years and offering afternoon care for school-age children. The facility includes six pre-school rooms, a manager's office, a kitchen, a dining room, sanitary areas, nappy changing rooms, and a sleep room. At the rear, there is a large outdoor play area with a sheltered section for all-weather use.

Staffing

The registered provider is the company director. A designated person in charge is appointed to manage the facility. There are 22 staff employed to work at the service.

All staff have achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent and comparable to the award.

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/premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9, 11, 19, 26 and 29.

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 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.

(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

(1)(a) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy was always available on the premises.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all staff members employed to work at the facility.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources such as colleges and schools.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed to work at the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for any staff member who had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of time in excess of six months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the 27th of March 2025 there were 69 pre-school children and 12 adults on the premises working directly with the children. The adult child ratio was correct.

There were 8 pre-school children and 3 staff in the Wobbler Room.

There were 12 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Toddler Room 1.

There were 8 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Toddler Room 2.

There were 9 pre-school children and 1 staff in the Preschool Room 1.

There were 14 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Preschool Room 2.

There were 18 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Preschool Room 3.

Relief staff were available to replace staff while taking meal breaks. A designated person was available to prepare, cook and serve food to all children who attended the service.

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

Healthy eating was a focus within the service. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were prepared fresh by kitchen staff each day and served at regular intervals to the children in their individual rooms. On the day of the inspection, a beef stir-fry and noodles were served as the main meal of the day. Healthy snacks were provided at regular intervals between meals. Children's drinks were removed from their bags upon arrival to the service and stored within easy reach in each room.

Sanitary accommodation was located close to each room. Nappy changing facilities were situated near the Baby/Wobbler and Toddler rooms, with waist-high changing units accessible. All toiletries were safely stored and clearly labelled, within easy reach of staff while changing. Nappy changing policies were clearly displayed in each

changing room. Sanitary facilities for older children were next to the pre-school rooms, allowing supervision by sight or sound while children used the facilities. Children from the first floor could use the downstairs bathrooms close to the outdoor play area if needed.

A separate sleep room with standard cots was available for children in the Baby/Wobbler room, while low-level sleep beds were used in the Toddler rooms. For children under 2 years who no longer slept in standard cots, a sleep plan with parental consent for low-level beds was available. Sleep periods were closely observed and electronically recorded, with air conditioning units controlling temperatures in sleep rooms.

Relaxation areas in all rooms included comfortable seating, soft floor mats, blankets, and cushions. These rest areas provided spaces for children to relax away from active play areas. Staff encouraged quiet periods during the day to facilitate each child's need for comfort and relaxation. Main room lights were switched off periodically, with soft fairy lights creating a calming atmosphere.

Children experienced regular changes of environment and spent long periods outdoors. Younger children had exclusive access to a separate play area, with sheltered spaces facilitating outdoor activities in various weather conditions.

Consistent staffing helped create a sense of belonging and well-being for the children. Staff worked collaboratively with parents, providing information electronically throughout the day. During transitions between rooms, children were facilitated to relocate on a phased basis.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service operates from a purpose-built facility. On inspection, it was observed that each room within the building was designed to be stimulating, challenging, and engaging for children. Rooms accommodating younger children featured numerous soft floor coverings to facilitate floor play and activities. Low-level wash hand basins promoted regular handwashing among the children. Low-level tables and chairs were used for tabletop activities and dining during mealtimes. Accessible open shelving stored and displayed all equipment. Family photographs were displayed at the children's eye level. Low-level climbing frames encouraged gross motor skills development in younger children. Preschool rooms included small world spaces, construction areas, home corners, imaginative play zones, and messy play sections, all equipped with low-level shelving units that allow children easy access to play materials. Following a review of room layouts by the service, Preschool Room 3 was relocated to a larger double room on the ground floor, offering more interest areas and space for diverse activities. Observations noted increased engagement and general happiness among children in the new space.

Children across all areas had daily access to outdoor play spaces. Sheltered areas outside enabled children to enjoy outdoor activities regardless of weather conditions. The outdoor area offered ample space for running, jumping, climbing steps, playing ball games, and using ride-on toys. Mud kitchens provided a venue for imaginative play, while various gardening areas supported digging and planting activities. Outdoor seating was available for both adults and children.

Non-Compliance Information

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The outdoor play area for the younger children had a limited amount of play materials for the Wobbler/Toddler age group. The following were not available:

Low climbing frames, soft ramps, or padded steps to encourage coordination and balance.

Tunnels – Crawl-through tunnels to promote spatial awareness and sensory exploration.

Obstacle Courses – Age-appropriate stepping stones, balance beams, or soft hurdles to develop motor skills.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider restocked the Wobbler/Toddler outdoor play areas with age-appropriate play equipment to enhance the development of gross motor skills. Regular audits of play equipment in all areas of the service have been scheduled to take place.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the order of the new play materials was forwarded to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified has been adequately 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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. Fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis. The most recent fire drill took place on the 25 March 2025.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of all firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. All equipment was serviced on a regular basis. Extinguishers were last serviced in September 2024.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (a) of sound and stable structure,
 - (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

- (a) The building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally.
- (b) The building appeared safe and secured. A buzzer system on the entrance door ensured all who entered the building were checked in by an authorised person. All visitor access was managed appropriately with a visitor book available at the front door to record details of all who entered the building. Outdoors the play areas were surrounded by secure high walls and gates where no unauthorised access to or exit from the area was permitted.
- (c) All areas of the premises were well lit by natural light and by artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation. All rooms had a heating system, and all areas were ventilated by either openable windows or by mechanical ventilation. All sleep rooms had black out blinds fitted to windows, to reduce lighting in the room while children slept.
- (d) The areas outside were all well maintained and routine cleaning schedules were in place for all internal and external areas.

(e) There were an adequate number of toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing areas available in the service. All waste was managed appropriately with lots of foot pedal operated, lidded bins in all areas. Handwashing and drying facilities were suitable and adequate.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
1. The floor covering along the corridors throughout the premises was worn, marked and stained, making it difficult to adequately clean these areas. It is acknowledged that work had started on replacing all floor coverings, with individual room upgrades completed.
 2. The paint work on wooden nappy changing units in the Baby and Toddler rooms was chipped and worn making these areas difficult to clean.
 3. The wooden nappy changing unit in the Toddler changing room did not have the required steps children needed by children to safely access the facility.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Floor coverings have been replaced along all corridors of the service.
2. Nappy changing units have been replaced.
3. The new units purchased have built in storage and steps.

The services maintenance schedule has been revised to include regular checks on the floor coverings skirting boards.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the changes was forwarded to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified has been adequately addressed.