

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015LK030 | | |
| Name of Service: | Busy Kids Creche | | |
| Address of Service: | Ennis Road, Limerick, Co. Limerick | | |
| Eircode: | V94 KC7K | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | John Mangan | | |
| Service type: | Full Day Care | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 23/06/2023 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 86 | PM 76 |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable |
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Description of service

Busy Kids is a privately owned full day care service located in the outskirts of Limerick City.

It offers a service to children of all pre-school ages. It also provides a service each afternoon to school aged children. It operates Monday to Friday 7.30am to 6.30pm.

The service operates from a purposely built premises. It has a large front entrance lobby and a spacious foyer which has a dining area located in the centre. It has a manager's office, a kitchen, a Baby room, a Wobbler room, 3 Toddler room, and 4 Preschool rooms. It also has 2 designated sleep rooms. There are 5 outdoor play areas, 2 at the front of the premises and the 3 at the rear of the building. Children spend long periods in the outside play areas throughout the day.

Staffing

The registered provider of the service is the regional manager of the Sonas Childcare Company. In Busy Kids there is a manager and a deputy manager on duty at all times. All staff working at the service hold an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education. Staff participate in ongoing training and professional development.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11 19, 20, 23 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 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*
- (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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

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 were always available on the premises.

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

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources.

(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.

(d) Police vetting was available for 6 staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive 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.

(7) All staff were supervised and trained where necessary on

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service.
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services Regulations 2016)

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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection there were 86 pre-school children and 22 adults on the premises. The adult child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

(2) There were 12 preschool children and 3 staff in the Baby Room

There were 11 preschool children and 3 staff in the Wobbler Room

There were 9 preschool children and 2 staff in Toddler Room 1

There were 13 preschool children and 3 staff in Toddler Room 2

There were 6 preschool children and 2 staff in Toddler Room 3

There were 8 preschool children and 3 staff in ECCE Room 1(Outdoor Cabin)

There were 12 preschool children and 3 staff in ECCE Room 2

There were 15 preschool children and 3 staff in ECCE 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 each room of 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

BASIC NEEDS:

Healthy eating was promoted throughout the service. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were prepared fresh on site each day and were served at regular intervals to the children in each individual room. On the day of the inspection chicken, mixed vegetables and rice was served for dinner. Croissants and jam were offered for afternoon break. Extra portions were offered to all children who had finished their meal. Children had easy access to their drinks at all times. Childrens drinks were taken outdoors when children played outside.

Sanitary accommodation was located next to each room in the service. Nappy changing facilities were provided next to the Baby, Wobbler and Toddler room. Easily accessible waist high changing units were available. Steps for older children to use the units were provided. All toiletries for the children were safely stored and clearly labelled and were located within easy reach of all staff. Nappy changing policies were clearly displayed on the wall and all practises observed were in line with the procedures in the policy. Sanitary accommodation for the older children was located next to each of the pre-school rooms. A change of clothes was available for all children. In warm weather sun hats and sunscreen were provided by the parents for all children.

Each room had a supply of tissues and wipes within easy reach of the children. Lidded bins were accessible for the safe disposal of waste.

There was a separate sleep room available with a sufficient number of standard cots accessible at all times to the children in the Baby and Wobbler rooms. Children were closely observed during all sleep periods and all sleep checks were documented in writing. Room temperatures were monitored and air conditioning units were used to ensure safe room temperatures while sleeping. The toddlers over 2 years who required a sleep had access to low level beds. Each child had access to their own bed linen. Staff stayed with the older children during their rest time. Relaxation areas with comfortable seating, soft floor coverings, cushions and blankets were accessible throughout the day in each of the rooms at the service. Low level beds with overhead canopies were added to each of the Toddler rooms.

These areas provided cosy spaces for children to relax in and take time out and away from active play spaces if they were tired. Staff throughout the service encouraged quiet periods during the day to facilitate each child's need for comfort, rest and relaxation.

The children had regular change of environment. They spend long periods of time outdoors in a well-resourced play area to the front, back and side of the premises. Younger children had exclusive access to their own space for safe outdoor play time. A large, sheltered area was provided outside for children to use in all weather conditions. Lots of outdoor seating facilitated children to bring many of the indoor activities to the outside area when weather permitted.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

Each room in the service was designed and planned to meet the individual needs of the various age groups. The Baby and Wobbler rooms had lots of soft floor mats to provide comfort for the children crawling and to facilitate many floor-based activities. Handholds and push along toys were available to facilitate those children learning to walk. Highchairs were available for mealtimes. Comfortable adult seating was accessible in each room. Toys and equipment were stored on low level open shelving. Baskets of toys were located on the floor of the Baby room to make access easy for the children not yet walking.

In the Pre-school and ECCE rooms there were numerous well developed interest areas, building and construction play spaces, art and craft facilities with lots of art easels, paint pots and brushes accessible, messy play areas with sand and water play, imaginative play areas with home corners accessible., dress up clothes and mirrors. All rooms had reading areas with a good variety of reading material. There was an emphasis in each room on the use of natural, open ended play materials. Staff had completed training on creative ideas using recycled materials. Toys and equipment were rotated, and internal and external spaces redesigned depending on each child's preferences, interests and abilities. A sensory room was available on the first floor of the premises. This area provided a quiet relaxation area with lots of soft lighting, comfortable seating and soothing music.

Children were encouraged to spend long periods outside. Lots of seating was available outside for all children. Tunnels, climbing frames, playhouses, slides, swings, ride on toys, rockers and basketball nets, art easels and blackboards were accessible outside. A large, covered area outside provided shelter for the children in all weather conditions. Gardening areas were recently added to the outdoor area at the rear of the premises. Strawberries and apple trees were set outside. Bug hotels and mud kitchens extended the creative play experiences.

Car parks were provided for all outdoor ride on toys with a petrol station prop designed to facilitate the imaginative play experience. The outdoor area was full of open-ended play opportunities and children were observed engaged and enjoying long periods of time outside.

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) A sufficient number of standard cots were provided in the Baby and the Wobbler sleep rooms at the service. All cots were in a proper state of repair and all mattresses appeared clean, firm and the correct size. There was sufficient space between all cots. Staff were all aware of the safe sleep guidelines and were observed closely monitoring all children while sleeping. No duvets, pillows or fleece blankets were used in the cots. All children were facilitated to sleep when tired and not just at prescheduled sleep times. An air conditioning unit was available in both cots rooms and this allowed room temperatures to be controlled between 17 and 20 degrees Celsius. The children over 2 years were allowed sleep on sleep mats in their own rooms. Blinds were pulled, soft music was played and staff sat with the children while they settled down to sleep. Children who woke early were helped to resume play and not disturb the other children who were still sleeping. One child who did not sleep was observed resting with a book in the rest area of the Toddler room while the others slept.

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 services Health and Safety Statement was displayed at the main entrance to the premises. A Health and Safety Officer was appointed to carry out risk assessments on a regular basis in both the internal and the external environment of the service.

On inspection the following was observed:

- All external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas or allowing unsupervised access to the building.
- All emergency exits and fire doors were clear and unobstructed.
- Windows on the first floor all had restrictive opening devices fitted.
- Suitable handrails were provided on the staircase.
- All highchairs were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.
- All toys and furniture were safe for the age group using them, were in good condition, free from obvious pinch and crush points.
- Sharp edges and corners on furniture were protected with rubber covers.

Administration of Medication:

All medicines were stored in their original containers and were clearly labelled. Parents gave written consent for the administration of all medication both prescribed and non-prescribed. All medicines were checked by 2 staff prior to been administered.

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 service appeared of sound and stable structure. No obvious defects were observed on the premises.
- (b) All entrance and exit points appeared well secured. A buzzer system was used to gain access to the building. All visitors were requested to sign in on arrival to the service.
- (c) Adequate natural lighting supplemented by artificial lighting was available in all areas of the service. Air conditioning was provided in all rooms on the first floor of the building and in each sleep room.
- (d) All areas of the service were clean and were maintained in a good state of repair throughout.
- (e) Adequate and suitable sanitary facilities were provided throughout the building.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) The room temperatures in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms downstairs were 23 degrees Celsius despite windows being opened. This recorded temperature was above the recommended limits of 18 degrees Celsius to 21 degrees Celsius for an occupied room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In the reply to the report the registered provider stated that additional measures have been taken to enhance ventilation and temperature control in accordance with relevant guidelines and regulations, ensuring improved air quality. New air conditioning units will be installed in the premises in downstairs care rooms.

Supporting documentation submitted

Ongoing quality control checks will be conducted to monitor the performance of air conditioning units, including temperature control, ventilation, and filtration systems. Daily room temperature checks are conducted, to ensure compliance with relevant regulations, guidelines, and industry standards

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 Premises has been adequately addressed.