

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK101
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Name of Service:	Boro Buddies Preschool
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Address of Service:	Anglesboro National School, Anglesboro, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V35 RH22
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Pratt Hogan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early years inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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

This privately owned preschool service opened in September 2016. It provides a sessional service for children aged 2 to 6 years of age from 08.45 to 12.00hrs for 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from a designated playroom in Anglesboro National school, located in the village of Anglesboro, Co Limerick

The service has one playroom, access to the sensory room in the school, designated sanitary facilities for preschool children and staff, the schoolyard and a sensory garden in the outdoor play area.

It can cater for 11 pre-school children at any one time.

Staffing

The registered provider and one staff member were working with the children on the day.

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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 10, 11, 19, 25, 26 and 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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*
- (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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge and a named person was available to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present in the service on the day of the inspection.

(c) There was 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 member of the team.

(2) The registered provider had ensured that each employee working in the service was suitable and competent as the following documents were available on file for the registered provider and the one staff employed in the service.

(a) There were 2 validated references from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer available on file for the registered provider and the staff member.

(b) There were two validated references from other sources on file for the registered provider and the staff member.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of A Garda Síochána were available for all staff working at the service. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, EYI-RN12.3 renewal of garda vetting, published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 1st of January 2024, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Garda vetting for one staff member was dated within the last three years as per the regulatory notice.

Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff had lived in another state for a period of 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) The registered provider and the staff working with the children had the appropriate childcare qualifications.

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The policies, and procedures for the service were updated in August 2024 and were available in the service, accessible to the staff and parents to view and refer to as required.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection there were 11 pre-school children and two adults on the premises for the sessional service. The adult child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

(3) On the day of the inspection there was the registered provider and one staff present with 11 preschool children for the session. The adult/child ratios were correct.

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 NEED:

Parents provided snacks for the children who attended in line with the healthy eating policy of the service, these included a wide variety of fruits, sandwiches, bagels crackers and yogurts. There was a fridge available for the storage of perishable foods and drinks prior to their consumption. The service provided the children with water at their break time and throughout the morning. The staff sat with the children at break time and actively encouraged break times to be a social occasion.

All children were toilet trained and toileted independently with assistance given where it was required.

Children were observed to wash their hands at appropriate times during the sessions such as after toileting and before eating. Hand washing took place using hot water, liquid soap and paper towels.

The children could rest as desired throughout the morning on the single chairs in the library area. The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the room. Children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a wide level of choice of activities. The adult modelled positive behaviour for the children and they were praised for their good behaviour.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

This sessional service was operated from the Anglesboro National school. The children had access to a designated playroom, sanitary accommodation and an outdoor play area including a sensory garden to the rear of the premises. The room was a bright and welcoming environment that had a variety of defined interest areas which were well-resourced with a wide range of equipment, including real items, natural and sensory material and a library area. Materials were rotated according to the learning needs of children in the group. The children were observed at play in the home corner which included a shop to extend the children learning and development. Children were observed moving freely between activities and the staff were available to help and assist where needed.

The outdoor play area was the school yard which was an enclosed, safe and secure area at the rear of the premises. The children had the opportunity to play in the sensory garden with access to flowers, shrubs, tyres for jumping in and out of and a wooden train for imaginative play. There was ample space for the children to run and play games in small groups or with a friend in the school yard and the sensory garden area.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for the two staff members. However, the vetting disclosure for one staff member was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action: The registered provider has stated in the CAPA document that:

General Safety:

Garda vetting process for the one staff member has commenced and the Garda vetting renewal policy has been updated for the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Evidence was submitted that the Garda vetting process has commenced.

Summary Comment

Evidence of an application for one staff for renewal of Garda vetting was reviewed; however, a copy of the complete Garda vetting has not been submitted to the inspector to date. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt. The noncompliance in relation to Regulation 23 remains out outstanding

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 was one staff member present who had up to date training in First Aid.
(2)(a) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible position in the playroom.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There was no staff member present with up to date First Aid Responder training completed. (FAR).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The registered provider has stated that:

A member of staff has been enrolled to complete the First Aid Responder training.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence was submitted to demonstrate that the staff member will have completed the FAR training by 17th of November 2025.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and the non-compliance remains outstanding until the FAR training is completed and a copy submitted to the Early year's inspectorate.

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.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The fire drills were practiced monthly up until the preschool closed in June 2025. The fire drills will commence in mid-September for the new school year.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on the 17th of June 2025 and mains powered smoke alarms were serviced on the 6th of June 2025. A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system.
- (4) A fire action notice was clearly displayed in the service.

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 school building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally and no obvious defects were noted on inspection. There was building work in progress but it appeared to be safe and secure and the preschool children and staff had no access to this enclosed area.
- (b) The outdoor area was surrounded by fencing, walls and gates. Staff were outdoors at all times supervising the children while playing outside.
- (c) The playroom and sanitary areas were well lit by natural light and artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation.
- (d) Routine cleaning schedules were in place for the internal and external areas.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets and wash hand basins available to the preschool children in attendance and the staff members working in the service.