

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015TY012
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Busy Bees Pre-School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Presentation Primary School, Room 1, Cathedral Street, Thurles, Co. Tipperary
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<b>Eircode:</b>	
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Bernadette Lyons
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	11/10/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM	8
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L McGeeney
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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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

This part time service was established to provide care and education to children aged 2 – 6 years old. A registered school aged care service is also provided. The service operates Monday to Friday, 8am – 5pm for 38 weeks of the year. This includes a 3-hour sessional service funded under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) for eligible children which operates Monday to Friday, 9am – 12pm.

The service is operated from a room on the ground floor of the Presentation Primary School, a two-storey, detached building in the town of Thurles in north Tipperary. The children have access to their room, the school hall, library, sanitary accommodation area and outdoor play areas.

### Staffing

The registered provider and two other staff work directly with the children in the service each day. All staff hold recognised qualifications in early childhood care and 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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(2)(4), 11(1)(2)(4)(8), 20(1)(3), 21, 22, 24(1), 25, 26(1)(4) and 28.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9 Management and Recruitment.

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

*(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

The staff file of one member of staff who had commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 13 May 2021 was reviewed as part of the inspection process. Staff files for other staff had been reviewed on previous inspections and were found to be compliant.

(2)(a) Written, validated references from past employers were available in respect of the member of staff.

(b) Not applicable as the available references were from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting had been carried out in respect of the member of staff and relevant documents were stored on file.

(d) Not applicable as the member of staff had not lived outside the state.

(4) All staff held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5 or 6 on the national qualifications framework.

### 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.*

*(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*

*(a) a sessional pre-school service, and*

*(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

*(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) There were 3 staff working directly with 18 children aged between 2 years 10 months and 5 years old on the morning of the inspection. After 12pm there were 3 staff working directly with 8 children aged between 3 and 5 years old who attended the service on a part time basis.

(2) and (4) The adult to child ratio was maintained at greater than the minimum requirements for the duration of the inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least 2 staff present at all times while the service was in operation.

### 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-*

*(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*

*(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.*

*(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-*

*(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The children had access to their room as well as access to the school hall, the school library and outdoor play areas.

The room was located on the ground floor of the building, close to the children's toilets which were located down the corridor. The room was square, with a high ceiling, wooden parquet floor and large windows on one wall which gave lots of natural light. The children went to the school hall three days each week on a timetabled basis, which gave them a change of environment and a large space to run and engage in physical activity indoors. The children enjoyed play in the outdoors most days unless the weather prevented it.

(b) Children could rest and relax in the cosy area in the room when required. Camp beds and blankets were available if a child required a sleep while attending the service though staff said that this rarely occurred.

(3)(a) The children had access to the school grounds for outdoor play and exploration. The grounds were extensive and included areas with mature trees and shrubs where the children were taken on nature walks. There was an enclosed playground at the back of the school building that had been developed for the exclusive use of two early years services operating in the school and children attending the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) unit in the school. This area was divided into two spaces to facilitate two groups to use it at the same time.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service was well equipped with furniture, toys, materials and resources in both the indoor and outdoor settings. There were adult and child sized chairs and child sized tables where the children engaged in tabletop activities and dining. The storage units had open shelves or cubes which were easy for the children to access. The children could see what they wanted to play with and know where each item went at tidy-up time. The shelves were movable and could be used as room dividers to create separate spaces when required.

Toys and materials were organised into interest areas such as the art and craft area, home corner, tuff tray exploration area, puzzles and manipulative play area, small world area and construction area.

There was a large selection of sports equipment such as balls, hoops, gym mats and ride-on toys available in the school hall.

The children's outdoor area had recently been refurbished. The bark mulch surface was replaced with an artificial grass surface and the equipment and materials were repositioned and upgraded where required. Outdoor equipment included a mud kitchen, climbing frames, balance beams, slides and seating areas.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy. Parents supplied all of the foods eaten by the children while attending the service. Most of the foods brought in by the children were healthy and nutritious. Lunches on the day of inspection included: sandwiches, pretzels, bread rolls, yoghurt, fromage frais, cheese, smoothies, sultanas and fruit (banana, pear, blueberries, grapes, plums, apples, kiwi and mandarins) with drinks of water or squash.

Bottles of drinking water were available in the room if a child needed a drink.  
Perishable foods were stored in the fridge in the room.  
Children who attended on a part time basis brought extra food to eat in the afternoon.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) All staff were responsible for signing the children in and out of the service. Paper based records were maintained and completed by whichever member of staff was managing the arrival and departure of children at any given time during the day.

## 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) Two members of staff held current certification in first aid response (FAR) valid until November 2024.  
  
(2)(a) A well-equipped first aid box was available in a cupboard in the room.  
(b) The first aid box was available for use if required by a child attending the service.

## 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 firefighting 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) A written record was maintained of the fire drills that took place in the service.
- (b) There was a record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms. Fire equipment was serviced annually, most recently in August 2023. Smoke alarms were serviced quarterly, most recently on 27 July and 17 October 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed on the wall in the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service was insured to cater for up to 22 early years children at any one time. The insurance also covers up to 36 school aged children and was valid until 27 March 2024 .