

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WH034
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Name of Service:	Busy Kids Creche
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Address of Service:	Cloghanboy, Ballymahon Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
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Eircode:	N37 PV24
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Name of Registered Provider:	James Moore
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	10/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	78	PM	64
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co Westmeath
Inspection undertaken by:	C.O' Connor Hughes & K. Murphy
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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 full day care service is registered to accommodate children aged 0 to 6 years and operates from 07:30 to 18:00 on a Monday to Friday basis. The service is part of a multiple.

The Early Years' Service is located in a two-storey purpose-built premises. The baby room, wobbler room, toddler room and two sleep rooms are located on the ground floor. Four pre-school rooms are in operation on the first floor. An office, kitchen, breakout area, staff room and laundry area are also provided.

Outdoor play areas are attached to the rear of the premises. Onsite parking and set down facilities are available. The service is urban in its location in a residential area in the town of Athlone, County Westmeath.

Staffing

There are twenty-six staff employed in the service. The designated person in charge, supervisor and 16 childcare staff were present and working directly with the children on the 10 February 2026. The service was supported by a full time cook and a part time cleaner. The designated person in charge facilitated the inspection and attended the closing meeting along with the supervisor. The registered provider does not work with 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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Regulation 8- Change in Circumstance

Regulation 9- Management and recruitment - (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4)

Regulation 11 -Staffing levels - (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 16- Record of a Pre-School Service

Regulation 19- Health, welfare and development of child - (1)(a)

Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and play

Regulation 21- Equipment and Materials

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25- First aid - (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26- Fire Safety Measures (1)(2)(4)

Regulation 28 – Insurance

Regulation 31- Notification of Incident

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under

Regulation 19- Health, welfare and development of child - (1)(a)

Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and play

Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler room (aged 1 to 2 years), the Toddler room (aged 2 to 3 years) ECCE room 3 (aged 3-4 years) and ECCE room sessional (aged 3-5 years).

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*

(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 designated person in charge and a deputy were available in the service.

(b)

The designated person in charge was present for the duration of the inspection.

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that one new staff member had commenced in the service since the last inspection on the 17 June 2025. The staff file was reviewed, and the following was noted.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written validated references were available from past employers in respect of the new staff member.

- (c)
A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the new staff member.
The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. An in date garda vetting disclosure was available for one staff member which required renewal since the last inspection on the 17 June 2025.
- (d)
Police vetting was available in respect of the new staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4)
The new staff member working directly with children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.*
- (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)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.
- (2)
There were seventy-eight children attending the service supervised directly by seventeen adults in the morning. There were sixty-four children present in the afternoon supervised by fourteen adults.

(8)(a)

The staff roster reviewed indicated that two adults are on the premises during the hours of operation.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h) and (i).
- (j)
Correct procedures were in place for the administration of medication in the service. Twenty-three administration of medication forms with signed parental consent were available and reviewed.
- (k)
Twenty-one accident and incident records were reviewed from the wobbler room. Each accident and incident record had details of the accident or incident and were signed by the children’s parents or guardians.

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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Wobbler room and Toddler room

There was a calm and happy atmosphere in the wobbler and toddler rooms as children enjoyed free play in the various interest areas supported by the staff members. Small group activities were observed as staff interacted and joined in the children's imaginative and creative play activities in the toddler room. The younger children slept in a in a restful atmosphere in the adjacent sleep room. Regular nappy changes were carried out for children attending the wobbler and toddler rooms. Older children were observed to use the toilet independently and wash their hands. Younger children were encouraged to be independent as they washed their hands before dinner supervised by staff members. Younger children's clothes were protected as they wore bibs while eating their main meal.

The staff were positive towards children and were familiar with each child, their personalities and their daily routines. Staff used children's individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities and at mealtimes. Children were happy and content with their carers in the wobbler and toddler rooms. Children that were upset coming into the service were reassured with hugs and cuddles which helped them to settle into the pre-school room. Seamless transitions were noted as the children were given a verbal five-minute lead in time to change from one activity to another.

The wobbler and toddler rooms were bright and colourful with children's artwork and posters displayed including "we love our families" and "catch of the day". The daily routine was displayed in the rooms. A range of developmentally appropriate toys to meet children's learning needs was available in the pre-school rooms. Age and stage appropriate toys and materials were accessible to children on low level shelving. Staff stated the wobbler room had been re arranged recently to meet the developmental needs of the young children present in the room.

ECCE 3 room and ECCE sessional room

The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development. Conversations and interactions between children and staff were observed during snack time. Children who used the toilet independently were supervised.

The children were encouraged to be independent, and their choices were supported. Staff were observed to offer support and praise to each child for their involvement in activities.

The staff were familiar with each child and their personality. Staff members were observed to be positive towards children evidenced by individual names used, eye contact and praise for children on completion of activities. Good teamwork between the staff members was observed during the inspection. A range of developmentally appropriate, challenging, creative and enriching experiences were available for all children. Materials included paint, play dough, dolls, dolls houses, buggies, puzzles, blocks, trucks, animals and fine motor skill toys including pegboards, jigsaws and shape sorters. Children's artwork was noted and paper, crayons, paint and a variety of open-ended art materials were in plentiful supply.

The service works in partnership with parents and guardians. Parents were observed to collect their children from the pre-school service after the ECCE session concluded. A verbal handover was provided to parents at this time. Communication between parents and the service was shared via an electronic application depicting the child's daily routine, play activities and learning stories as well as child development observations.

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)

Suitable play equipment was provided indoors which included toys and equipment for construction, tabletop activities, arts and crafts and home corners.

(b)

Two separate sleep rooms were provided for the children adjacent to the baby room and wobbler rooms. The sleep rooms were equipped with thirteen cots for children to sleep in. Sleep beds were provided for the individual children attending the toddler room. Cosy rest areas and soft furnishings were provided in the pre-school rooms.

(3)(a)

The outdoor play area was safe and secure surrounded by fencing and a locked gate. A synthetic surface area was noted. The outdoor environment was sectioned off into three play spaces for different age groups of children to avail of. Toys and equipment included a toy kitchen, climbing frame with slide, a playhouse and tyres. A shed was available for the storage of toys and equipment.

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

There was a variety of suitable and sufficient play materials and equipment to support children for various forms of creative, manipulative, sensory, imaginary and free play in the indoor environment in the service.

The tables and chairs were child sized suitable to each child's age and development. Equipment was well maintained, durable and easy to clean. Materials were accessible to children on low level open shelving and drawer units. Personal belongings and bags were stored individually for each child.

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

A three-week menu plan was in place depicting the main meals provided to children each day. The service provides the breakfast, morning snack and main meal to children attending on a full day care basis. Parents provide the morning snack for children attending the ECCE session. Parents provide the afternoon snack for children attending the service on a full day care basis.

The morning snack consisted of watermelon and breadsticks with water to drink. At approximately 12:00 the cook served the main meal which consisted of spaghetti bolognaise to children. Milk and water were offered to drink. Cultural preferences were adhered to and children offered alternate foods as required.

A refrigerator was available in the pre-school rooms for the storage of perishable goods. A record was available of correct refrigerator temperatures recorded on a daily basis.

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 service was secure from unauthorised access as a coded system was in operation at the front door of the service to allow parents and guardians and authorised visitors access to the premises. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents. The inspectors signed the visitors book on arrival. Safety checklists, audits and risk assessments were carried out on a daily basis by staff members and noted in the pre-school rooms.

Infection Control:

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Staff were observed to wash their hands during the inspection. Correct respiratory etiquette was observed as children's noses were cleaned

and staff members washed their hands after wiping. Soothers were stored correctly in individual containers for each child as required in the wobbler and toddler rooms. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the sanitary accommodation and in the pre-school rooms for the hygienic disposal of waste. The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available. Warm water, paper hand towel and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. Natural ventilation was available through openable windows in the pre-school rooms. Mechanical ventilation was in operation in the sanitary accommodation and nappy changing room.

Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available if a child presented with a high temperature. Medication was stored safely in the office inaccessible to children. Medication was observed to be given correctly to children during the inspection. Documentation reviewed indicated correct procedures were in place for the recording of the administration of medication to children in the service with both staff signatures documented.

Safe Sleep:

A sleep log noting the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children indicating children were checked every 10 minutes while sleeping was available for review. A staff member was observed to remain with and physically check sleeping children every ten minutes in the toddler sleep room. The environmental temperature recorded was 18 degrees Celsius in the wobbler sleep room and 16.6. degrees Celsius in the baby sleep room. An air conditioning unit was in place in the baby and wobbler sleep rooms. Safety mattresses were in place and conformed to recognised safety standards. Cot sheets were fitted to the mattresses correctly. The required 50 cm space was noted between each cot. Each cot was assigned to an individual child.

Fire Safety:

The fire emergency exits were free from obstruction in the premises. A fire assembly point was noted to the side of the premises.

Outing:

The designated person in charge stated outings are undertaken by the service. A risk assessment was reviewed for the service's most recent outing to the local play centre.

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)

Thirteen adults were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises on a rostered basis during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)

First aid boxes were located on the ground and first floor of the service.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to adults caring for children in 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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,

(b) an employee, and

(c) an authorised person.

(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 for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 27 January 2026.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises were serviced on the 16 April 2025 and 19 September 2025 respectively.

(2)

The fire records were open to inspection to (a)(b)(c).

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2026.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:

(d) a serious injury to a pre-school child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner whether in a hospital or otherwise

Compliance Information

The designated person in charge had submitted a notification of incident to the Early Years Inspectorate in respect of a child sustaining an injury on the 5 February 2026.