

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2019CN001

Name of Service: Lil Buddies Pre school

Address of Service: 12 Parkview, Oldcastle Road, Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan

Eircode: A82 YK64

Name of Registered Provider: Christine Kelly

Service type: Sessional

Date(s) of Inspection: 11/10/2024

No of pre-school children:	AM	4	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Tusla Early Years Inspectorate
Meath Child & Parent Support Hub,
Commons Road,
Navan,
Co. Meath

Inspection undertaken by: AM Cunningham

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

Description of service

The Registered Provider is operating a Sessional service which caters for children aged 2 years to 6 years. Lil Buddies opens from 9.30am – 12.30pm Monday – Friday and partakes in the ECCE scheme. The service is located in a residential estate in the town of Ballyjamesduff. It operates from the Registered Provider’s private residence.

Staffing

The registered provider is a sole operated with emergency staff cover available if required.

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 announced 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.

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,

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) The registered providers and an emergency contact file was reviewed, and the following was noted.

(a) & (b) Four validated written references were available.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available. 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 not required as the staff member or emergency contact person had not resided outside the state for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The staff member had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 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.*
- (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 inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (3) The adult/child ratio was correct;
One adult cared for 4 children attending a sessional service (aged between 2 years 8 months to 4 years).

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 Care Needs of the Children:

A healthy nutritious snack in line with the healthy eating policy of the service was provided for the children attending the service by their parents. The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to the age and stage of development, including hand washing, toileting and caring for their belongings. Snack time was a very social event with animated conversations and discussions. Staff encouraged children to be independent and to develop self-care skills at every opportunity

Supporting Relationships Around the Children:

Interactions observed during the inspection were consistently positive and caring. The registered provider enabled children to engage in their preferred play activities and worked alongside offering encouragements, support and praise. Conversations with the children were delivered using warm vocal tones, welcoming facial expressions and a listening and reflective approach. Children in turn showed confidence and responded positively to the guidance and directions given to them. Children were helped to develop good social skills in their engagement with each other. They learned how to behave within a group, how to take turns, to listen, wait, to share and to be mindful of those around them. The guideline rules that children were asked to adhere to were kept minimal and simple and adults used clear language when reminding children about these. There was a predictable general routine within the session with transitions being announced in advance (e.g. tidy up time, outdoor play). These helped children to mentally prepare and accept when moving onto the next activity.

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

Play equipment and materials were grouped together to create a number of well-defined areas of interest with all areas of the playroom set out for play. Each interest area was arranged to present an attractive play environment with a range of props to maximise the visual appeal and the learning opportunities in the area. Open shelving units were used to display many of the play materials which created visibility and easy access for children, giving them direct control in selecting items for play. Suitable sized tables and chairs were provided for tabletop activities. Considerable care and attention had been made to adding visual appeal to the learning opportunities in the area. The outdoor area which is accessible from the care room on two sides. One side with a covered area and to the back of the service. There was a hard surface area, small area of artificial grass and pebble area for digging. Equipment available included sand table, ride on toys, large toy house, dinosaur area, tyres for planting, basketball hoop and ball, balance beams, wall mounted, water gutters and diggers, cars and trucks.

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 premises was secure in a manner which ensured that children could exit unsupervised, and adults could not enter without permission. The outdoor play area contained high rise surround wall and fencing with controlled entry and exit points. Exit routes were free from obstruction. Cleaning products and equipment were secured safely so that children could not access these. The hot water provided at the children's wash hand basins was controlled to a safe temperature for hand washing. The play equipment and play materials in use on the day of inspection were noted to be in good repair and did not pose a risk of injury. Shelving units were all low level with stable bases.

Infection Control:

Regular hand washing practices by children was observed throughout the inspection period. Children appeared familiar with hand hygiene routine and washed their hands, after outdoor play, toileting and before eating. Suitable hand washing facilities were provided at the wash hand basins which contained liquid soap dispensers, disposable paper towels, and a waste bin. Good respiratory etiquette was promoted. A supply of disposable tissues and a lidded bin was provided in the playroom. Children were prompted to carefully dispose of tissues and wash their hands after blowing their noses.

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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) Records demonstrated that the date and time of attendance and departure in respect of each pre-school child is recorded on a daily basis.

(3)(a) All persons are approved by an employee prior to entry to the pre-school service. Parents or Guardians of children currently attending receive the code of the keypad to gain entry.

(b) Visitors are announced and approved by an authorised staff member on arrival, the visitors' details are entered into the visitors' book.

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) The service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises

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) A written record was available of fire drills which were completed monthly in the service.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment was last serviced in 13th January 2024 and the smoke detection alarms were last serviced 27th September 2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed 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 registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 11 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28th March 2024 to the 27th March 2025