

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2024LK003
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Buddies Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Scoil Mathair Dé, Convent Street, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V94XY93
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Clara Daly
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	30/09/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	9	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M Riordan
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Little Buddies is a sessional preschool service, located in the Scoil Mathair Dé, National School in the town of Abbeyfeale in Co. Limerick. The service operates from 9.20am to 12.20pm, Monday to Friday and is open for 38 weeks of the year. The service can accommodate a maximum of 22 preschool children at any one time. The school operates from a large, well-resourced preschool room. An outdoor play area used solely by the preschool children is located at the side of the premises. Suitable sanitary accommodation is located directly next to the preschool room.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the owner of the service. A designated person in charge is appointed to work at the facility each day. Both staff members have completed their studies and hold the relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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. 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 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 registered provider had appointed a designated person in charge to oversee the operating of the service.

There was a named person available to assist in an emergency if needed.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person was available on the premises each day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references from past employers were available for the registered provider and for the designated person in charge.

(b) All references were from past employers and references from other reputable sources were not required.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the registered provider and the designated person in charge. Both Garda vetting certificates were in date within the last three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for the designated person in charge.

(4) The registered provider and the designated person in charge both held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 8.

### 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) The registered provider ensured an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at the service.

(3) On the day of the first inspection there were 8 preschool children present with 1 adult. The adult child ratio was correct. A second person, familiar with the service and with the children, was close by and could be called to attend the preschool in the event of an emergency.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*

- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The registration forms completed by parents for each child attending the service were reviewed. The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept in respect of each preschool child attending the service and contained all the required particulars.

### 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:**

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service and parents were advised to provide children with nutritious snacks each day for break time. Sandwiches, fruits, crackers, cheese strings, pasta snacks were observed in children's lunches on the day of inspection. All perishable foods were appropriately stored in a refrigerator each morning until required at break time.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets located adjacent to the preschool room. Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were available for handwashing. The children could be easily supervised while independently accessing the bathroom facilities. A wash hand basin was also accessible in the preschool room. A change of clothes was available for all children if needed. Protective clothing was accessible for the children to wear when participating in messy play activities, or when playing outdoors in wet weather.

Tissues and wipes were always reachable to the children and all waste was disposed of properly in lidded bins. A large black out tent was available, and this provided a quiet sensorial space for children to rest and relax in if tired during the session. Children got to spend time outdoors each day at the preschool. An enclosed garden area was available to the children directly adjacent to the preschool room.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service operates from a large carefully designed classroom. The room had a range of developmentally appropriate well-resourced interest areas for the children e.g. a construction area, home corner/ imagination play area, a rest and relaxation reading area with a large soft couch. Lots of art and craft materials and sensory toys were accessible to the children at all times. Low level tables and chairs were used for dining at break time and for many tabletop activities at all other times. Lots of play materials and equipment were organised to be visible and easily accessible to the children on open low-level shelving.

A large coat and bag hanger was located in one corner of the room, which helped maintain an organised space for the storage of children's personal belongings.

A large notice board in the preschool room and in the main school corridor outside the entrance door, helped to inform parents of all the relevant information regarding the service. Lots of educational posters and colourful charts displayed material on the walls of the room at a level suitable for the children to engage with. A display of each child's age and date of their birthday were visible. Children's artwork was clearly displayed around the room. The outdoor play area provided space for more active play opportunities. The garden was safe and secure with fully enclosed fencing surrounding the area. Children had access to a low level climbing frame, a large sand box, hula hoops and a low-level slide. Children had exclusive use of this area throughout the morning.