

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK006
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Name of Service:	Bambinos Creche
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Address of Service:	10/11 Lintown Way, Johnswell Road, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
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Eircode:	R95 YY33
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Name of Registered Provider:	Gillian Watkins Dunne
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	06/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	12
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child & Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow
Inspection undertaken by:	Norma Thornton
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).

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Description of service

Bambinos Creche is a full day childcare service located in Kilkenny city which offers full day, part-time and sessional childcare services for children aged 1 to 6 years. The service operates from an adapted premises composed of two terraced residential houses in the residential estate of Lintown Way. An onsite outdoor play area is provided at the back of the service.

There are two classrooms Toddler Room 1 and Toddler Room 2 located on the ground floor with adjacent nappy changing and toilet training facilities, a children's toilet and kitchen. On the first floor there are two preschool classrooms 1 & 2. Two sleep rooms are also provided in the service.

Staffing

There were six staff members including the registered provider employed in the service. All staff members who as part of their role in the service worked directly with the children all held qualifications in early childhood care and education ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 on the national Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) framework.

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.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following regulations.

Regulation 19(1)(a)(b)-Health Welfare and Development of Child,

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health Safety and Welfare of Child,

Regulation 24- Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the outdoor play area and Preschool room 2.

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.

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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 was in charge in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(b) The staff roster demonstrated that the designated person in charge or a named deputy designated person in charge, was always onsite while the service was in operation.

(2)(a)(b) No new staff members had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection on the 13 December 2024.

(c) Garda vetting certificates were available on file for each staff member. The registered provider demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as no staff member employed in the service had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

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(4) Certificates of qualifications were displayed in the service for each of the six staff members, who as part of their role in the service, worked directly with the pre-school children, demonstrating that each staff member held at least a minimum Level 5 to Level 8 qualification in early childhood care and education on the national QQI 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.

Compliance Information

(1) Throughout the inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children. An additional staff member was available from 12:00 hours to provide relief for staff breaks. This was also evidenced in the daily staff roster.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed on the morning and afternoon of the inspection. In the morning there were 13 pre-school children aged 2 to 5 years were directly cared for by 3 staff members. In the afternoon 12 preschool children aged 2 to 5 years were directly cared for by 3 staff members.

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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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b) Throughout the inspection the inspector observed that the pre-school children in attendance were appropriately cared for and responded to with suitable care practices.

The children attending the toddler room 1 enjoyed most of their day in the covered outdoor classroom, where two staff members engaged in their imaginary play with the ride on toys and pedal motors provided. Toy fuel pumps provided children with extra play resources to create an imaginary garage with the staff conversing with them about the cost of fuel and what type of car they were driving, a current topic of conversation in the daily lives of families. The inspector observed how staff encouraged children to extend on conversation and voice their opinions.

On one occasion where a child fell and hurt their knee, the staff member promptly responded nurturing the child with a comforting hug and reassuring them. With distraction methods the staff member gently cleaned the wound, applying a clean dry bandage under the supervision of the rest of the children. The children were observed to check on their friend and sat together for a while to allow for a recovery break before hitting the imaginary roads with their toy vehicles again. The staff member was observed to note the time of the incident for the purpose of recording the incident later and sharing the information with the child's parent.

Children were also responded to when minor conflicts arose with staff members encouraging children to be solution focused and reinforcing positive behaviours. Staff encouraged children to voice their choice of activities and were responsive to cues demonstrated by the children such as when one child arrived late to the service and was off form, the staff was overheard asking him if they were hungry and if they would like to have lunch which was eagerly agreed to.

Once the child was observed to have had some food to eat their demeanour immediately changed to that of a happy content child.

At lunch time the main meal of spaghetti bolognaise was served in the dining area adjacent to the kitchen. As one staff member was responsible for serving diners, the second staff member ensured that children were safely

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secured in appropriate seating such as a highchair for the youngest child and suitable small wooden chairs for the children who were at a physically developed stage to safely use them.

Children had washed their hands in the outside wash basin before lunch and were provided with protective bibs for their clothing.

The staff ensured that the spaghetti pasta was cut to an appropriate safe size and were observed to sit and supervise the young children eating while also engaging in conversations with them.

Children who did not like the main meal were provided with an alternative such as one child who was observed to be provided with roast chicken breast, carrots and mash with added gravy to disguise the pureed carrots.

Each child had their own individual drinks bottle or were provided with a beaker of fresh water.

The inspector observed that staff ensured that the water in children's drink bottles was replenished throughout the day.

Children were also provided with plenty of time to eat at their own pace and were observed to be put at ease by the staff reassuring them to take their time, while some children confidently looked for additional servings which were promptly provided from the kitchen. Another child's liking for some grated cheese on the spaghetti bolognese was also promptly responded to.

As children finished eating their meal in their own time, they were offered the opportunity to use the bathroom or have their nappy changed which most duly did. Some of the children were engaged in toilet training which the staff explained that they worked in partnership with the child's parents, so the child was toilet training in the same way at home and in preschool.

During nappy changing and toilet training times, the staff were overhead chatting softly to the children explaining to the child each stage of the procedures and praising each child's success at using the potty while also ensuring good infection control practices were maintained. Children were observed celebrating their success with the toilet / potty training upon hearing the praise and positive reinforcement from their key workers.

Children in the upstairs preschool room enjoyed a morning of art and creativity activities, manipulative and connective games and tasks before also going outside to enjoy the outdoor area which was carefully divided in two with a covered classroom at each side to ensure that the younger children were safe from the busier physical activities of the older preschool children.

At drop off and collection times the staff were observed to spend time with each child's parent /guardian exchanging information ensuring that they were aware of any change in each child's care as well as ensuring

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information was provided to parents and guardians on how the child's day in the service was spent including any incidents or accidents that may have occurred.

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 main entrance to the service was secured with a call bell system. Only staff working in the service could permit access at the main entrance to persons entering the building. This helped reduce the risk of any unauthorised person entering the building and reduced the risk of children exiting the service unsupervised. The outdoor play area was secured with a high block wall, surrounding the perimeter of the play area.

A daily risk assessment of the outdoor play area was carried out and records demonstrated that this was recorded daily.

The service cleaning materials and equipment were stored appropriately in a secure storage area inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

The service had suitable and adequate toilet and nappy changing facilities provided to meet the numbers and needs of the children in each classroom. All sanitary facilities contained handwash basins, supplied with liquid hand soap and paper towelling, which the children could easily access and use.

Staff were observed to carry out nappy changing procedures in line with the service's nappy changing policy and in adherence with the service's hand washing and infection control policy.

Children were observed to use the toilet and hand-washing facilities with ease, while staff were observed to support and prompt the children to wash their hands correctly after using the toilet, after messy and outdoor play and before snack and mealtimes.

A handwash basin, liquid soap and paper towelling was also provided in the outdoor play area.

Administration of Medication:

An adequate administration of medication policy was in place in the service for administration of an anti-febrile medication, a prescribed medication or a specific prescribed medication in the event of a medical emergency.

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On review of past administration of medication forms, the inspector observed that procedures for administration of medications were carried out and recorded in line with the service's administration of medication policy.

Safe Sleep:

Two sleep rooms were provided in the service containing a total of four standard cots, two in each sleep room. Staff were observed to ensure that the temperature of the sleep room was maintained within the recommended range of 18 to 22°C for children aged 1 year and over.

Staff were observed to physically check and record the room temperature and sleeping children's physical checks, which included colour, breathing and sleep position every 10 minutes.

Outings:

While staff informed the inspector that they generally did not operate outings away from the service they were well informed that an outings policy was available to implement if an outing was arranged. The policy detailed the preparation, risk assessment and communication with parents/guardians prior to the outing, the precautions, and procedures to be taken prior to and during the outing and the procedures to be carried out in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. In Sleep Room 1, the cot mattress in the largest cot was observed to be stained with three large brown patches.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted the following response.

Infection Control:

The mattress has been replaced. I will ensure that the mattresses are checked daily and replaced if stained.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of new mattress purchased and replacing stained mattress.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted are appropriate to address the non-compliance. The implementation of these actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

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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) The staff directly supervising the children in the toddler room 1 and preschool room 2 in operation on the day of inspection demonstrated that each child's arrival and departure times to and from the service were recorded daily.

Non-Compliance Information

(3) There was no daily record maintained of visitors to the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted the following corrective and preventative actions.

A visitor record book has been purchased and is located at the main entrance for visitors to the service to sign in and out.

I will make sure we have a visitor record book on the premises and in working order at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of new visitor book.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted are appropriate to address the non-compliance. The implementation of these actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

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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) All six staff members employed in the service had current certification in a Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) accredited first aid course.
- (2) (a)(b) A first aid box was available and easily accessed by staff on a shelf in the kitchen. A record demonstrated that its contents were checked monthly and replaced if necessary.

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) There was a written record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on the 24 July 2026.
- (b) The registered provider maintained a record of the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. New fire-fighting equipment had been installed in November 2025 and the maintenance check for the smoke alarm system was recorded as having taken place on 24 July 2026.
- (4) A fire procedure notice was observed in the main entrance hall and on the landing on the first floor with an assembly point clearly signposted in the carpark.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate for the pre-school service was displayed on a notice board in the entrance hall. The insurance certificate detailed insurance cover for a full day care service provision for a maximum of 30 children and covered the period from 28 March 2026 to 27 March 2027.