

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC053		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Beehive Childcare and Montessori Pre-School		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Gortnatrea, Berrings, Co. Cork		
<b>Eircode:</b>	P12 Y271		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Eileen Buckley		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	12/02/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	60	PM 48
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D Prendergast & M O' Reilly		
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Beehive Childcare and Montessori Pre-School is a privately owned full day care service, that also provides part time and sessional care. It is registered to accommodate children aged 0 to 6 years and currently caters for children from the age of 4 months. Children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme are facilitated from 9.00am to 12.00pm and from 1.30pm to 4.30pm, over 38 weeks of the year. Daily opening hours are from 7.30am to 6.00pm and the setting is open throughout the year, with the exception of Christmas and public holidays.

Located in the village of Berrings in Co. Cork, the childcare service is provided from a single storey detached building, with six operational care rooms. Child and staff sanitary facilities are accessible adjoining the care rooms and the premises also includes a large sleep room, with an interconnecting smaller sleep room and a kitchen. Since the previous inspection, the prefabricated cabin which was located at the side of the building, has been replaced with a new wooden cabin, for use as a combined office and staff area. Two outdoor play spaces are available on site.

### Staffing

There are 27 adults in employment at the service, of whom 21 work directly with the early years children and hold a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The registered provider is involved in the direct care of the children, but was not assigned to a particular care room at the time of inspection. The service's two cooks, two cleaners, one administration staff member and two school age staff members are not involved in the care of the early years children. There are two adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. A student was also undertaking a work placement at the time of inspection.

### 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.

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.

## Additional Information

During the inspection on 12 February 2024, an Immediate Action Notice (IAN) was issued to the person in charge, in respect of one adult who was observed working at the service, without appropriate Garda vetting. A subsequent response to the IAN was received on 13 February 2024.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, deputy 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 service had a person in charge and named deputy persons in charge.
  - (b) The deputy was present when the inspectors arrived at the premises and remained on duty until the end of the inspection. The person in charge arrived at 10.20am and the registered provider also visited the service during the inspection.
- (2) Twenty-eight staff files were reviewed. This included the registered provider, 19 childcare staff, including 2 AIM workers, 1 student, 2 chefs, 2 cleaners, 1 administration staff member and the 2 staff who worked with the school aged children.
- (a) There were 36 written and validated references on file from past employers.
  - (b) There were 16 written references available from sources other than previous employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 27 staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Four police vetting records were available on file for the 3 adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more, while over the age of 18 years.

(4) The 21 adults who worked directly with the children all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, or an equivalent qualification, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

Four written and validated references were not on file for two of the adults.

(c)

A Garda vetting record was unavailable for one adult, who worked at the service. On 12 February 2024, an Immediate Action Notice was issued to the person in charge, regarding the breach of regulation 9(c). The deputy person in charge responded to said notice on 13 February and stated that the adult in question would be working remotely until the Garda vetting was received.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

The written response received stated that references have been provided and verified for the two staff members. As a preventive measure, all staff, including ancillary staff, will be required to provide references and have them verified, before commencing their duties at the setting.

(c)

The required Garda vetting has been submitted to the inspectorate. As a preventive measure, all management have been informed that the commencement of employment prior to vetting being received is not permitted, including for staff who will not be working directly with the children and have been asked to read the recruitment policy again.

### Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b)

Four written and validated references were submitted in respect of the two adults, along with a copy of the service's Recruitment policy.

(2)(c) The required Garda vetting was forwarded on 14 February 2024.

### Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted were assessed and accepted in meeting the regulatory requirements.

## 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) During the period of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in attendance.

(2) Taking into consideration the age range of the children present in the service and the duration of their stay, the adult to child ratios were maintained in line with the required ratios, as follows:

Morning:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Pre Pre-school (2 – 3 years)	12 (11 attending part time or full day care, 1 attending sessional)	3
Baby (1 – 2 years)	6 attending part time or full day care	2
Toddler (1 ½ - 2 ½ years)	9 attending part time or full day care	3
ECCE 1 (3 – 4 years)	14 5 attending sessional, 9 attending part time or full day care	2
ECCE 2 (4 – 5 years)	11 attending part time or full day care	2
Wobbler (1 – 1 ½ years)	8 attending part time or full day care	2

Afternoon:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Pre Pre-school (2 – 3 years)	12 attending part time or full day care	2
Baby (1 – 2 years)	6 attending part time or full day care	2
Toddler (1 ½ - 2 ½ years)	8 attending part time or full day care	2
ECCE 1 (3 – 4 years)	7 attending part time or full day care	1
ECCE 2 (4 – 5 years)	7 attending part time or full day care	1
Wobbler (1 – 1 ½ years)	8 attending part time or full day care	3

A student was not included in the adult child ratios.

(8)

(a) There were at least two adults present in the service, during the hours of operation. This was observed in practice at the time of inspection and was further demonstrated through review of the staff roster.

## 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:*

*(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(j) Written parent consent had been obtained for staff to administer relevant medication to the three children who may require same, while in attendance. Records of the medication administered at the service were entered and maintained on an online application.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(j) Two of the sampled administration of medication records did not meet the requirements. The records did not include the name of the medication administered or the name of the staff member who witnessed the administration of medication, as required.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

In her written reply, the registered provider stated that the administration log has been rectified. In addition, a message has been circulated to staff, highlighting the need for the details of the medication to be clearly logged on the app and the need for the administration of medication to be witnessed by another staff member and for this information to be logged appropriately.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

A screen shot of the message circulated to staff was forwarded as evidence.

#### Summary Comment

Based on the statements and evidence submitted by the registered provider, regulatory compliance is determined to have been met.

## 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:

- Up to five daily meal breaks were facilitated at the early years service; breakfast, a mid-morning snack, a hot lunch meal, an afternoon snack and an evening snack. This ensured that there were no gaps longer than two hours in between the children's mealtimes.
- The children appeared to really enjoy the food offered and were afforded ample time to eat and drink at a relaxed pace. Staff members were readily available to provide assistance and reminders at this time and ensured that suitable crockery and cutlery were available, as well as feeding bibs for the younger children.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children within the care rooms outside of allocated mealtimes.
- Attention was given to the children's personal hygiene, for example, in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms, the children's hands and faces were cleaned once they had finished eating and staff were observed to assist children to clean their noses.
- Care routines, such as nappy changing, handwashing and sleep time were managed sensitively, with adults noted to speak kindly and calmly to the children and soothe the younger children to sleep.
- The children who attended the older ECCE rooms were observed to freely access and use the adjoining sanitary facilities, as needed.
- Shortly after eating lunch, the children in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms were facilitated to sleep as needed, during a scheduled rest period. Children who did not wish to sleep were accommodated to participate in quieter activities, as was observed in the Toddler room and in the Pre pre-school room.
- There was adequate space in the care rooms to accommodate a variety of play activities. Outdoor play was also observed during the inspection.

## Supporting relationships around children:

- The key person system was evident in the service, which supported children to form secure relationships with the adults involved in their care. In ECCE 1, it was reported that as part of this practice, key workers developed learning journals for each child, which were sent home each term for parents to view. Parents were also welcomed to provide feedback on said learning journals.
- The adults were observed to demonstrate patience and kindness in their interactions with the children, as was noted when the children's efforts were readily acknowledged and when children were calmly assisted to resolve minor conflicts.
- During discussion, staff demonstrated confidence in outlining the service's procedures for supporting children to transition between the care rooms. For example, the inspector was informed that, as children prepared to progress from the Pre pre-school room to ECCE 1, parents were invited to complete a form in relation to their children's interests, with a view to helping staff to get to know the children. The inspector was also advised that children spend time in their new care room with a familiar staff member, before attending said care room full time.
- An online application was predominantly used to share information with parents regarding their children's activities of daily living. Phone calls, a messaging application and informal face to face discussion at arrival and collection times, were also incorporated.
- Staff members advised that there was regular communication in relation to curriculum planning and that the children's emerging interests were frequently discussed. In addition, the person in charge stated that staff appraisals were conducted each term and that full staff meetings took place approximately twice per year.

### 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 inspectors were advised that parents had been provided with a copy of the service’s Healthy Eating policy.
- Food for the children’s meals and snacks was predominantly provided by the service, with the exception of the children who only attended the ECCE sessional service; the parents of these children supplied snacks for the mid-morning meal break. Parents of the children who attended part time or full day care had the option of providing snacks if preferred, or could alternatively avail of the snacks offered at the childcare facility. Breakfast, a mid-morning snack, a hot lunch meal, an afternoon snack and an evening snack were catered by the service.
- A four-week menu plan was in place and a written copy was presented for review. Meals were prepared by a cook, in the onsite kitchen.
- On the day of inspection, a hot meal of beef bolognese and pasta was served for lunch, followed by an afternoon snack of toasted cheese sandwiches with a selection of fruit and an evening snack of homemade pizza. Water was available as a drink.
- It was reported that some of the children had specific dietary requirements. The deputy person in charge stated that this was managed through the use of dairy free products in the preparation of meals and snacks.
- The deputy also advised that if a child became hungry outside of the usual mealtimes, or if a parent advised that their child had not eaten breakfast before attending the service, they would be provided with a suitable snack.

### 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:

- Upon the inspectors' arrival at the service, the main entrance door was found to have been secured and was maintained secure when not in use. An intercom system was in place for visitors and parents.
- Cleaning agents were stored on high-level shelving, out of the children's reach.
- Unsupervised access to staff sanitary facilities was prevented through the securing of access doors, when the facilities were not in use. Keys were stored on high level wall hooks.
- Low-level glass panels were brightly painted, to reduce the risk of a child sustaining a collision injury.
- First aid boxes were appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- Water temperatures at the wash hand basins were thermostatically controlled, so as not to exceed 43°C.
- Restrictive opening devices were in place on the low-level cupboards in the Pre pre-school room.

##### Infection Control:

- During an observed nappy changing procedure, appropriate infection control measures were ensured;
  - The adult wore a disposable apron and single use gloves, which were removed and disposed of after the nappy changing procedure was completed.
  - Both the adult and the child washed their hands after the child's nappy was changed.
  - The changing mat was sanitised.
- Suitable handwashing facilities were available across the care rooms. Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were in place. Handwashing by the children was observed before lunch and before the afternoon snack in the Wobbler room and prior to the afternoon snack in the Baby room.
- Mouthed toys were noted to be removed from circulation and a staff member advised that said items were subsequently sterilised, before being reintroduced.
- Within the nappy changing areas, there was individually labelled storage for the children's toiletries.
- A designated cleaner was observed to attend the service during the inspection and carried out routine cleaning of windows and surfaces.

##### Administration of Medication:

- The medication maintained at the service was safely stored out of the children's reach.

### Safe Sleep:

- Sleep logs were held electronically and presented for review. Said records reflected physical checks in relation to the colour, breathing and position of children, as they slept.
- While in use to accommodate sleeping children, the air temperatures of the main sleep room and that of the smaller interconnecting sleep room were respectively recorded at 19.8°C and 19.9°C. The Toddler room had an air temperature reading of 20°C, while in use to facilitate a scheduled rest period.

### Outings:

- Not applicable, as an outing was not observed.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for 6 staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. The risk of unauthorised access to the outdoor play environment at the front of the building was not prevented. The gated entry from the public car park had two bolt locks at varying heights on the interior side. However, as there was a gap between the gate frame and the hedging, the latches could be accessed and opened through reaching around the gate frame.
3. One of the shelving units in the Toddler room had not been adequately anchored and was observed to be unsteady when pushed back and forth by two of the children. This increased the risk of injury to a child.

#### Infection Control:

4. Several of the cot mattresses were not waterproof or were not fitted with a waterproof mattress protector, as required to reduce the risk of cross infection.

#### Safe Sleep:

5. Suitable sleep equipment was not provided for one of the children on the day of the inspection. The child, who was aged under two years, was accommodated to sleep on a stackable bed, with a thin mattress. The use of stackable beds is unsuitable for children under the age of two years, as they are not sufficiently conducive to sleep for children in this age range.
6. Sampled sleep logs, which were recorded on an online application, indicated that sleep checks were not consistently conducted at 10-minute intervals, as required.

For example, on 8 February, the checks undertaken on one child indicated one gap of 13 minutes and a second gap of over 30 minutes and a sleep record in respect of another child logged a time lapse of 19 minutes.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. Renewed vetting for three of the staff has been received and forwarded. Three further renewal applications have been sent to the bureau and are awaiting completion. As a preventive measure, the registered provider has outlined that at the end of August each year, managers will check the staff folders, and will note any staff that require vetting renewal.
2. The response stated that the fencing has been heightened and that the lower latch has been secured. While the children are using the outdoor play area at the front of the building, a chain will be placed on the top latch, to prevent unauthorised access. Going forward, a regular risk assessment will be carried out on the outdoor environment and a new gate, with a fob system will be considered when budget allows.
3. The shelf has been stabilised and secured to the wall. As a preventive action, it was stated that the managers' hazard checklist has been updated to include a check to ensure that the shelves are stable and secured to the wall.

##### Infection Control:

4. The written reply stated that waterproof mattress protectors have been applied to all cot mattresses. In addition, the managers hazard checklist has been updated to include ensuring that all mattresses have waterproof mattress protectors.

##### Safe Sleep:

5. The response outlined that children under 2 will not be permitted to sleep on stackable floor beds and that a sign has been added to the sleep room door, reminding staff that children under 2 years are not permitted to sleep on stackable beds.
6. In the response received, the registered provider stated that staff are now logging all 10-minute checks and that a sign has been placed on the sleep room door, reminding staff to log these checks. Managers will also monitor logs to ensure compliance.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. The six required Garda vetting disclosures were forwarded.
2. Photographic evidence.
3. Photographs to demonstrate that the shelving unit has been anchored and a copy of the hazard checklist.

#### Infection Control:

4. An invoice for the waterproof mattress covers.

#### Safe Sleep:

5. A photograph of the sign.
6. A photograph of the sign on the sleep room door and a copy of the hazard checklist.

### Summary Comment

The corrective actions implemented by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

### Compliance Information

(e) There were eight toilets and ten wash hand basins available for the children's use. Five nappy changing units were also in place, including a new changing unit, which had been installed in the staff sanitary facility adjoining the ECCE 1 room, following the previous inspection. Staff had access to three designated toilets and wash hand basins in the main building.

### Non-Compliance Information

(d)

1. The toilet seat in the Toddler room sanitary facility was not adequately secure and required repair.
2. The windowsill in the sanitary facility adjoining ECCE 2 was heavily chipped, which impeded effective cleaning.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d)
1. The response received stated that the toilet seat has been repaired. As a preventive action, a check to ensure that all toilet seats are in good repair, has been added to the hazard checklist.
  2. The written reply stated that windowsill has been painted.

### Supporting documentation submitted

A photograph to demonstrate that the toilet seat has been repaired and a photograph of the painted windowsill were submitted, along with a copy of the service's hazard checklist.

### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was deemed to meet regulatory compliance with Regulation 29.