

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL010
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Name of Service:	Bee Kool Kidz Creche
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Address of Service:	Upper Ballymacool, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
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Eircode:	F92 TKE5
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lucia Dunleavey
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Service type:	Full Day Care
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Date of Inspection:	08/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	49	PM	28
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F95 XK94
Inspection undertaken by:	N Toner
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

Bee Kool Kids Creche is a privately owned and operated preschool service located on the outskirts of the town of Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. The service caters for children aged 1-6 years and provides full day care from 8.00am-6.00pm each weekday. The service operates from one main building which was purpose built for the provision of the early years' service. The premises consists of three care rooms. There is also a sleep room, a kitchen dining area, where meals for children are prepared and served, an office and relevant sanitary facilities. There are three outdoor play areas, two located at the sides of the main building and a separate secure area along the driveway.

Staffing

There is a total of 17 adults employed in the service including the registered provider and person in charge. There are 14 adults working directly with preschool children. There is one staff member employed to work in the kitchen. The registered provider does not work directly with the preschool 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 announced/unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16i, 16j, 19,23, 25,27 & 29.

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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.

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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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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) The registered provider ensured that.

- (a)
There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
- (b)
The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
- (c)
There was a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee.

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(2) On the day of inspection, ten adults who were employed to work directly with the children. A review of records showed that the vetting documentation for six adults had been examined during a previous inspection on 04/06/2025 and was found to be compliant.

In line with the requirements of Regulation 9, vetting records for eleven adults were then reviewed and the following information was noted.

- (a)
There were sixteen written validated references from past employers.
- (b)
There were six written validated references from reputable source.
- (c)
Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 17 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)
International Police Vetting was not required as no adults had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.
- (4)
Evidence of completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent was on file for ten adults.

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)
On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

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(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained throughout the inspection.

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:

(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

Compliance Information

(i) A written record was maintained in the service with details of staff rosters available for review.

(j) A random sample of medication administration records were reviewed for compliance under regulation 16 (J). All records had evidence of administration, the dose, route, signature of administrator, witness and parental consent.

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.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Basic Needs:

- The person in charge described how they provide balanced meals and snack each day. This was further evidenced by a review of the four-week rolling menu plan, a discussion with the cook and staff members and observation of meals in the Junior room. Morning snack served was waffles and fresh fruit a pairing that balances

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warm, crispy carbs with naturally sweet, juicy toppings, dinner was pizza and fish fingers, and evening snack was spaghetti hoops and brown bread toasted. The service had a four-week menu with a treat day on a Friday.

- Drinking water was freely available throughout the day and stored on shelving easily accessible to children in all care rooms.
- Nappy changing was observed in the wobbler nappy changing room. This was a positive engagement with the young children. The staff members responded to the needs of the children and provided regular nappy changes. The older children who were toileting independently were prompted to do so and supervised from a distance.
- The sleep needs of the younger children were met, this was observed on the day by children sleeping at a structured time of 12:30 to 14:00. One sleep room was in use in the service, and the wobbler room was also used for sleep and rest by darkening the room. Sleep was monitored by physical checks from staff a minimum of every ten minutes.
- Older children who required sleep were provided with stackable floor beds in the wobbler room. The room was darkened and soft music played to create a relaxed environment.

Programme of Activities:

- Ongoing observations and assessments were documented which helped create a well-rounded picture of each child and their learnings. Observations were individual to the child and recorded tasks completed and goals for the future.
- Children's language development was observed to be supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling. Circle time was observed in the senior preschool room where children learned about nature.
- On the day of inspection, the children were facilitated to make their own choice in selecting play equipment and activities that they wished to engage with.
- Turn taking and sharing was promoted; this was evidenced in all rooms on the day, where staff members supervised children and encouraged inclusion of all.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff members were observed to be respectful, gentle, and kind in their interactions towards the children in their care. During mealtimes the staff members sat at the table and engaged in social conversation with children promoting a relaxed atmosphere. The staff members sat at the children's level when feeding the younger children or when assisting the children to feed themselves.

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- The younger child were held and cuddled as needed throughout the day. There was evidence of familiarity between the staff and children as conversations included activities about home and family.
- The service took measures to support the children's relationships including keeping parents and guardians fully informed of the daily activities. This was completed through the use of an book in the younger children's rooms where parents received information in relation to the children's eating, sleeping and nappy changing.
- Pictures of families displayed on the walls in the care rooms ensured children's connection to home was maintained.
- All children had a designated keyworker in place who maintained the communication with home. This included recording individual observations, working towards agreed goals and ensuring parents are kept fully informed of the child's progress and development.

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 was found to be secured on arrival preventing unauthorised access or exit from the premises.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C.
- Cleaning products were stored out of the reach of children.
- The outdoor perimeter was secured with fencing and bolted gates to prevent unauthorised exit from the service.

Infection Control:

- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- The sanitary facilities were observed to be ventilated by openable windows.
- Cleaning records were in place in each room which stated the areas to be cleaned each day.

Administration of Medication:

- When interviewed, staff were aware of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication. No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Children over the age of two slept on low level, stackable beds.

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- Children under two were provided with individual cots.
- Each child had access to their own bed linen.
- Sleep checks were carried out on sleeping children. The records detailed the child's name, the date and time of the check, the position, breathing pattern and colour of the child and the adults' initials.
- The temperature of the toddler sleep room was monitored and recorded by the adults supervising the children.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Two floor mats in the service appeared worn, frayed and dirty posing a trip hazard to preschool children.
2. A fire door was held open with a door stop in the sanitary area in the junior room posing a risk to preschool children in the event of a fire.
3. A sharp kitchen utensil was found in a drawer in the senior preschool room posing a risk to the preschool children.

Infection Control:

4. Foot-operated waste bins were not in operation throughout the service on the day of inspection. Bins observed in the preschool rooms and handwashing areas required manual handling to open, which failed to prevent the cross-contamination of hands and posed an avoidable infection control risk to the children attending the service.
5. Hand hygiene practices were inadequate in the senior preschool room. Inspectors observed three separate occasions where children did not wash their hands after using the toilet. Staff failed to prompt or assist the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Floor mat have been removed and replaced
2. Door stopper has been removed and staff made aware door has to be closed at all times.
3. Kitchen knife has been removed and staff informed to keep out of room.

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We have had a staff meeting and discussed the non-compliant areas, we have put a plan in place going forward on staff to inform management of any mats etc that need replacing, door stoppers removed and no sharp knives allowed in any rooms.

Infection Control:

4. . We have replaced all bins with new foot pedal bins.

5. We have updated our hand hygiene policy as well as updating the staff on the importance of role modelling and observing hand always washing. In every hand-washing area we have put a visual aid to support children during hand washing.

New policy update and staff made aware of the changes going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

A selection of photographs was attached.

Infection Control:

Photo and policy attached.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 23.

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 registered provider had ensured that an adequate number of staff members were trained in first aid, and available to the preschool child always. On the day of inspection, there were six staff trained in first aid responder (FAR).

(2)

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(a) First aid boxes were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (b) The first aid boxes available to the preschool children were insufficiently stocked with out-of-date equipment (Sterile wipes).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Out of date sterile wipes have been removed and replaced with in date wipes.

Designated person appointed to check First Aid boxes on a regular occurrence.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photo Attached.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 25 First Aid.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

During the inspection, the required ratio of qualified adults to children was maintained, ensuring that children were under the supervision of qualified staff members. The staff were observed positioning themselves within the rooms to allow effective engagement with the children, offering support when required and attentive supervision. During mealtimes staff sat close by the tables whilst, ensuring help was given to children when required. The outdoor area was designed to ensure that the children could be kept within sight and sound of the staff.

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Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The premises was of sound and stable structure.
- (b) The premises was safe and secure on the day of inspection.
- (c) The premises was kept adequately lit throughout the day; the service was adequately heated and ventilated.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
 - Soft furnishings in the Wobbler room (Pink Matts) appeared frayed, dirty and worn.
 - The walls in the Junior preschool room required painting.
- (e)

The sanitary washing basins required maintenance due to faulty taps leading to inadequate flow of running water in the following rooms

 - Senior preschool (sanitary room)
 - Wobbler room (care room)

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Pink mats removed and replaced with new soft mats. Staff have been informed to report if mats are needing freshened or replaced.
2. Painter has been booked for Saturday 1st August leading into the bank holiday weekend to give all rooms a freshen up.
3. Faulty taps have been fixed and have adequate flow of running water. Staff have been encouraged to keep a close eye if children are pulling on taps and report any faults of any inadequate flow of water.

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Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted for review.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 29 Premises.