

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL012
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Name of Service:	Bizzy Bees Creche
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Address of Service:	Roskey, Clonmany, Co. Donegal
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Eircode:	F93 KX70
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Name of Registered Provider:	Deirdre McLaughlin, Michelle Harkin
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	06/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	53	PM	41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84
Inspection undertaken by:	S Mc Kenna & M Mc Donnell
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Bizzy Bees Crèche is a private owned full day care service which is situated in the townland of Rooskey, outside of Clonmany village on the Inishowen peninsula of County Donegal. The service caters for children aged 0 to 6 years. The hours of operation are weekdays from 8am to 6pm which includes the operation of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.00 am to 12.00 midday.

The premises consists of a former detached domestic dwelling which has been modified for the provision of the childcare facility. The building contains four playrooms, a sleep room, a sensory room a kitchen and sanitary accommodation for children at ground floor level and an office, staff room and storage on the first floor. Outdoor play areas extended from the front of the premises and along one side and to the rear of the building. A registered school age service is also provided.

Staffing

A total of nineteen adults are employed in the service including the two registered providers, all of whom work directly with children to include two staff employed on the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

Two students were on allocated educational 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 25 First Aid, Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures, and Regulation 28 Insurance. However, on inspection, an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29 Premises. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the two registered providers, 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
- (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.

(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 two designated persons in charge, who are the registered providers, and two named persons to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the registered providers, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation, the designated persons in charge or the named persons in charge were on the premises.

(c) A management structure was in place, which was clearly identifiable through review of the staff roster and in discussion with the staff team.

(2) The files for 19 staff and 2 students were reviewed.

(a) (b) Two written and validated references were on file for 19 staff and 2 students.

A total of 32 written and validated references were from a previous employer.

A total of 10 written and validated references were from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 19 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all employed staff. The college had carried out the vetting procedures for the students, and these were available on file.

(d) A review of the employment history for 19 staff and 2 students demonstrated that two adults had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. The required police vetting for the two staff was available on file.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 19 staff employed to work with children held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. A qualification for the two students was not required.

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

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at maximum attendance;

- The Baby room was closed on the day of inspection.
- Three adults cared for 11 children aged 1 year 6 months to 2 years 9 months in the Toddler Room (Beehive) of whom 2 attended on a sessional basis and 9 attended on a part time or full day care basis.
- Four adults cared for 18 children aged 2 years 11 months to 3 years 10 months in the Junior Preschool Room, of whom 5 attended on a sessional basis and 13 attended on part time or full day care basis.
- Three adults cared for 24 children aged 3 years 11 months to 4 years 9 months in the Senior preschool Room, of whom 5 attended on a sessional basis and 19 attended on part time or full day care basis.

One of the registered providers was scheduled to work in the kitchen on the day of inspection and prepared and cooked the meals consumed by the children. The second registered provider attended the service intermittently on the day of inspection and covered in care rooms where needed.

Two students on work placement were present in the Toddler room and Senior Preschool room on the day.

(8) A review of the staff roster demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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

The following examples demonstrate how children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs

The service provides all snacks and meals to the children, with the exception of the Toddler room, who bring in their own snack items, which are stored in the fridge in their care room. Drinks were readily available to the children in the care rooms throughout their day. Meal and snack times were observed to be a relaxed time, with staff observed to sit with and support younger children where needed. The hot meal due to be served on the day of inspection at approximately 2.15 pm was sausage stew with potatoes and vegetables. Children's dietary requirements were met where required, with snack and meal options adjusted to suit their needs.

The younger children had their nappies changed in line with their routines, and older children were observed to use the toilet independently. Bibs were used at mealtimes for younger children. Spare clothing was available for the children if required.

Children in all of the care rooms experienced a change of environment to the outdoor play areas on the day, and were dressed appropriately for the colder weather. The children in the Senior Preschool room availed of outdoor play throughout the morning, as the door off their care room led directly onto a designated covered outdoor area. The sleep needs of younger children in the Toddler room were provided for at a scheduled sleep time at 12 noon. At this time, stackable beds were set up for children to sleep on, and those children who did not sleep at this time were taken over to play in the sensory room across the hall. Rest areas to include soft child-sized seating, mats and cushions were provided in all of the care rooms for children to use for rest during their day.

Supporting Relationships

The atmosphere throughout all of the care rooms was warm and welcoming. The staff were observed to engage in play and activities with the children both indoors and outdoors. The staff were observed to sit on the ground and play and interact with the younger children, with the staff members in the Toddler room playing with toys and reading books of the children's choice. In the Junior Preschool Room children could take part in a painting/art activity and if they chose not to another staff member played with building blocks and sensory activities with the children. The staff in each room appeared familiar with the children and were aware of the children's likes and dislikes. The staff were observed to promote positive behaviour and give praise where positive interactions were observed.

The children in Senior preschool told the inspector all about their outing the day before to "Wild Ireland" where they saw "kangaroos and snakes" and went on "a big bus". The children made creative animals such as hedgehogs and snakes based on their experience on their outing.

Communication with parents is in person at arrival and collection times. In addition, the service also uses a digital application to share photos of children during their day in the preschool service.

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 were appropriately secured to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The garden areas were observed to be secured when in use, with no hazards identified.
- The play equipment and toys used by the children were observed in good repair.
- Risk assessments were carried out, and records were available for review.
- The kitchen and storage areas were observed to be secured when not in use and inaccessible to the children.
- Blind cords, where fitted, were adequately secured.
- Floor coverings were maintained in good condition.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.
- Fire exits remained free from obstruction throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the staff adequately supervising the children throughout the inspection.

Infection Control:

- Warm running water and liquid soap were provided for handwashing purposes. Hand washing was observed in practice in the Senior Preschool room before snack times and after children used the toilet, and after nappy changing in the Junior Preschool room.
- The Junior and Senior Preschool toilets were ventilated by openable windows.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned before and after snack and meal times.
- Snacks taken in from home by the children in the Toddler Room were stored in the fridge until snack and meal times.
- Cleaning schedules were available for review. The service was maintained in a clean manner throughout.
- External waste bins were stored securely and were inaccessible to the children.
- Children's soothers were stored in individually labelled containers, and staff members were knowledgeable about the cleaning and storage of children's soothers.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff outlined the procedure for administering and recording medication if required.
- Care plans for children with allergies were maintained, and any relevant emergency medication was easily accessible to the staff.

Safe Sleep:

- A cot room is provided for children attending the Baby room. This room was closed on the day of inspection.
- A total of 4 cots were available. Individual bed linen and cellular blankets or sleeping bags are used for each child and laundered at least weekly in the service.
- Sleep check records were available for review, which detailed the sleep position, skin colour and breathing pattern of sleeping children, every 10 minutes.
- Children who slept on stackable beds were supervised at all times.

Outings:

- A recent trip to “Wild Ireland” had taken place. A completed risk assessment that was carried out prior to the trip was available for review.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The bins in use for the Senior Preschool were not pedal-operated and required staff and children to lift the lid each time they used the bin; this is a cross-contamination risk.
2. The paper towels in the Senior preschool sanitary area did not support effective infection control. The paper towels were not stored in a dispenser; therefore, the repeated handling of the paper hand towels increases the risk of cross-contamination.
3. During nappy changing, inappropriate infection control practices were observed, for example;
 - A staff member in the Toddler Room was observed to use the same apron whilst changing different children’s nappies. The staff member left the nappy changing room with this apron on and went into the care room to collect other children for nappy changing. The staff member did not wear gloves for the three nappy changes observed.
 - Following nappy changing in the Toddler Room, the children’s hands were not washed, and the children were observed returning to the care room to play.
 - Following a nappy change observed in the Junior Preschool Room, the child did not wash their hands in the handwash basin available in the nappy changing area for the Junior Preschool children. Whilst their

hands were washed, this was in the sanitary facilities that were accessed by walking through the care room.

- The nappy bin used in the Toddler room was not pedal operated as per infection control requirements.

4. Ineffective infection control practices were observed in relation to mouthed toys in the Toddler Room. The inspector observed a child playing with two different toy drills and putting them in their mouth. These toys were not removed from play by the staff members. It is acknowledged that when asked, staff were knowledgeable about the need to wash toys and disinfect these toys.

Safe Sleep:

5. Safe sleep practices were not always implemented in the Toddler room in line with Tusla's safe sleep guidelines for children under 24 months.

- Three children aged under 24 months were placed to sleep on a stackable bed. The stackable bed was not suitable for a child aged under 24 months, in line with Tusla's Early Learning and Care sleep provision guidance for children under 24 months, which requires a floor bed to be fitted with a mattress of at least 6cm in thickness.
- A sleep plan was not in place for three children under 24 months who were not sleeping in cots. This is at variance to the guidelines that state a child can sleep in an approved alternative to a cot provided it is agreed with parents, and a sleep plan is established and signed.

6. One of the four mattresses available in the Baby cot room did not contain the required recognised safety standard label.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Bins were replaced that afternoon, as we had some in the attic. This non-compliance was amended the very next day following the inspection. Our bins are going to be inspected monthly to make sure they are in good condition, and the lid is still lifting properly. This is added to our monthly cleaning schedule in the rooms, and if bins are broken before the month, they will be replaced.
2. We have put in the z-fold paper towels for the children to dry their hands and won't be using the blue roll for this in future. This non-compliance was amended the very next day following the inspection. These checks are also added to the cleaning schedule, and whoever is on cleaning that day is responsible for making sure the paper towel holder is stocked up.

3. We had a separate meeting with the toddler room staff regarding the nappy changing and use of aprons and gloves. Since the meeting, both registered providers have been monitoring the staff and observing them at nappy changing times, making sure aprons and gloves are being changed, and children's hands are being washed. The bin is changed in the toddler nappy area to a pedal bin. We have added an apron dispenser to our changing area, and the room leader is responsible for making sure each staff member changes their apron and gloves and that children's hands are washed before they go back into the room. Following our meeting with staff, this seems to be working effectively, and management is carrying out visits to the room at nappy changing times to make sure the staff are carrying out these procedures. A reminder poster had also been put on the wall. The water in the changing room has had thermostatic controls fixed by a plumber.
4. During the meeting, we discussed with the staff of the toddler room about the mouthed toys and being more vigilant when children put toys into their mouths. Staff in the baby and toddler rooms are reminded of mouthed toys and are making sure they are keeping an eye on toys being put into kids mouths. Each room has added a new box with a sign on it saying mouthed toys, and toys are placed into the box and washed when the staff have time to do so.

Safe Sleep:

5. The new beds were ordered the next day. A parent's letter regarding the children's sleep is now in place, where we have issued it to the parents to give them the choice of where their child can sleep. We will ensure we are up to date with all sleep policies regarding safe sleep for children. We will have monthly reviews with our toddler room staff regarding children transitioning from cots to beds. Stackable beds are no longer used in the Toddler room for children aged under 2 years. Our beds for under 2's will have a mattress of a thickness of between 6 and 15 cms and meet EU safety standards. We are going to add our sleep plan to our registration forms for all children under 2 years old. These forms will be reviewed with parents every few months in case there are any changes to their child's sleep routine. A copy of our sleep plan will be added to our parents' handbook and also to our policy book.
6. The mattress was replaced straight away as we had spare ones in the attic. Mattresses will be checked daily before use by the room leader and staff within the room. We have placed a daily check for the mattresses on the wall, and this must be ticked off each day before use. Management will also inspect beds monthly to make sure they are safe to be used.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographs of new bins, Z fold paper towel holder in place.

Evidence of gloves and aprons in nappy changing area, and handwashing posters in care room.

Evidence of new mouthed toy boxes in place.

Safe Sleep:

Receipt for new beds. Completed sleep plans for 3 children.

Photos of mattress replacement. Copy of daily checklist for mattresses.

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 ensured that a person who held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. Four staff members held in-date FAR training certificates and were rostered to work on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) (b)

The first aid materials available throughout the service did not contain sufficient amounts required for the number of children in attendance. Between the two first aid cupboards, there was a box of plasters and a range of bandages available. Safety pins were available in the office. The inspectors were advised that the first aid bag had been taken on the outing the day before the inspection and had not yet been taken back into the service. A similar non-compliance was identified at the last inspection 17/02/2022, where insufficient materials were available, and the registered provider's response of "The first aid box is fully stocked" is deemed to be insufficient in ensuring this non-compliance did not re-occur.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The first aid box was restocked the day after inspection. A list was drawn up to do a monthly stock check.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photos of first aid materials.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 25 (2) (a) (b).

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 record of the fire drills that take place was available. The most recent fire drill was recorded in October 2025.

(b) The annual maintenance certificate for the fire extinguishers was dated October 2025, and the smoke alarms were dated August 2025.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed on walls and doors throughout the service, which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for up to 75 pre-school children attending the service on a Full Day Care basis. The policy showed that the service had insurance in place from 28 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required

Non-Compliance Information

(c)
The mechanical ventilation in the Toddler nappy area did not seem to be working which was confirmed by a staff member. The inspector noted a malodour in the nappy changing area on the initial walk around of the service and during the inspection whilst in the Toddler Room.

(d)

- A pane of glass on the external side of the window pane in the Senior Preschool sanitary area was cracked. The area located outside the window is used for children, parents and staff entering and exiting the Senior preschool room. This poses a risk of injury to a child. It is acknowledged that the registered provider outlined that the landlord was aware that this required replacement.
- The toilet roll holders in the toilets in the Senior Preschool room's sanitary area were rusted and required replacement.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Arranged with contractor for works over Christmas to mend the mechanical ventilation.

The landlord was contacted to fix the pane of glass.

The toilet roll holders were ordered the next day and arrived the following Monday.

Do premises check more often.

Supporting documentation submitted

Letters detailing scheduled works to replace the window pane and fix the mechanical ventilation.

Video evidence of mechanical ventilation in working order. Photo evidence of the window pane replaced.

Photos of new toilet roll holders.

Summary Comment

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