

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL049		
Name of Service:	Busy Bees Pre School		
Address of Service:	159 Bath Road, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	K32 HT99		
Name of Registered Provider:	Janet Morrell		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	10/02/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.		
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Coyle		
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).			
Conditions if applicable	Not applicable		

Description of service

Busy Bees Pre School is a sessional Early Years service located in Balbriggan, County Dublin offering early childhood care and education to children aged between 2 and 6 years. The state funded early childhood care and education (ECCE) scheme is offered to children of eligible age for 3 hours daily, over 38 weeks of the year. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09:30 and 12:30 hours. The service operates from a care room located in the registered providers family home with sanitary accommodation located directly off the care room. There is an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider and the core staff member were present on the day of the inspection, both of whom work directly with the pre-children in the service on a daily basis. One staff member is employed in the service to reduce the adult to child ratio and if necessary to work with a child with additional needs, a post which is funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child.

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.

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 is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of inspection.

The files for 2 staff members including the registered provider all of whom work directly with the children were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) Two written, validated references were available for the 2 staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 2 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as following a review of the staff files it was confirmed that no staff members had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 2 staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with children in the service held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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 staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) The adult to child ratio was correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection.

There were 5 pre-school children aged 3 years 2 months to 4 years 5 months being cared for by 2 staff members.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

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

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency*

Compliance Information

(1) A sampling process was used in relation to the children's records. All 7 sampled registration forms were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

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

(1)(a) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

Basic needs:

- There was a welcoming atmosphere in the service with children observed to be engaged in activity and conversation when the inspector arrived at the service. The registered provider and staff member were observed to be attentive and caring in their interactions with the children, demonstrating their familiarity and understanding of the children when they spoke about them.
- The children brought their own snack with them from home, one of the children requested snack earlier because he was hungry and with the agreement of all the children morning snack was facilitated. The adults sat at the table chatting about the day and upcoming activities with the children all of which created a relaxed and social experience for the children.
- The personal care needs of the children were attended to promptly, children were facilitated to use the bathroom as needed with support and supervision provided as required with gentle reminders, discreet supervision and assistance provided when required. The children were supported in putting their coats on independently before they went home.
- The layout of the care rooms enabled the children to move around the spaces freely and access the available play materials. The children's photographs and artwork were displayed in the care room, reflecting the children's identity, and encouraging children's sense of belonging in the service.
- A comfortable rest area comprising of 2 children's armchairs along with an assortment of circular cushions were available to the children alongside a reading area which provided the children with the opportunity to take a break from activities as they chose.
- The adults were observed to approach any minor disagreements that occurred between the children in a positive and calm way and supported the children to resolve any conflict that arose. There was an emphasis on praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members were observed interacting with the children in a warm, caring and playful manner. Informal conversation was used as a means of extending children’s learning and their engagement with an activity through the use of open-ended questioning techniques. The children were praised throughout the session particularly when they were helpful to others, took turns and shared resources.
- The children appeared confident and relaxed in their environment and were observed naturally forming small groups and engaging in a range of activities during the inspection.
- Parents and guardians were observed being welcomed by the practitioners when the children were going home from the service with the opportunity taken for updating the parents and guardians regarding their child’s day in the service taken at this time.

Physical and material environment:

- The care room was bright and welcoming, and the play materials and equipment were accessible on low-level shelving to facilitate children’s independent choice and play.
- The preschool room was laid out with a variety of interest areas and learning resources, a home area included a play kitchen with a range of suitable play resources including pots, pans, play food, tea sets and a range of dolls and baby care items all of which supported the children’s imaginary play experiences. Construction resources, transport toys along with arts and crafts materials and a wide range of tabletop resources including jigsaws were also available to the children.
- The theme of the week was Valentines Day, and the children happily participated in creating Valentine cards and themed artwork.
- A wide selection of books was provided alongside the rest area and the children were observed to choose the book that they wanted to have read at various times throughout the inspection and the children’s language development was further enhanced through conversation.
- The outdoor area is located to the rear of the service. A fully roofed area immediately adjacent and attached to the premises is provided for the children. This rear of this area can be opened completely to allow the children access to the outdoors and to move freely between the two areas. The ‘enclosed area’ had several interest areas including a mud kitchen, a large sand tray with a variety of toys for the children to enjoy sensory play along with a large sensorial board with a variety of textures for the children to explore. The outdoor area is covered with an artificial grass surface and has a climbing frame with a slide,

a dome climber, a small wooden climbing frame, a playhouse, and a variety of ride on toys for the children to enjoy.

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 and outdoor play area were appropriately secured. This prevented a child from exiting the service unsupervised and unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- The water temperature in the sanitary accommodation did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children.
- The toys and equipment available to the children appeared in good condition with no safety hazards observed. Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- There was warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels provided for hand hygiene at the wash hand basin in the sanitary accommodation of the service. The children in the service were facilitated to wash their hands before eating and following messy play. Children were gently reminded, and assisted, when necessary, to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- Children's lunches which contained perishable food items including meat and dairy products, provided by parents for the morning snack, were refrigerated on arrival to the service. This reduced the risk of bacteria multiplying to levels which could result in food contamination.
- The children's tables were observed to be appropriately cleaned prior to and following the morning snack.
- Documented up to date cleaning records were maintained on the premises. The premises and the play equipment and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

- No children attending the service required a medical care plan. No medication was observed being administered on the day.

Fire Safety:

- The emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

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) A person trained in first aid including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions on the premises, out of the reach of children.

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) Records were available in the service to demonstrate that regular fire drills take place. The most recent fire drill was recorded to have been carried out 13/01/25.

(b) There was a record available that detailed the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment was serviced on the 07/02/24 and the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 07/02/24.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were on display in the service.