

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK057
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Name of Service:	The Beehive Play Learn Grow Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Well Lane, Rathkeale, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 F7PN
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Name of Registered Provider:	Méabh O'Kelly
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	14/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	62	PM	67
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2 nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan, E Browne
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

The Beehive is a private, full day childcare service located in the town of Rathkeale in Co. Limerick. It offers a service to children of all preschool ages. It is opened Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6.00pm. At the time of inspection there were 83 preschool children registered to attend the service. The service operates from a purposely designed single story building. The building includes a Baby/ Wobbler room, a Toddler/ Playgroup room, a Junior Pre-school room, and a Senior Preschool room, a Manager's office, a Kitchen and a Dining area, sanitary accommodation, nappy changing areas and a designated sleep room. There are 2 well-resourced outdoor play areas located on the grounds of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider is the manager of the service. There are 21 staff employed to work at the facility. There is a person employed to work in the kitchen to prepare and cook fresh meals each day. All staff have achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. All staff participate in continuous professional development with courses such as manual handling, first aid and child safeguarding offered on site.

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

The inspection was triggered by information received by the Early Years Inspectorate Department.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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
- (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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.

(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 member of the management team.

(2)(a) All staff files were reviewed. There were two written and validated references available for all staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff working at the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for 6 staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

(7) All staff had induction training and were supervised on

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service.

(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and

(c) Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services Regulations 2016)

On taking up employment at the service each new staff member completed 2 days of induction training. Staff appraisals were then completed at 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, 9 months and an annual review was carried out at 12 months. All staff have supervision meetings with their manager at regular times throughout the year.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

All policies at the service were reviewed in 2023 and staff were updated on all changes to the policies.

The following policies were reviewed and were deemed to be detailed and comprehensive.

- Statement of Purpose and Function
- Complaints Policy
- Policy on Behaviour Management
- Recruitment Policy
- Risk management Policy
- Staff training Policy
- Supervision Policy

A Policies Information pack for parents was available with the main points on the services policies clearly outlined.

A full range of the policies was available on request for parents.

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) The registered provider ensures that at all times there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at the pre-school service.

(2) On the day of the inspection there were 62 pre-school children and 17 adults on the premises working directly with the children. The adult child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

There were 7 preschool children and 3 staff in the Baby/Wobbler Room

There were 17 preschool children and 5 staff in the Toddler/Playgroup Room

There were 19 preschool children and 4 staff in the Junior Preschool Room

There were 19 preschool children and 3 staff in the Senior Preschool Room

There were 2 relief staff available to replace staff while taking meal breaks. A designated person was available to prepare, cook and serve food to all children attending the service.

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 sample of children's registration forms from all rooms at the service were reviewed. There was a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of these children.
- (a) The name and date of birth of the child.
 - (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
 - (c) Provision to record 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 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 where the family has registered with a general practice.
 - (h) Record of each child's immunisation.
 - (i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
 - (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
 - (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
 - (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
 - (e) the facilities available;*
 - (f) the opening hours and fees;*
 - (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
 - (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
 - (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 consent;*
 - (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*
- a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service. This information was shared with all parents in the services.

- (a) The name, position, qualifications, and experience of the persons in charge. A staff identity wall with photos and details of each staff member was displayed at the entrance of the service.*
- (b) Details of the type of service in operation and the age profile of children for which the facility is registered to provide services.*
- (c) Details of the adult/child ratios in the service.*
- (d) The type of care programme provided in the service. Regular newsletters were issued to the parents to keep them updated with this information.*

- (e) The facilities available.
- (f) The opening hours and fees.
- (g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10 and were found to be comprehensive and detailed.
- (h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child daily with the time of arrival and departure of each child documented.
- (i) Staff rosters were maintained on a daily basis and available for inspection. These correlated with the numbers that were present on the day of inspection.
- (j) The service had a medication administration record template available that could be used in the event of a child requiring medication to be administered at the service.
- (k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service. These reports were viewed and were deemed to be detailed and comprehensive.

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*
- (1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*
- (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.*
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.*

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

A healthy eating policy was available at the service. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were prepared fresh and were served to all rooms throughout the day. A menu plan was displayed at the entrance to the premises. Breakfast was served to children on arrival if needed. A mid-morning snack was served at 10am, dinner at 12md and afternoon snack at 3pm. Mealtimes were observed to be unhurried and relaxed. Drinking water and cups were accessible to children in each of the rooms. Each child had access to their own cup, beaker and bottle and no sharing of crockery, cutlery or utensils were allowed.

Sanitary accommodation and nappy changing facilities were located next to each room. Staff were observed to follow the procedures as outlined in the nappy changing policy for the service. Children's toiletries were stored close to each changing unit and within easy reach of the staff. Staff washed their hands before and after each nappy change, gloves and aprons were used for each change and all were removed when the nappy was changed. The staff assisted each child to wash their hands using the hot and cold running water, liquid soap and paper towels to dry. Each child has access to a change of clothes if needed.

Children spend long periods of time outdoors each day. Outdoor raingear and wellingtons were available for all children to ensure children got outdoors in all weathers.

Each room has a supply of tissues and wipes and foot pedal operated, lidded bins were accessible for the safe disposal of waste.

Clearly labelled individual lockers for each child's belongings were available in the Toddler/Playgroup room. Sleep facilities were available next to the Baby/Wobbler and Preschool room, with an adequate supply of cots available to facilitate sleep on demand for all children. Low level beds were used for the older children, and these were placed in the Baby/Wobbler room. Where children share usage of a cot or a bed, fresh linen was used for each child. Children were closely monitored while sleeping and all checks were documented. Rest areas with soft couches, cushions and blankets were accessible in each of other rooms occupying the older children.

The staff interacted with the children in a caring and respectful manner. Staff were observed conversing with the children at their level, using a soft tone of voice and staff responded promptly to their cues for assistance. The staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the children's personal interests and capabilities. Staff supported the children to be independent in their chosen play-based activities both individually and as part of a group.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

Room layout and designs were arranged to ensure the opportunity for different types of play and learning were available and accessible in all rooms of the service. The atmosphere in each room was unhurried and encouraging and children in each room appeared content and all were actively engaged in numerous activities.

There were clearly defined, well developed interest areas in all rooms with age-appropriate resources available to children depending on their age and stage of development. The Baby room was laid out with lots of uncluttered, clear floor spaces for the children to play safely and lots of soft floor matting facilitated many floor-based activities. Adult seating in the room facilitated staff to sit and hold the children throughout the day.

The Toddler playschool room had clearly defined interest areas, offering ample space for different types of play activities and routines, e.g. adult armchairs, book areas, home corner and kitchen areas, low level tables and chairs and construction play areas. Messy play activities for sensorial development such as painting, colouring with crayons, rice and cones in the turf tray were available in the room. A large climbing frame occupied the centre of the room. A well-developed outdoor area was accessible directly off this room and children had opportunities to be outside as much as possible every day. The children were observed moving freely in the indoor and outdoor environment throughout the day.

The Junior and Senior Preschool rooms were large, spacious, and bright areas with low level open shelving available to display play equipment. Defined interest areas included library areas, construction areas, imaginative play areas with props for home corner, manipulative play areas and small world areas. Both rooms had clearly defined rest areas with soft seating and rubber matting.

The large outdoor area for the preschool children had lots of equipment and materials which supported children's play, movement, learning and exploration exclusive to the outside. Children could explore and experiment with nature in this area with lots of areas for digging and planting. Bikes, trikes, cars, and scooters were available outside with a variety of good quality ride on toys provided. A large, sheltered area outside provided a space for children to play outdoors in all types of weather.

(2)

There was a Behaviour Management policy in place for the service. The staff members were observed to respond appropriately and in a timely manner when children became upset and tired.

(3)
Staff were observed to speak kindly to the children using soft tone of voice and listened to the children in a caring and respectful manner. On the day of the inspection no practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful were observed in respect of any pre-school child.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) Each child was checked in by an adult on arrival to the service. At home time each child was checked out by an adult. The time of arrival and departure was documented in each room.

(3) No person other than a child attending the service, a person dropping or collecting a child, an employee or an unpaid worker could enter the premises without prior approval.

(b) All visitors were signed in and out, documenting their time of arrival and departure and the reason for their visit. The name of the person who admitted them to the building was also recorded.

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

Each child attending the service was under the supervision of a qualified staff member on the day of the inspection. Children were supervised primarily by sight except for short periods by sound, when for example children were using the toilet independently.

Quiet areas used by the children as rest spaces were designed with visibility in mind that allows constant adult supervision in an unobtrusive way. Equipment in all rooms was arranged to ensure effective supervision while respecting children's opportunities to be alone and have space.

In the outdoor areas staff moved around all areas to ensure effective supervision.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-*
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The complaints policy of the service was reviewed, and the policy stated the following:
 - (a) The procedure to be followed by a person making a complaint in relation to the service.
 - (b) The way a complaint was dealt with.
 - (c) The procedures for keeping a person who makes a complaint informed of how the complaint was dealt with.

- (2) In relation to a recent complaint the registered provider had kept the following
 - (a) a record in writing of a complaint made.
 - (b) Records to demonstrate that the complaint was dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.

- (3) The records contained information that included
 - (a) The nature of the complaint and the way the complaint was dealt with.
 - (b) This record was available for inspection.