

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH020
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Name of Service:	Bumblebee Daycare
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Address of Service:	Racehill Manor, Ashbourne, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	A84 WE27
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ciara Kavanagh
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	15/04/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM	24
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive Airside Business Park Swords Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. McDonnell and S. McKenna
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

Bumblebee Daycare is a privately owned service based in a residential area of Co. Meath. The service is registered to provide sessional, part-time time and full-day care to children aged 0-6 years old. The service is located in a two-storey building with the Baby, Toddler and Pre-school room based on the ground floor and the two Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) rooms, the Sun and the Moon, based on the first floor. The service has a dedicated cot and sleep room on the ground floor. There is also a kitchen and an attached dining room on the ground floor. There are sanitary facilities located on both floors. There is an outdoor area on the premises and a car park to the front. There is a registered school-age service in operation on the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service in a supernumerary capacity. The registered provider employs 17 staff members. This includes 15 staff who work directly with the children, a cook and an administrator.

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 26 Fire safety measures, Regulation 27 Supervision and Regulation 29 Premises. However, on inspection, additional non-compliance, which posed a risk, was identified under Regulation 25. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations in this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 9, 19, 23, 26, 27, and 29. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby, the Toddler, the Sun and the Moon Room.

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 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.

(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 person in charge arrived on the premises following the start of the inspection. A manager was identified as the deputy person in charge to the inspectors after entering the service.

(2) Following the last inspection on 17 July 2024, a review of the staff roster and staff attendance on the day of inspection demonstrated that three new staff members were working in the service. These files were reviewed along with the Garda vetting disclosures for the 15 staff member working at the last inspection and the outstanding police vetting for one staff member.

(a) The registered provider had six written and validated references available for each of the new staff members. Of these references available, five were from a previous employer.

(b) The registered provider had one written and validated reference was available from a reputable source.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the three new staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for 15 previous staff members.

(d) A review of the documentation concerning the staff members' employment history demonstrated that police vetting was not required for any of the three staff members. The police vetting that was outstanding from the services last inspection July 2024, was available on file for review.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 19 staff members which included the three new staff members 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.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) A review of the roster for the week of the inspection did not demonstrate that designated person in charge was in the service at all times during operational hours. The two other staff members named as the deputy person in charge also did not fully cover the core opening hours of 8.00am to 5.30pm when children were in attendance.
- (c) On discussion with staff members and the registered provider, there was no clearly defined deputy person in charge to ensure lines of accountability in the event of an emergency.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)(b) The registered provider submitted a roster which demonstrated that the person in charge or deputy person in charge was available during the operational hours. They stated that this will be available on the service noticeboard.
- (c) The registered provider stated that in discussions with staff the designated deputy persons in charge are named and staff are aware of these deputies.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of roster.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider in their corrective and preventive action plan has addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection.

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) On the inspectors' unannounced arrival, the adult child ratio was observed to be correct and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult-to-child ratios were observed:

- In the Baby room there was one staff member with three children aged between 1 year 9 months to 2 years 2 months old.
- In the Toddler room there was one staff member with four children aged between 2 years to 3 years and 2 months old.
- In the Preschool room there was one staff member and six children aged 2 years 6 months to 3 years old.
- In the Sun Room there was one staff member with five children aged between 3 to 4 years 8 months old. There were also two school aged children present in this care room.
- In The Moon Room there was one staff member with six children aged between 3 years 11 months to 4 years old.

In addition to the above there were 12 school aged children present, being supervised by one adult in the Stars room.

During the inspection, a staff member, arrived to provide relief cover and support and the person in charge was available in a supernumerary capacity.

Non-Compliance Information

(8) Following discussions with staff members and the registered provider the inspectors could not confirm that two staff members were on the premises at all times, as there was no documentation available that detailed the sign-in and sign-out times of staff members on a daily basis.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(8) The registered provider has stated that there is now a staff record for staff to sign in and out daily. This will coincide with the staff roster which clearly states that two members of staff will be present at all times throughout the working day.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of the sign in book.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider in their corrective and preventive action plan has addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

Compliance Information

Basic Needs

The children had access to water within the rooms. During mealtimes, children were given appropriate cutlery to eat their dinner and opportunities to eat independently as required. During nappy changing and sleep time, staff engaged in appropriate conversations to engage individual children and provide comfort. The children who could use the toilet by themselves were encouraged to do so, with a staff member remaining close by.

Supporting relationships around children

The staff members were observed to interact kindly with the children in their care. A staff member was observed playing with the children in the Toddler room with the musical instruments, climbing blocks and dolls. They engaged in the children's play and used soft, gentle tones. A staff member in the Baby room was observed providing comfort and positive behaviour management following a minor incident between children over a toy. The staff in the Sun and Moon rooms interacted on an ongoing basis with the children within their care, for example during a story reading activity in the Sun room and during tabletop activities in the Moon room.

Physical and material environment

Appropriate relaxation areas were available in the rooms, with cosy areas available in all rooms and an adult chair to provide a nurturing space in the Baby room. Activities and equipment were available on open shelving at a low level for children to access independently.

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 service had a secure entrance to the service with a buzzer system in place. This prevented any unauthorised access to the service and exit from the service by children.
- Following the last inspection, buggies were not stored in the cot room, and fire exit routes were clear of obstructions.
- Blind cords were secured and were not accessible to children.
- Cleaning agents and medications were stored out of the reach of children.
- Stairways were fitted with handrails suitable to the children.

Infection Control:

- The registered provider had ensured, since the last inspection, that the mattresses available were in good condition and were made of cleanable materials.
- Children's soothers were observed to be in individually labelled containers.

- The service was visually clean and staff members discussed cleaning schedules for the service, which included the common areas as well as the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A risk of injury was observed in the Toddler room as the radio, in use on the day of inspection, had a lead that was accessible to the children. The children could pull on the lead, leading to possible injury.
2. A child in attendance in the Moon room was observed to wear a teething necklace. Teething jewellery poses several serious risks including the risks of strangulation and choking/inhalation. Amber bead teething jewellery is prohibited for use in early years services for children under 3 years old.

Infection Control:

3. Children's snacks provided by the parents, which contain perishable items, were stored in the children's bags in the care room at room temperature on the day of inspection, rather than in the fridge. This increases the risk of bacteria multiplying in the perishable food items.
4. The pedal bin at the handwash basin in the Sun room was broken, requiring children and staff to lift the lid with their hands each time to dispose of waste, which poses a risk of cross contamination.
5. Paper hand towels were not provided in the toilet areas accessed by children in the Sun room, instead the children used the toilet, and then walked from the toilet area across the hallway back into their care room to wash their hands and use paper towel in the care room. This poses a risk of cross contamination.
6. The nappy changing observed did not support effective infection control measures and there was the possibility of cross-contamination. The inspector observed that the nappy changing did not adhere to the service's procedure, which was displayed in the nappy changing area. The following was observed;
 - The same gloves were used for the nappy changes of three different children.
 - No apron was worn throughout the nappy changing procedure.
 - The changing mat was not wiped down between each child.
 - The staff members' and children's hands were not washed after nappy changing and before they were placed back in the care room.
7. The water in the handwash basins in the Toddler Room, Baby Room, Nappy Changing room, the three downstairs toilets, the girls and boys toilets upstairs and the Sun room was cold to the touch and therefore did not support effective handwashing.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider submitted a photograph of the lead being secured and made inaccessible to children. The registered provider stated that as a preventive action this has been added to the room checklist.
2. The registered provider stated that amber beads have been removed, and they submitted a policy regarding amber beads not being worn.

Infection Control:

3. The registered provider stated that for children who bring in snacks parents are requested to put perishable items in a clear, named bag so the items can be put in the fridge.
4. The registered provider submitted a photograph of new bins and that this has been added to the monthly checklist.
5. The registered provider stated new dispensers were purchased and will be checked every morning.
6. The registered provider submitted a record of a staff meeting regarding handwashing and nappy changing. The registered provider stated that all staff are reminded of the importance of hygiene around nappy changing and hygiene in general with reminder signs in place in the service.
7. The registered provider engaged the service of a plumber who advised that a new water heater was required. The registered provider put in place interim measures for hand washing with water from other areas of the service being made available. Following the submission of the second CAPA the registered provider advised the work was still ongoing in the weekend and evenings.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photograph of radio
Policy on amber beads

Infection Control:

Photograph of new bins
Record of staff meeting
Photograph of nappy procedure in service.
Food and Nutrition policy

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider in their corrective and preventive action plan has addressed the non-compliances 1 to 6 as identified on inspection. Whilst it is acknowledged that the work to fix the hot water is being done as it is not yet complete therefore the non-compliance in relation to Regulation 23 point 7 remains outstanding. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider had not ensured that a person trained in a First Aid Responder (FAR) course was available to the children attending the preschool service. On review of the documentation available, there was no staff with an in-date FAR training certificate. It is acknowledged that all other staff members had valid training in paediatric first aid.
- (2) The first aid equipment available in the service did not provide adequate resources in the event of a first aid emergency. A review of the two first aid boxes for the service demonstrated that there were insufficient resources for the size of the service. Some of the resources available such as eye pads and bandages were out of date.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) The registered provider provided confirmation of a training course for July 2025. The registered provider submitted evidence of partial completion of the FAR course. They also stated that another staff member will be trained over the summer.
- (2) The registered provider stated that there are two new first aid kits available, one for each floor. Supplementary items are also available in the first aid kit located in the kitchen. The registered provider stated that this will be checked monthly.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of partial completion of the FAR course

A photograph of one of the two first aid kits purchased in situ.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider in their corrective and preventive action plan has addressed the non-compliance in relation to Regulation 25 (2). However, as the FAR training has not yet been completed Regulation 25 (1) remains outstanding.

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 previous fire drill on 19 March 2025 was available for review. The service had maintained a record of monthly fire drills since the last inspection in July 2024.

(4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in the rooms sampled on inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) The registered provider could not provide evidence of the annual maintenance of either the fire alarm system or the fire extinguishers.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b) The registered provider submitted evidence for the maintenance of the fire alarm on the 6 June 2025, the fire extinguishers on 27 May 2025 and that an annual contract is in place.

Supporting documentation submitted

Maintenance records.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider in their corrective and preventive action plan have addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection.

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 children were observed to be supervised appropriately. For example, children were observed being supervised as they moved through the service by staff members. During sleep, a staff member provided physical supervision to children who were asleep in cots and on floor beds in one room. In another room, children were asleep on floor beds with a different member of staff.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 55 children at any one time attending for full-day care. The policy showed that the service was insured 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-

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

Compliance Information

(d) The registered provider had appropriately cleaned the wall and partitions of the boys' toilets and the downstairs sanitary facility sinks. The toys and equipment in the rooms, such as dolls and their accessories and the chairs for the children were visibly clean.

(e) The service was equipped with an appropriate number of sanitary facilities for the children attending the service. The service had two nappy changing areas on the ground floor. These were supplemented by three toilets for children downstairs and five children's toilets upstairs. Two sanitary facilities for staff were also available. Following the previous inspection, the registered provider had installed doors on the boys' toilets which provided privacy to children whilst using the facilities. All toilets on the day of inspection were in working order.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) The registered provider did not ensure the premises of the service are cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required

1. The upstairs sanitary areas were not maintained in good repair;
 - The mechanical ventilation units in both the boys and girls toilets had an accumulation of dust present.
 - There were holes in the walls of the girls toilets and paint was chipping of the wall.
 - A toilet bowl in the girls toilet was stained and rusted.
 - The high-level ceiling window had an accumulation of cobwebs.
2. The edging of a table used by the Toddlers, was not sufficiently sealed to allow for effective cleaning.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The registered provider stated that they had engaged the services of a local handyman to complete the works. Photographs were submitted of cleaned ventilation units, high level windows and the toilet bowl. The registered provider stated that maintenance work was still ongoing and no photographs of the holes being rectified were submitted. It is acknowledged that the registered provider is having the work completed when the children are not in attendance and there is planned work for the summer.
2. The registered provider submitted a photograph of a new tabletop.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of works described above.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider in their corrective and preventive action plan have addressed the majority of non-compliances identified on inspection. The registered provider has stated there is ongoing work required including painting and repairs that is scheduled to happen when children are not present. The corrective actions will be reviewed at the next inspection. The non-compliance in relation to Regulation 29 (d) has been addressed.

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