

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY044
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Name of Service:	Busy Bees Playschool
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Address of Service:	Noggus, Ferbane, Co. Offaly
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Eircode:	R42 YY03
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carmel Flynn
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	06/01/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly
Inspection undertaken by:	Roisin Flynn
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.
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Description of service

Busy Bee's Playschool is a private sessional service providing care and education to preschool children aged between two and six years old. The preschool operates from a purpose-built single-story premises on the site of the registered providers domestic dwelling. The service is located in the rural town of Ferbane, in Co. Offaly. An enclosed outdoor play area is located to the side of the preschool. The service operates from 09:30 – 12:30pm Monday to Friday. The preschool consists of one large preschool room. Car parking and set down facilities are available in the car park at the front of the registered provider's home.

Staffing

The registered provider employs two staff in the service. There were two adults present on the day of the inspection including the registered provider and one childcare staff. The registered provider works directly with the preschool children and facilitated the inspection on 06 January.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations

- Regulation 9 – Management and Recruitment (1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d),(4).

- Regulation 11– Staffing Levels (1)(3),
- Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child (1)(a),
- Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and Play (1) (a) (b), (3) (a)
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,
- Regulation 25 – First Aid (1), (2)(a)(b).
- Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures (1) (a) (b), (4).
- Regulation 28 – Insurance

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
- (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)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

The person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

The staff members were aware of the management structure, the lines of authority and their roles within the service.

- (2)
Three staff files including the registered providers were reviewed and the following was noted:
- (a)
Three written validated references were available from a previous employer and
- (b)
Three written validated references were available from a reputable source.
- (c)
Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for three staff. In regard to the three staff members, the service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)
Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside of the jurisdiction as an adult for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4)
All employed childcare staff members working directly with the preschool children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education from Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the preschool children on the day of inspection.

(3)

The ratio of adults to children was maintained on the day of the inspection. There were 22 children being cared for by two adults.

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)

Basic needs

Children brought in a packed lunch provided by their parents. Lunches brought in from home were observed to contain a variety of sandwiches, yoghurts, crackers, fruit and pasta. Children's drink bottles were readily available in their lunch bags. The children sat together at low level tables while eating and engaging in conversations with each other. Staff engaged in conversation with the children during snack time.

Self-toileting was supported, and children were supervised as necessary. Nappy changing facilities were available for any child who required changing.

Supporting relationships

Staff members were observed to be warm, kind and respectful towards the children in their care. Children were spoken to using their first names and appropriate eye contact was made. A community wall was on display, photographs of the local GAA pitch, fire station and shop were displayed. This helped the children feel connected to home. Children's birthdays were displayed on the birthday wall.

The staff advised the inspector that information and updates are provided to parents at drop off and collection times. Additional updates are shared via an electronic messaging application. Learning journals are maintained for each child highlighting the 'voice of the child' and presented to parents at the end of the academic year.

Physical and material environment

Toys and play equipment were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving which nurtured independence, facilitated choice, and encouraged curiosity and spontaneous play. Children were observed to choose play equipment of their choice such as train tracks and jigsaws. Children were engaged in tabletop activities such as

playing with modelling dough with shape cutter and rollers, small vehicles and beads and boards which supported fine motor skills. Children’s language development was supported through one to one and group discussions and singing songs which were observed on the day of inspection. A range of books were available in the reading area of the preschool room. Children enjoyed singing and dancing to songs in the outdoor play area, while others choose to play in the outdoor playhouse or use the ride on equipment such as tractors and tricycles.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The preschool was bright and spacious for the children to move about, work and play during their time spent in the service. Child sized furniture enabled the children to sit comfortably for activities.

(b)

A rest area was available in the corner of the preschool room if a child wished to take a break from activities, rest or read a book. The rest area consisted of a child sized cushioned bench with throw cushions. Mesh curtains were hung on each side of the bench to segregate the area from the larger preschool room when required.

(3)(a).

A large enclosed outdoor play areas was provided on the premises. A wooden fence, gate and tall hedge surrounded the outdoor area. Play equipment provided in the outdoor area included a slide, a playhouse with a kitchen, and a variety of ride on toys. A storage shed was available to store outdoor toys not in use. Children had space to engage in gross motor activities such as riding bikes, trikes and to run. Picnic benches to sit, eat and

participate in outdoor tabletop activities, were located throughout the garden. Part of the outdoor area was covered with plastic corrugated roofing, which allowed for the continuation of outdoor play in inclement weather. Wellington boot storage was provided in the roofed area of the garden.

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 entrance door to the preschool was securely locked and controlled by staff to prevent children exiting the pre-school unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access. The partial glass entrance door allowed staff visibility of any visitors.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children in a cupboard.

The service had an oil tank in the outdoor play area which was securely fenced off.

Wooden gates and low fencing secured the perimeter of the premises to prevent children accessing the front of the premises and carpark when playing outdoors.

Infection Control:

Liquid soap and warm water were available for hand washing. Paper hand towel dispensers were accessible to children. Children were encouraged and supported to wash their hands before snack time and after using the bathroom. Pedal bins were available in the preschool room and sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste. Mechanical ventilation was in place in the two sanitary accommodations. The preschool was well-ventilated with openable windows. The service was clean and well-maintained on the day of inspection.

Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was stored in a cupboard out of reach of children. No medication was administered on the day of inspection. Staff were familiar with the procedure of administration of medication if required by a child.

Fire Safety:

Fire exit signs were posted on doorways in the service. Fire exits in the premises were easily recognisable and unobstructed. A fire assembly point was located at the side of the building in the carpark.

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)
One staff member was qualified in First Aid response (FAR). The FAR qualified staff member was available on the premises during the operational hours of the service on 06 January 2026.

(2)(a)
A suitably equipped first aid box was located in the service.

(b)
A first aid box was accessible to adults caring for children in the pre-school service.

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 written record for the completed fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on 26 November 2025.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number and type of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment was serviced on 05 January 2026, and the smoke alarms were serviced 02 September 2025.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire were positioned at doorways throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for twenty-two children attending the service and the expiry date noted was 27 March 2026.