

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WH071				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Busy Little Bees				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Castle Town, Geoghegan Village, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath				
<b>Eircode:</b>	N91 TE8P				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Annie Carroll, Caroline Maloney				
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	10/12/2025				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>21</td> <td>PM</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </table>	AM	21	PM	n/a
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	T. Duignan				
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

Busy Little Bees provides sessional childcare and education for children aged 2 to 6 years of age.

The hours of operation are between 8:45 – 11:45am Monday - Friday.

The service is located in an existing renovated building with a single-story extension in the village of Castletown Geoghegan. There are two care rooms, sanitary facilities for both care rooms including nappy changing facilities, a kitchen, staff room and a storage room. There is a secured spacious outdoor play area at the rear and side of the premises. Set down and parking facilities are available.

The service is registered to provide school age care.

### Staffing

The service employs four adults including the two registered providers. All adults employed have completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education as per the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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 announced and focused on the area of governance and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under.

- Regulation (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4) - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1), (3), – Staffing Levels.

- Regulation 19(1)(a) – Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

however, on inspection additional non-compliances were identified under:

- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

## Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered providers, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

*(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

- (2)
- (a)(b) Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of four adults employed whose staff files were reviewed.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for four adults whose records were reviewed. 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 no adult had resided outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) Four adults employed and working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 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) There were twenty-one children attending the service and they were supervised directly by four adults.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

### 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 of children:

The service promoted a healthy eating policy. The children bring their snacks and lunches, and they are placed in a fridge. The children's water bottles were freely available to them if they needed a drink throughout the morning.

Independence was encouraged with children who were toilet trained however the staff members maintained supervision in case any assistance was needed.

The staff members ensured that the children were appropriately dressed for outdoor play.

A comfortable rest area was available in the two care rooms.

The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours. Children were spoken to in a kind and respectful manner. Their first names were used; appropriate eye contact and gentle vocal tones were observed being used during all interactions.

#### Supporting relationships around children:

The adults were observed being respectful, gentle and kind towards the children in their care and each child was listened to and given time to chat and express their thoughts and feelings. The children were observed to be happy, content and relaxed with the two staff members. There was an established routine and predictability to the mornings activities which the children were very familiar with.

There is an open-door policy for parents. Information was shared with parents and guardians at the drop off and collection times. The service was preparing for its Christmas concert in the local village later in the week.

Face to face meetings can be arranged for parents/guardians as necessary, email and telephone contact are also used as alternative methods of communication.

### **Physical and material environment:**

The physical and material environments in the two care rooms were comfortable, inviting and laid out to accommodate the needs of all children. Defined areas of interest were observed. These included a library and rest area combined, a home corner, area with blocks, magnets, connecting toys, peg boards, puzzles and jigsaws, a construction area, small world toys and materials, mark making materials, arts and crafts, musical instruments, sand and playdough on the day of the inspection.

All equipment and materials were accessible to the children and grouped to encourage children to use them independently. Low level chairs and tables were available to the children for meals and tabletop activities.

The secured outdoor area was located at the rear and side of the premises. Equipment included a large covered wooden container with stones, swing and slide unit, sand / water trays with associative equipment to enable children to extend their play, balance blocks, ride on scooters, a raised nature growing area which allowed the children to dig also. There was plenty of space for the children to play games and run freely as they wished.

### **Programme of activities:**

On the day of the inspection, the children were facilitated to make their own choice in selecting play equipment and activities that they wished to engage with. The staff members supported the children with their activities and did not interfere in the play. The routine was child led and responsive to the children's interests. The children enjoyed outdoor play on the morning of the inspection.

The themes in the two care rooms were hibernation, winter and Christmas which was celebrated with themed decorations and soft furnishings. Learning was incorporated through play, stories and songs.

There was evidence of a short, medium and long term curriculum however it was flexible to enable the children's emergent interests to take priority. There was evidence of the children's emergent interests recorded on whiteboards in each care room.

### 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.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. Fire safe window restrictors were not fitted to the windows in the care rooms and sanitary areas to prevent the unsupervised exit of a child or the unauthorised entry to the service.
2. There was a gap observed in the plasterboard at the top of the plug socket and electric switch socket located beside each other in Preschool room 2. These sockets were accessible to the children and required to be sealed to prevent a child trapping their fingers in the gap.
3. The door on cupboard under sink unit in the sanitary area used by Preschool room 2 was observed to be hanging by one hinge when opened. This could cause injury to a child if they opened the door and it detached from the remaining hinge.
4. The door on the cupboard under sink in the sanitary area used by Preschool room 2 was not secured. An unlabelled tub of cream and a container of mediated powder for nappy rash were accessible to a preschool child and could cause harm if ingested.

##### Infection Control:

5. A roll of paper towel was placed on the sink in the sanitary area used by Preschool room 2 and on the work surface in the care rooms. They required to be placed in a dispenser for hygienic dispensing for infection control purposes.

#### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. Fire safe window restrictions were fitted to all the windows in the facility. Check that window fittings are still in place on a daily basis.
2. All sockets were sealed to prevent any harm towards children and staff.
3. The door of the cupboard was fixed with immediate effect.
4. All tubs and creams are now on a shelf high up where children cannot reach with immediate effect.

##### Infection Control:

5. Blue roll dispensers are supplied and fitted to all rooms and changing area.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1-4. photographs

#### Infection Control:

5. Photograph.

### Summary Comment

The written response and photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 23.