

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE087
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Name of Service:	Busy Bee's Playschool
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Address of Service:	Pluckerstown, Kilmeague, Naas, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W91 FV59
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Name of Registered Provider:	Susan Leeson
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	18
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35K1W4
Inspection undertaken by:	A Spain
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).

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Description of service

Busy Bees Playschool is a privately run sessional preschool service caring for children in the age range 2 to 6 years. The service provides a morning sessional service between the hours of 8.40 and 11.40am and a second sessional service between the hours of 12.00 and 3.00pm daily for 38 weeks of the year. Rooms in the service include an entrance hallway and storage area, a playroom and sanitary accommodation for both children and staff. An outdoor play area is provided directly off the service. The purpose-built premises is located on the grounds of the registered provider's private residence.

Staffing

The registered provider employs four staff members and also works in the service directly involved in the care of children in attendance.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3),(4) – Management and recruitment,

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Regulation 11(1)(3) – Staffing Level,
Regulation 19(1)(a) - Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(4) – Facilities for rest and play,
Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,
Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance,
Regulation 25 (1), (2)(a)(b) – First Aid,
Regulation 26(1) (a) (b), (4) – Fire Safety Measures,
Regulation 27 – Supervision,
Regulation 28 – Insurance,
Regulation 29 - Premises,
Regulation 32 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a) – Complaints.

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, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

Compliance Information

The inspector reviewed the staff files for the registered provider and the four staff working in the service.

(1)(a)

The service had both a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

Both the designated person in charge and the named person to deputise as required were present in the service on the arrival of the inspector and for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

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There was a clear management structure in the service. Each staff member was observed to be mindful of their roles and responsibilities as they cared for the children and encouraged their participation in activities both in the playroom and outdoors.

(2)(a)

Two written and validated references from past employers were held on file in respect of two staff members.

(b)

Two written and validated references from reputable sources were held on file in respect of the remaining two staff members. Two written references from reputable sources were also held on file in respect of the registered provider.

(c)

A Garda vetting disclosure was held on file in respect of the registered provider and the 4 staff employed. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff members.

(d)

Records held on file demonstrated that none of the staff had lived outside of the state and required Police vetting.

(3)

Records confirmed that the necessary vetting procedures were conducted prior to the appointment of staff to work directly with the children.

(4)

All staff working in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Education on the National Qualifications Framework varying from level 5 to level 8.

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.

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Compliance Information

- (1)
An adequate number of adults cared for the children present in both the morning and afternoon sessional service.
- (3)
Three adults cared for a total of 20 children in the morning sessional service. Four adults cared for a total of 18 children in the afternoon sessional service.

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 were observed to use the toilets independently, supported by the staff who issued reminders to hand wash at the wash hand basins which were in view of the staff in the hallway outside of the playroom. After hand washing, children sat at low level tables for morning break with their friends and enjoyed sandwiches, yoghurts, and fresh fruit including apples, bananas and strawberries, with beakers of water to take drinks. Staff sat with the children during the leisurely break time, engaged in friendly conversation with the children and assisted children as required. Children were afforded time to finish their lunch at their individual pace as other children went outdoors to play. Low level seating and books were provided for children to rest and take a break from activities as required.

Supporting relationships around children:

Children were observed to select toys and play equipment of their choice to play with both indoors and outdoors. Children in both sessions had the opportunity to learn from each other and to work together as they played in small groups on the ride on toys, with the water and sand trays, on the swings and climbing frame and while playing ring a ring a rosy with a staff member. Their artwork was on open display in both the playroom and adjoining hallway, and monthly themes provided predictability to the children. For example, easter, making rice crispy buns, the monthly colour and shape were posted on the wall for the month of April. Pictures from home

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settings were posted on the family tree in the playroom and beehive cones with the month of the year on the birthday wall to connect the children to their home environment.

Staff were observed to greet the children by name as they arrived to the afternoon sessional service and to remind the children leaving the morning sessional service to bring their favourite teddy for a teddy bear picnic the next day in the service. Children were praised for returning their lunch boxes to their bags after the morning break time and for placing their bags on the open shelving in the playroom on the arrival of the second sessional group. The staff assisted the children with their coats as requested, held children when comfort was needed and participated in play activities with the children.

During the morning story time in the playroom, the theme of the story “a little girl who likes to have her own way” was introduced to the children. Pauses were taken to allow the children to ask questions, to listen to their questions and to provide answers.

In addition to daily handovers to parents and guardians, the monthly newsletter furnished information on the plan of activities for the next month in the service. Scrapbooks and folders with artwork were provided to showcase each child’s learning journey in the service. Children leaving the service for transition to primary school were furnished with “Mo Scéal” which provided parents with details which included their child’s likes, dislikes, strengths, what they identify with and possible useful strategies for supporting the child during the summer months before starting primary school.

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.

(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Toys and play equipment were located on low level shelving and in open boxes for children to see and access toys of their choice to play with. Defined areas of interest indoors included a home corner stocked with a cooker, cooking equipment and utensils, a playhouse and dolls. A variety of arts and crafts materials, including coloured pencils, crayons, paint and paint brushes were provided for arts and crafts activities. Picture cards, puzzles, games, connection toys were located on open shelving for children to access and sit for tabletop activities. A Shop and a cash register were noted for pretend play. Miniature animals, tools sets and small toys on wheels were provided for floor play.

The outdoor play area was fenced to provide three separate areas for children to move openly to for outdoor play. An area provided with a smooth tarmac surface provided a suitable ground surface for children to play on ride-on toys, including tractors, trikes, and to push dolls in push chairs. A sandbox with shovels and buckets to dig with and a water tray was located on the tarmac surface for children to engage in messy play.

A picnic table and chairs was located in the grass surfaced area for children to both play with toys outdoors and to sit for both picnics and games outside. Climbing frames were provided on the grass and balls for children to engage in energetic outdoor play. Slides, swings and playhouses were observed on the all-weather surfaced area outdoors. Black boards were anchored to the walls outdoors and chalk provided for children to draw pictures outdoors. In addition, childrens diverse backgrounds and identities were reflected in a positive way in the service. For example, children had an open view of cows in calf and hens housed in a hen coup in the field adjoining the outdoor play area.

(b)

The low-level seating in the playroom and seating outdoors provided suitable furnishing for children to relax and take a break when engaged in activities both indoors and outdoors in the service.

(4)

The outdoor play area was spacious and was safely secured in by heavy duty wire fencing which was securely anchored to the ground. A Keypad lock was provided above child height on the entrance gate to both the outdoor play area and the entrance to the service to guard against both unsupervised exit of children and unauthorised access to the service.

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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:

Entrance to the service was secured and the gate entrance allowed a full view of all approaching the service. Childrens coats were hung on hooks in the entrance hallway to provide clear floor access space to the playroom. Cleaning agents and chemicals were stored on high level shelves and high level presses in the playroom. The television screen in the playroom and associated flexes were wall mounted above child height. Bins for the storage of refuse and waste were stored in an area outside of the service, fenced off to prevent child access.

Infection Control:

The rooms, toys and play equipment were observed to be clean and well maintained on the day of inspection and completed daily cleaning schedules were available for both the indoor rooms and outdoor play equipment. A sink with a hot and cold water supply was provided in the playroom to assist with day-to-day cleaning. Liquid soap, disposable paper towels and thermostatically controlled hot water and child friendly hand washing signage were provided at the children's wash-hand basins outside of the toilet cubicles.

Administration of Medication:

No medication was administered to children on the day of inspection. Temperature reducing medication was stored in a high level press in the playroom and a medical record was maintained to record administration of temperature reducing medication as required, which had provision for both staff and parent signatures.

Fire Safety:

The fire exit from the service was clear and unobstructed. A fire assembly point was posted in the parking area at the front of the service.

Outing:

The registered provider advised that the service did not undertake outings away from the service.

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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.

Compliance Information

(1)

The service maintained an attendance record for children in attendance in both the morning and afternoon sessional service. The inspector reviewed the attendance records for the week of the 13 April 2026. Childrens arrival and departure times were recorded in both the morning and afternoon attendance records.

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 staff member working in the service had up to date FAR (first aid responder) training with an expiry date of June 2026.

(2)(a)(b)

A suitably equipped first aid box for children was located on a high level window cill in the playroom which was easily accessible to the staff caring for the children in attendance in the service.

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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)

The record of fire drills confirmed that the last monthly fire drill was conducted on 13 April 2026.

(b)

The maintenance record for fire extinguishers in the premises confirmed that an annual service was conducted in April 2026.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was on display in the hallway in the service leading to the playroom.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

A record of annual maintenance servicing was not available for the smoke alarm system in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b)

The registered provider submitted written confirmation with the CAPA response on 8 May 2026, which confirmed that the smoke alarm system was serviced on 7 May 2026. As a preventive measure, it was advised in the CAPA response that the smoke alarm system will be serviced yearly and this has been added to the staff calendar to ensure it is not overlooked going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the service record was submitted to the inspector.

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Summary Comment

The measures taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance 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

Children were observed to be supervised by both sight and sound while in the playroom, playing outdoors and during collection time and arrival of parents after the morning sessional service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had insurance cover for a maximum of 22 children in daily attendance in a Sessional service. Insurance cover was valid from the 28 March 2026 to the 27 March 2027.

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Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The single storey purpose build premises was observed to be in a good state of repair with no evidence of dampness or mould growth on internal walls and ceilings.
- (b) A visitors' book, signed by the inspector on arrival to the premises, was in use to manage access to the service. A smooth concrete ramped area and grab rails lead to the entrance to the service.
- (c) A combination of openable windows and light fittings covered with shatterproof diffusers ensured a good combination of both natural and artificial lighting and ventilation in all rooms in the service. The radiators in the service were protected with timber guards, which were safely anchored to the wall.
- (d) The walls and ceilings in the rooms were brightly painted with a washable paint and were clean. The heavy duty floor lino was well fitted and in a good state of repair and maintenance.
- (e) Two separate toilet cubicles were located off the entrance hall in the service for use by preschool children. A separate staff toilet cubicle was available to staff working in the service. Three wash hand basins were located outside the toilet cubicles for children and staff to wash their hands.

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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,

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)

The inspector reviewed the complaints policy for the service. The policy detailed the procedure for making a complaint, the manner in which the registered provider followed up on complaints and the procedure for keeping the complainant informed of how complaints were followed up. The policy also outlined an appeals provision should the complainant be dissatisfied with the complaint investigation. In addition, the policy outlined that a separate reporting procedure was followed by the service as outlined in the service child protection policy in the event of a complaint involving a child protection concern.

(2)(a)

The registered provider confirmed that no complaints were received by the service.