

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015MH020 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Bumblebee Daycare |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Racehill Manor, Ashbourne, Co. Meath |
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|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | A84 WE27 |
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|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Ciara Kavanagh |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Full Day |
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| <b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b> | 29/04/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 35 | PM | 35 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

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|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Tusla Child and Family Agency,<br>Early Years Inspectorate,<br>Nexus Building Block,<br>Blanchardstown Corporate Park,<br>Dublin 15 |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | E Saini and N McEndoo                                                                                                               |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | 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).

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### Description of service

Bumblebee Daycare is a privately owned service based in Ashbourne Co. Meath. The service is registered to provide sessional, part-time and full-day care to children aged 0-6 years old. The service is located in a purpose built two-storey building with the Baby, Wobbler and Toddler room located on the ground floor, and the preschool rooms namely the Sun room and the Moon room located on the first floor. The service has a dedicated cot room and sleep room on the ground floor. A service kitchen with an adjacent dining room is located on the ground floor, an enclosed outdoor area is located to the side of the service. A registered school-age service in operation on the premises.

### Staffing

The service employs 16 staff members including the registered provider. The registered provider is present in the service on a daily basis. Twelve staff members work directly with the preschool children, one of which is hired as relief cover. An administrator, cook and bus driver are also employed.

### 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 not announced and focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25(i), and 29(d); These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. The scope of the inspection included all four care rooms.

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,*

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*(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) The registered provider ensured that.

(a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.

(b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.

(c) There was 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.

2) It was confirmed by the registered provider that one new staff member had been employed in the service since the last inspection on the 01/10/2025. The file of the one adult was reviewed as part of the inspection;

(a) Two written and validated references were available from a past employer.

(b) Not applicable as both references available were from a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff. The service had also adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff who have lived outside of the State for longer than six months as an adult.

4) Documentation was available to show that one staff who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

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### 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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were maintained on the day of inspection as outlined below.

- **Baby Room** (aged 1 year to 2 years) 1 adult was caring for 3 children in the morning, and 1 adult was caring for 3 children in the afternoon.
- **Toddlers** (aged 2 year to 3 years) 1 adult was caring for 3 children in the morning, and 1 adult was caring for 3 children in the afternoon.
- **Pre-school Room** (aged 3 years) 1 adult was caring for 4 children in the morning, and 1 adult was caring for 5 children in the afternoon.
- **Moon Room** (aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years) 1 adult were caring for 9 children in the morning, and 1 adult was caring for 7 children in the afternoon.
- **Sun Room** (aged 2 years 8 moths to 4 years) 3 adults were caring for 16 children in the morning, and 2 adults were caring for 7 children in the afternoon.

The registered provider was available to support rooms for breaks, nappy changing or where required to meet adult: child ratios.

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### 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
- (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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service.

#### Basic Care Needs

- The transitions between activities such as outdoor play to mealtimes and return to the care rooms for free play and activities were observed to be calm and relaxed, with staff available to care for the individual needs of the children.
- All children had access to the outdoor play area during the inspection.
- Lunchtime was observed to be a relaxed and sociable event, with children given time to sit at low tables appropriate to their age. Children were observed to eat independently, with staff on hand to help as required.

#### Supporting relationships

- Staff were observed to have respectful, warm and responsive interactions with the children through the use of soft tones and positive non-verbal communication strategies such as being at the children's level and sitting with the children at mealtimes.
- Communication with parents was completed through verbal updates at drop off and at pick up, daily diaries and through the issue of a newsletter.
- Staff were observed to be engaged with and sit with the children during play time and have positive interactions during play activities of free play

#### Physical and Material environment

- The materials and equipment provided to the children in the care rooms were accessible in clearly laid out areas of interest and suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present.
- Low level shelving and child sized furniture supported children's independence.

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- Cosy areas with soft mats and cushions were present offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day.

### 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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- Older children were observed to use the staircase. Children were observed to be encouraged, as a matter of routine, to come down the stairs carefully and safely.
- No trailing flexes were observed, blind cords were secure and cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- Room temperatures were kept between the recommended 18 °C to 22°C.

##### Infection Control:

- During sleep time, cots, floor beds and floor mats were positioned with the recommended 50 centimetres between each child.
- Pedal operated lidded bins were available for waste disposal.
- Soap was readily available to children to wash their hands prior to eating, after both toileting and nappy changes. Child friendly handwashing posters were placed beside the sinks.
- Tables and highchairs were observed to be cleaned after mealtimes in the care rooms.

##### Safe Sleep:

- The service had a designated sleep room with appropriate cots available to children.
- Sleep checks were observed to occur every ten minutes, with staff observed to remain present in the room whilst children slept.

##### Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were unobstructed in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.

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- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The service had not completed or maintained comprehensive indoor and outdoor daily risk assessments to identify, assess and manage potential hazards within the environment. During the inspection, a number of safety risks were observed that had not been identified or addressed by the provider, including:
  - A large storage shelf in a care room containing equipment was unanchored and unstable.
  - The outdoor slide was cracked and broken on the upper surface of the slide posing a risk of injury to children.
  - Radiator dial covers were missing in both the Sun Room and Moon Room, exposing sharp edges to children.
  - Cleaning agents were stored beside the nappy changing pad and were accessible to children.
  - Medication was stored improperly on an open shelf accessible to children.

#### Infection Control:

2. The service did not have sufficient cleaning schedules and monitoring systems in place to ensure that all areas of the service were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. Records reviewed during the inspection were incomplete and not updated regularly, with cleaning records for the baby room last documented on 6 March. Observations during the inspection identified a number of areas that had not been cleaned or maintained appropriately, including:
  - Ventilation ducts in the sanitary facilities contained a heavy build-up of dust.
  - Toilets were observed to be unclean with visible limescale accumulation.
  - Limescale build-up was also present in some sink areas.
  - Excessive clutter around sinks in the baby room and nappy changing room prevented effective cleaning and appropriate hand-washing practices.
3. Thermostatically controlled warm water was not available for hand washing at the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation in all rooms other than the baby room. The water in both the hot taps and the cold taps felt cold to touch. Cold water does not support children to effectively wash their hands. This is a reoccurring noncompliance as evidenced in the inspection held on the 1 November 2025.
4. In both the Sunroom and the Moon room children's snacks provided by the parents, some of which contained meat and dairy produce, were stored in the children's school bags at room temperature on the

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day of inspection. This increased the risk of bacteria multiplying in the perishable food items. This is a reoccurring noncompliance as evidenced in the inspection held on the 1 November 2025.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### **General Safety:**

The unit in question has been secured to the back wall using L brackets.

Outdoor slides have been replaced

Radiators caps have been replaced.

Staff have been reminded of the importance of storing cleaning agents safely. This will be part of daily risk assessment.

Parents and staff have been reminded to not leave medications in a child bag or indeed a nappy changing box. All medication must be recorded in each morning and placed in the fridge with each child's name on the box.

A risk assessment is in place for items like these and this will be monitored going forward.

##### **Infection Control:**

2.

While a cleaning system is in place within the crèche and cleaning checklists are readily available to all staff, employees have been reminded of the importance of maintaining high standards of cleanliness throughout the day. All areas have been cleaned and addressed.

Monthly checks are in place and all risk assessment forms and cleaning forms are now being collected at the end of each month for examination.

3.

The plumber has attended the service and hot water available in some sinks. Service is working together with the landlord to ensure that the hot water system is fully operational and functioning correctly on a permanent basis going forward.

4.

A refrigerator has been placed in the upstairs kitchen area for the storage of children's snacks. This arrangement will be implemented going forward and will also apply to all new children enrolling from September 2026.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### **General Safety:**

Picture evidence

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### Infection Control:

Plumbers report

### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted have been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1) A person trained in first aid including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service as evidenced in the staff roster and the in-date FAR certifications provided for inspection.

## 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.*

### Non-Compliance Information

d) The building was observed to not be well maintained and required repair. The premises was observed to be not adequately cleaned, maintained, or repaired, as evidenced by the following:

- The outdoor area adjacent to the baby room was deemed unusable due to extensive overgrowth accumulated during the winter. Furthermore, the area was cluttered with hazards, including broken toys and bags of garden rubbish.
- A tile in the eaves of the roof appeared to have been displaced and was in need of repair.
- Several cracked windows were identified in the care rooms on the ground floor, as well as one on the upper floor. Additionally, a window handle was missing.
- An additional toilet seat was required in the children's toilets on the ground floor.

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- Multiple defects were observed in the functionality of sinks and taps across several facilities. These included slow drainage, active leaks, and a seized tap. Consequently, surrounding floors and walls were found to be wet.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The area directly outside the baby room has been cleared and all broken toys have been removed and disposed of.

The misplaced roof tile above the playground has been repaired and secured.

All broken and cracked windows within the crèche have been repaired and replaced.

A third baby toilet seat has been purchased and installed. This will remain available in the toilet area to support the children's needs.

All sinks and taps throughout the crèche have been cleaned using a limescale remover. All taps and sinks are now clear, fully functional, and draining properly.

These items added to daily and weekly check list and risk assessment forms.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence

#### **Summary Comment**

The actions and evidence submitted have been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 have been adequately addressed.