

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY077			
Name of Service:	Bee Happy Childcare			
Address of Service:	55 Clochran, Kilcloghans, Tuam, Co. Galway			
Eircode:	H54 WK24			
Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Geoghegan			
Service type:	Full Day			
Date of Inspection:	20/08/2026			
No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	20
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park Hospital, Galway.			
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel			
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

Bee Happy Childcare is a private early years care and education service in operation since 2021, providing a full day care service which also caters for children attending on a part-time and sessional basis. The service accommodates children aged from 2 years to 6 years. Daily opening hours are from 08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. The service is open for 50 weeks of the year and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated over 38 weeks, school term time only, from 09:00 to 12:00.

It is located in a residential area on the outskirts of Tuam, County Galway and it operates from a purpose built two-storey building which has three care rooms namely- Pre-school located downstairs and Toddlers and Senior Pre-school located upstairs. A designated sleep room and kitchen are on the ground floor along with adult and children's sanitary facilities. The office is located on the first floor. Secure outdoor play areas are available at the rear of the service. A school age care service is available in the morning from 08:00 to 09:00 and from 13:00 to 18:00 in the afternoon.

Staffing

There are nine adults employed by the service including the registered provider and a kitchen assistant.

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.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15 – Record of a pre-school child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Senior Pre-school, Pre-school and Toddler care rooms from which records were reviewed from each one.

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, persons 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.*

(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, in so far 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

(1)

- (a) The registered provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person available to deputise as required.
- (b) The staff roster evidenced that the person in charge was available while the early years children were present in the service. The registered provider was present for a short period to assist with the paperwork required for the inspection process.

Following a review of the service files, the staff roster and a discussion with the person in charge it was

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confirmed that there were three new adults employed since the last inspection on 12 March 2025. Therefore, these three files were reviewed along with Garda vetting for two existing adults who required renewal.

- (2)
- (a) Four of the required six written and validated references were from previous employers.
- (b) The remaining two of six written and validated references were from sources other than previous employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the three adults employed since the last inspection. In addition, two garda vetting disclosures which required renewal for two existing staff members were also on file demonstrating compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Overseas police vetting was not required as the curricula vitae of the three adults indicated that none had spent six months or more, as adults, outside the State.
- (4) The staff files reviewed for the three new adults indicated that two of the adults employed to work directly with the children had obtained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The remaining adult working in the kitchen and in school age care did not require a childcare qualification.

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.*

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Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in attendance.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratios were met. There were 20 children in attendance with 5 adults in the both the morning and afternoon.
- (8)
- (a) The registered provider ensured that there were two adults on the premises while the early years children were present. The staff roster confirmed two adults were on the premises while the early years children were present in the service.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

- (1) *A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*
 - (a) *the name and date of birth of the child;*
 - (b) *the date on which the child first attended the service;*
 - (c) *the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
 - (d) *the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
 - (e) *authorisation for the collection of the child;*
 - (f) *details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
 - (g) *the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
 - (h) *record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
 - (i) *written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*
- (3) *A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*
 - (c) *an authorised person.*

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Compliance Information

(1)

A sample of 12 children's pre-school records; 3 from Senior Pre-school, 3 from Pre-school and 6 from the Toddler care room children were reviewed. These were found to contain all the required information under

(1) (a)-(i).

(3) (c) The records referred to in paragraph 1 (a) – (i) above were open to inspection on the premises.

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.

Compliance Information

Basic needs:

- In line with the service's healthy eating policy food prepared and freshly cooked in the service and snacks provided by the parents/guardians, were provided at regular intervals throughout the day.
- The hot meal of the day consisting of sausages, beans and pasta was observed being served in the Toddler care room at 12:10 with staff stating breakfast, if required, consisting of oat and wheat-based cereals, was available from 08:00. Snacks served at 10:00 and in the afternoon at 15:00 were observed being consumed during the day.
- Individual water bottles, stored on top of the fridges, in each care room, were easily accessible and children were observed drinking from these when thirsty.
- Developmentally appropriate cutlery and crockery were observed in use for each age group, promoting independence.
- Children were observed accessing the pre-school sanitary area independently, adults were nearby to help and to remind the children to wash their hands after toileting.
- The adult in the Toddler care room was observed carrying out nappy changing regularly. In conversation, the adult stated that there are designated nappy changing times- 10:30, 13:00, 14:30, 16:30 and as required ensuring the children are kept dry and comfortable.

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- Steps were available to facilitate children to access the changing mat. In addition, step-ups were visible in pre-school sanitary area promoting independence with toileting activities.
- Rest/quiet areas were visible in each care room which were furnished with a variety of soft furnishings. These areas were located away from noisy activities.
- Suitable sunscreen provided by parents/guardians, labelled for each child, was observed being applied by the adults in the outdoor play area in line with the service's sunscreen and sun protection policy. Staff stated the service had additional sun protection should a child require it. Additional measures including a covered area were visible should a child have an allergy or be sensitive to sunscreen and need to shelter from the sun while playing outdoors.

Physical and material environment:

- Well-equipped areas, clearly defined, were visible in each of the care rooms which provided play opportunities for enhancing the learning needs of the children across all developmental areas.
- A variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys and play equipment, in each care room, were easily accessible from storage boxes and trays on shelving at the children's level providing choice and promoting independence.
- Tables and chairs were positioned to facilitate group and solitary activities with a wide variety of resources stationed nearby.
- The secure outdoor play areas provided alternative spaces where younger and older children were observed playing safely, supervised by the adults. The areas were cordoned off with barriers to ensure the safety of the various age groups while moving and playing freely in these areas.
- Children had access to a wide range of developmentally appropriate equipment and toys where they were observed practicing gross motor skills of riding, climbing, crawling, scooting, swinging and balancing. Examples included the younger children accessing ride-ons, a caterpillar tunnel and scooters while the older children were observed playing on swings, climbing on a frame and cycling on balance bikes. Sensory materials including sand and water were in use for hands on exploration and discovery.

Supporting children's relationships:

- A key person approach was in place in the Toddler care room with an adult assigned the responsibility for observations of each child in their group. The children's scrapbooks, which had been put together by the adult in the care room, were labelled with each child's name and were available to view. The adult stated

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they document each child's individual interests and emergent curriculum throughout their time in the service.

- The adults stated that various methods of communication were in use with parents/guardians including verbally at drop off and collection, by phone and email.
- Adults supervising children playing in both the indoor and outdoor areas, were observed to work well as a team. They were heard, on several occasions, discussing children's individual needs throughout the day.
- An adult in the outdoor play area was observed to respond to a child's non-verbal cues. They noticed that the child was standing away from the main group with a sad expression, they approached, engaged in conversation and encouraged the child to join in.
- Interactions between the adults and the children were noted to be relaxed, pleasant and happy. The adults were observed joining in with the children while Irish dancing in the outdoor play area and engaging in social conversation during mealtimes.

Programme of Activities:

- Children's language development was supported through one to one, group discussions and singing which were observed during the inspection.
- Activities were child led and children had the opportunity to express their views, take the lead and exercise choice in relation to their engagement in activities and in accessing play equipment throughout the day in both the indoor and outdoor environments.

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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:

- The main entrance door was secured on arrival and was operated by a buzzer preventing unauthorised adults from entering the building. A camera security system was in operation whereby the adult in the service could see who was at the door when the buzzer was pressed.
- Younger children were kept safe from older children running by way of barriers separating each age group.
- The stairwell was well lit from both artificial and natural lighting ensuring the children could see where they were stepping. Handrails were accessible on both sides ensuring children could navigate the stairs safely.
- Windows in the care rooms were fitted with restrictors ensuring that the children could not fall or exit from them.
- Glass doors downstairs were identified with murals to prevent children bumping into them.
- Finger shields were visible on doors to protect children from trapping their fingers.
- The perimeter of the outdoor play areas at the rear of the service were secured with high walls and gates with safety devices, ensuring unauthorised adults could not enter these areas and that children could not leave these areas unsupervised.

Infection Control:

- Perishable food was observed to be stored in the fridges in each of the care rooms ensuring the food did not spoil.
- Adults in the Pre-school care room were observed sanitising the tables before and after the serving of food, aiding in the prevention of the spread of germs.
- Disposable gloves and aprons were available for nappy changing in line with the service's nappy changing policy. Cleaning agents were visible to sanitise the mat and area after use preventing cross contamination.
- Hand basins in use by adults and children were fitted with thermostatically controlled hot water, between 20.2°C and 37°C, dispensing hand soap and paper towels encased in dispensers. Pedal operated bins were available for the disposal of paper waste.

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- Handwashing was observed coming in from outdoor play before consuming food and after toileting preventing the spread of germs.
- Cleaning schedules were noted to be completed for each area and were up to date making sure the areas were kept clean and hygienic.
- Children's belongings including coats and bags were stored off the floor area preventing cross contamination.

Administration of Medication:

- Temperature reducing medication, in its original container, was available and stored out of reach of the children. The expiry date was noted as 08/2026.

Safe Sleep:

- Stackable beds were available in the designated sleep room for children who wished to rest/sleep. These were noted to be placed 50 centimetres apart enabling staff to walk around the beds to complete safety checks.
- Ambient lighting was available to enable staff to be able to observe each child to carry out the 10-minute physical sleep checks.
- The temperature of the sleep room was within the recommended 18°C-22°C range, ensuring the safety and comfort of the children when resting/sleeping.
- Cellular blankets were visible aiding in the prevention of the children overheating.

Fire Safety:

- Fire extinguishers were secured with brackets in each of the care rooms.
- Fire doors were unobstructed enabling children and adults to exit the care rooms safely in the event of an emergency.
- Fire exit doors were fitted with thumb twist cylinders facilitating the safe evacuation of children and adults in the event on an emergency.

Outing:

- In line with the service's outings policy written consent was furnished for each child to participate on outings which were covered by the service's insurance policy.

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Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A staff member, providing lunch covering in the Toddler care room, was unaware of the location of medication for a child who suffered from allergies and was present in the care room, posing a safety risk to the child in the event of an emergency. It was acknowledged that when the room leader returned from their lunch break the medication was found and the staff member covering lunch was informed where it was stored.
2. A safety gate, in place as a preventive measure between the office space and the kitchen, was noted to be left open on a number of occasions- 10:35, 12:00 and 13:10 by staff members, posing a safety risk to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The following statements were received from the registered providers;

General Safety:

- (1) (2) A staff meeting was held on 17/09/2026 and all staff were reminded of their responsibilities with regards to staff covering having relevant information for each child for whom they are responsible including the location of medication which may need to be administered in the event of an emergency. Medical cabinets have been purchased and installed in each room and children's medication is now stored in each care room so that staff can access required medication immediately. Staff were also reminded of the need to ensure that the gate between the office space and the kitchen is kept closed to prevent children from entering the area. An alarm system has been placed on the gate to remind staff to close the gate after themselves. Management will monitor with regular checks.

Supporting documentation submitted

The following documentation and photographs were received in the office of the inspectorate;

General Safety:

- (1) and (2) A copy of the staff minutes of the meeting which took place on 17/09/2026. Photographs of the individual medical plan visible to the staff at the first aid station and the first aid box long with a photograph of the secured gate.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered providers have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23

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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) Certificates were available to evidence that two adults had first aid responder for children (FAR) training completed. The staff roster evidenced that at least one adult was available while the pre-school children were on the premises.

(2) (a)(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available in each care room. These were accessible to the adults while the early years children were present in the 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

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Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The inspector observed that written records were available of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service. The record of the most recent fire drill was dated 21 July 2026 with previous months noted as 23 June 2026 and 22 May 2026.
- (b) Written records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service along with the smoke alarms. The firefighting equipment certificate was recorded as 05 November 2025 and smoke alarm certificate was dated 27 January 2026.
- (2)
- (c) Both the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm records were open to review on the premises.
- (4) The notices of the visual fire drill procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were located on the walls of the care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A certificate was available which documented that the service was insured for the number of children for which it was registered and the type of service provided. The expiry date was noted as 27 March 2027.