

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015DR036 |
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| Name of Service: | Lakelands Preschool |
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| Address of Service: | Hill's Centre, Johnstown Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin |
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| Eircode: | A96 HW92 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Vivienne Walsh, Ceinwen Walsh |
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| Service type: | Part Time, Sessional |
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| Date of Inspection: | 19/06/2025 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 19 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Level 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham Dublin 8. |
| Inspection undertaken by: | R Phillips |
| 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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| Conditions if applicable | N/A |
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Description of service

Lakelands Preschool is one of two early years services owned by the registered providers. This service operates from a purpose-built premises located in Dun Laoghaire. The service provides part time and sessional childcare for children from 2-6 years. It participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service currently operates from 09:00 -14:00hrs.

Staffing

The service employs eight adults, including two relief childcare practitioners. One of the registered providers works directly managing the service, alongside a manager employed to act as the person in charge in her absence, both this manager and registered provider also work directly with the children.

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

- 8 (1) (3) Notification of change in circumstances,
- 9 (1) (2) (4) Management and recruitment,
- 11 (1) (4) Staffing levels,

- 15 (1) (a)-(i) (3) (c) Record of a preschool child
- 19 (1)(a) Health, welfare and development of child,
- 25 First Aid
- 26 Fire Safety

However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under

- Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, record of a preschool child.

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.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Compliance Information

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Non-Compliance Information

(1)(3) The registered provider failed to notify the Early Years Inspectorate of a change in hours of operation from 08:30 – 13:30hrs to the current operating hours of 09:00- 14:00hrs.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has made an application to regularise the change in opening hours to comply with the regulation and will ensure all change in circumstance applications are submitted in a timely manner.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation supplied as evidence of application to amend opening hours.

Summary Comment

The change in opening hours has been approved by the Early Years Inspectorate.

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 named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The person in charge was present when the inspector arrived unannounced for the inspection. The named person in charge remained on the premises throughout the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place. The manager and staff demonstrated an awareness of their roles and lines of authority within the service.
- (2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of all staff employed and met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a)(b) References had been sourced from past employers and had a record of verification as required.

- (c) Garda Vetting had been sourced. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for seven adults employed. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, for one adult. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Records of police vetting were available for staff who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.
- (4) A record was available evidencing that the adults working directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or equivalent.

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.*
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and*
 - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

Compliance Information

- (1) The inspector observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the preschool children.
- (4) There were four adults working directly with seventeen children, throughout the inspection.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) A sample of 10 records for children were reviewed. The information required was documented as outlined below.
- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
 - (b) The date when each child first attended the service.
 - (c) A section was available for recording when each child ceases attending the service.
 - (d) The name address and telephone number of parents and information where parents can be contacted.
 - (e) Names and contact details of other adults who are authorised to collect the child.
 - (f) Medical information, allergies, additional needs and other information specific to the child.
 - (g) The name and telephone number of the child's medical practitioner.

- (h) Immunisation details.
 - (i) Signed parental consent for medical treatment in the event of an emergency.
- 3(c) The records were made available for inspection.

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

Basic Needs:

Healthy eating was promoted in the service. Meals and snacks were provided at regular intervals by the service. The atmosphere was relaxed and sociable at mealtimes, as staff sat with the children.

Staff were observed to respond to individual children's cues quickly.

Children used the toilet independently; staff supervised them appropriately respecting their privacy and dignity.

Nappies were changed in a timely manner.

Staff encouraged independence and supported children who required more help.

Children were facilitated to rest where required.

Supporting Relationships around children:

The service uses a key person approach caring for the children. Staff showed respect and affection in their interactions and responded in a timely manner to upset children. Staff were actively involved with the children's play.

There was evidence of teamwork among the staff as they communicated the children's needs and wishes to each other.

Physical and Material environment:

The preschool room had a range of play based materials accessible to the children on low level shelving, facilitating choice, spontaneous play and movement. There was a range of books available to the children.

Sensory experiences were observed as children made modelling dough to play with. Children also played with sand and water in the outdoor area.

Gross motor development was facilitated with ride on toys, slide and a balance beam in the outdoor play area.

Programme of Activities:

Activities were observed to be child led. The usual programme of activities was identified on the walls and through staff discussions, but flexibility was afforded by staff to enable the children choice. The group was divided in two to facilitate indoor activities and outdoor play.

Children's language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling observed during the inspection.

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

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

One adult's garda vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'. This poses a risk to the safety of the children in the service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider has a vetting checklist now to ensure vetting timeframes are met going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copy of vetting checklist submitted. Copy of Garda Vetting certificate submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted have been reviewed by the early years inspectorate and have been deemed to address the noncompliance.

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) It was confirmed by review of staff files, and discussion with the registered provider that two staff held in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificates and were available to the children at all times of opening.

(2)(a) Adequately equipped first aid boxes were stored in conspicuous locations that were easily accessible.

(b) The first aid boxes were available to the children in the service at all times.

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.

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) A record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed the last fire drill had taken place on 14th May 2025.

(4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service. Fire exits and assembly point were signposted.

Non-Compliance Information

1(b) There was no record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced, or that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had been carried out.

(2)(c) The records were not available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered providers submitted evidence of quarterly servicing of the fire detection systems and annual servicing of firefighting equipment. The registered providers will ensure that documents are filed for access for inspection by authorised persons.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered providers submitted the most recent servicing report for Fire Panel/alarm system, and separate certificate for annual servicing of firefighting equipment.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted have been reviewed and deemed to address the noncompliance.