

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DR098
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	St. Louise Playgroup
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Loughlinstown Community Rooms, Loughlinstown Drive, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A96 RY11
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jean Browne
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	21/05/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	7	PM	No.
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Early O'Brien
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector

### Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	NA
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### Description of service

St Louise Playgroup was established in 2009 and is a community-based pre-school service registered to provide a sessional service and offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service operates Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 12:00 and caters for children from 2 to 6 years. The early years' service is in a room within Loughlinstown Community rooms in an urban residential area of Loughlinstown, County Dublin. An outdoor play area is provided to the side of the premises for the children.

### Staffing

Two staff including the registered provider are employed in the service. On 22 May 2025, two adults were working 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, safety and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4) - Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1)(3) - Staffing levels

Regulation 15(1) – Record in relation to a pre-school child.

Regulation 16 (1)(h)(i)(j)(k) - Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 (1)(a) - Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 – Record in relation to a pre-school child and regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school services.

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, 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,
- (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) The registered provider works in the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.
  - (b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced at 09:50 on the morning of the inspection and was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)
- Following a discussion with the registered provider and a review of two staff files it was confirmed that there were no new employees since the last inspection on 17 January 2023.
- Documentation was reviewed in respect of all adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b) Four written and validated references were available as required. One was available from a past employer and three from a reputable source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for both staff members demonstrating that the service 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 not required.

(4)  
Two adults employed in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

*(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)  
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(3)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children for sessional services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. On the morning of inspection there were 7 children being supervised by 2 adults.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)(i)

Five children’s records were sampled and reviewed. The records contained in each meet the required information as set out in Regulation 15 (1)(a) to (i).

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Children's attendance was recorded on the day of inspection. These records included details of each child's arrival and departure times from the service.
- (i) A record of the staff roster was available and was reflective of the staff present on the day.
- (j) One medication record was available and reviewed and found to be completed appropriately with signatures from both staff and parents.
- (k) One accident and incident record was available and reviewed and was completed appropriately by staff and parent.

### 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**

Heathy eating is promoted in the service and children bring their own lunch from home for snack time in the ECCE session. Water was available to the children throughout the session.

On the day of inspection, children were observed to take their lunchbox from the refrigerator and were encouraged to open and close lunch boxes and bottles and be responsible for their own belongings. Snack time was a social experience during which time the staff members interacted with and engaged in social conversations with the children.

Children were encouraged to use the toilet and engage in handwashing independently with assistance provided where needed.

## **Supporting Relationships**

The children appeared happy and content and were engaged and relaxed within the care rooms. Staff members were heard using gentle tones with the children and encouraged them to share, take turns and use gentle hands. Children's learning is documented in learning journals, and these are shared with parents at the end of the year. Staff also informed the inspector that they operate an open door policy with parents and share information about children daily.

## **Physical and Material Environment**

The indoor environment was bright and provided children with freedom to play and explore. Designated interest areas within the room included an arts and crafts and mark making station, a construction area, a dolls house, a dress-up area, a home corner, a play kitchen, and a library area.

Birthday charts and children's artwork were also on display, and this demonstrated a sense of identity and belonging for the children.

On the day of inspection, the children spent time in the outdoor play area. Equipment and materials available appear to provide appropriate learning opportunities for the children based on their age and stage of development. The outdoor area is a grass surface, and children had access to a sand-pit, slide, plastic climbing frame, balls and tricycles. There was a storage shed to the rear of the outdoor play area which contained equipment for use by the children.

## **Programme of Activities**

During the inspection children's individual choice was respected in the daily routine in which they are encouraged to participate. Children were observed to make choices on their own play materials within the environment with freedom to access resources from low level shelving. Children are familiar with the routine and handle transitions between activities very well supported by the educators.

### 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

The inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending.

#### General Safety:

The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid any unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised,

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared safe and in good working order.

The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor play environments were safe and free from hazards.

Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of the reach of children.

Visitors to the premises were required to sign in on arrival to the premises.

Medication was stored safely and out of the reach of children.

#### Infection Control:

The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet, before lunch and after outdoor play. Staff in the room were observed to carry out consistent hand washing and sanitising as appropriate.

Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal-operated, lidded bins throughout the service.

Liquid soap, paper towels and warm water were available to facilitate hand washing in the adjoining sanitary accommodation of the care room.

#### Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of anti-febrile medication and prescribed medication and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required.

Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication if required during discussions with the inspectors.

#### Fire Safety:

On the day of inspection, all emergency exits were observed to be clearly identifiable and were not obstructed

**Outing:**

The registered provider explained that outings are undertaken with the children. Prior to any outing a risk assessment is carried out and the staff members explained the procedure in line with the services outings policy.

**Non-Compliance Information**

**Fire Safety:**

1. Monthly fire drills were not completed posing a potential risk to the safe evacuation of the children in the event of a fire on the premises.

**Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

**Corrective & Preventive Action**

**Fire Safety:**

The registered provider has completed a fire drill for June. To prevent this non-compliance from re-occurring, a reminder to undertake a fire drill has been included with the daily sign in sheets and has also been scheduled as an alarm on the registered provider's mobile phone calendar.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**Fire Safety:**

Photographic evidence has been submitted of the completed fire drill in addition to photographic evidence of the reminders for the coming months once the service reopens in September.

**Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these non-compliances. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection.

**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) A written record of fire drills was available with the last documented fire drill recorded as being completed on 31 January 2025.
- (b) A service record was maintained for the fire detection system and smoke alarms. These were last serviced on 04 February 2025.
- Firefighting equipment service records were available demonstrating that this equipment is serviced annually and was last serviced on 04 November 2025.
- (4)
- Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous places throughout the service