

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR164
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Name of Service:	Lilliput
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Address of Service:	222 Clonkeen Road, Deansgrange, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	A94 K2H5
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Name of Registered Provider:	Annmarie Marah
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time
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Dates of Inspection:	13/08/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	27
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Duff F. Carty
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

Lilliput is a full day care service and is located in an urban, residential area of Deansgrange, Co Dublin. A service is provided to children aged between 1 – 6 years and is open Monday to Friday between 7.30am and 6.30pm. The service operates from a detached domestic dwelling which has been purposely adapted for use as an early years service. The service consists of four care rooms, the Twinker, Toddler, Pre-Montessori and Montessori rooms. A large outdoor play area is available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs fifteen adults, including a cook and the registered provider who works directly in the service. On the day of inspection, twelve adults were present including a relief cook.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child, information and records and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2)(3)(4) and (7)-Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels.

Regulation 16 (i) Record in relation to preschool service

Regulation 19 (1)(b) Health, welfare and development of child.

Regulation 20 (1)(b) Facilities for rest and play

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of 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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 13 August 2025 during the inspection in respect of Regulation 23, general safety. A response was received from the service on the 14 August 2025 which sufficiently mitigated the risk identified.

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,
- (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

- (1)
- (a)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2)
- (a)(b)

The inspection included a review of the required documentation for 9 adults employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 14 October 2024. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for each of the 15 adults employed in the service. The following documentation was available;

Of the 18 written and validated references that were required, 14 were available from a past employer and 4 were available from a reputable source.

(c)
Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for 15 adults employed to work in the service. Garda vetting disclosures from all staff were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Garda vetting which was dated within the last three years was available for 2 staff, however, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice.

Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)
Police vetting was available for 8 adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(4)
Records were available evidencing that 6 new adults who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. Two adults did not require a qualification as they were employed under a work placement programme.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) International Police vetting for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult was not available. It is acknowledged that the registered provider had evidence to show an attempt to secure International Police vetting for this adult had been previously sought.

(3) The registered provider did not take appropriate measures to ensure that all adults were suitable to work in an early years service prior to their commencement as follows:

- There was no evidence available to demonstrate that 3 references in respect of 2 adults had been validated by the registered provider before they commenced working in the service.
- Garda vetting disclosures for one adult had not been received prior to the adult commencing work in the service.

The above non-compliance was found on the last three inspections dated 23rd January 2023 and 10th May 2024 and 14 November 2024. The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider did not prevent the non-compliance from re-occurring.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) The registered provider has stated that the person who required police vetting was contracted to the service for a short time and is no longer working in the service, in future, the service will not accept any contractors unless all documentation is available.

(3) The registered provider has stated that all references and Garda vetting are now in place and verified and that references and Garda vetting will be obtained and verified in advance of a person commencing employment. If a reference cannot be obtained from a previous employer a reference will be obtained from a reputable source.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met, this regulation will be assessed on the next inspection.

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)

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

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for full time services was adhered to at all times during the inspection.

There were 29 children attending the service being supervised by 11 adults on the day of inspection.

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:

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

Compliance Information

(j) Records of medication which had been administered to children in the service were available. A sample of 15 records of medication documentation were reviewed and contained all of the necessary details

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-

(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

A busy and welcoming atmosphere was evident on arrival at the service and throughout the inspection. The inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place. The children moved freely in all rooms – exploring their environment, playing and engaging with each other and the staff. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children and addressed children by name. Staff responded quickly to children’s need for support. Alternative activities were available to children who didn’t want to join the scheduled plans. Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to a new activity and mealtimes. Drinks were readily available within the care rooms. The service provides all snacks and hot meals. Mealtimes were social occasions with children and adults sitting together, staff provided children with help when needed. Younger children were supported to eat independently, and bibs were worn during meals to protect the children’s clothes from

becoming soiled or wet. Children were assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times. Older children used the toilet independently and children wearing nappies had these changed regularly.

Child sized tables and chairs allowed the children to eat and engage in tabletop activities. Equipment was laid out on low level shelving units and accessible to children. All care rooms also had cushions and floor mats to facilitate rest or provide a place for children to take a break from activities.

The service has scheduled times for use of the outdoor area, on the day of inspection all groups had the opportunity to access the garden.

Engagement with families and parents is facilitated by the daily sharing of information on the child's day. This is shared through conversations at drop off and collection and supported by electronic means.

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-

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The registered provider insured there were adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day. The designated cot room provided sleeping facilities for 9 children under 2 years old. 10 children over 2 years slept on stackable beds in the toddler room

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:

- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored in a locked press or out of reach of children.
- Staff were aware of children's food allergies and adequately described how allergies are managed in the service.

Infection Control:

- Soothers were kept in individual labelled containers to avoid cross contamination.
- Each child was provided with their own bed linen, which was laundered weekly.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, and pedal operated bins.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff adequately detailed the services procedure for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and administration of medication forms were for review.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. When the inspectors arrived at the service, the side gates were in use for access. The outer gate was not locked or monitored by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. The inner gate is low level and leads directly to the outdoor play area and to the childcare facility. This was observed to be in use for entry and exit throughout the day and was easily opened from the inside and outside. An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 13 August 2025 during the inspection in respect of Regulation 23, general safety. A response was received from the service on the 14 August 2025 which sufficiently mitigated the risk identified.

Infection Control:

2. In the toddler room, the handwashing practices observed on the day of inspection were inconsistent, staff were observed to wipe children's noses without washing or sanitising their hands. This poses a risk of cross contamination to children.
3. In the Twinkler room the cushions in the cosy area were heavily stained and required cleaning. Children were observed lying on the cushions throughout the inspection. This poses a risk of cross contamination to children.

Safe Sleep:

4. The temperature in a designated cot room where children between the age of one and two years were sleeping was recorded at 22.8°C which is outside the recommended range for safe sleep. Although efforts were made by staff to reduce the temperature such as placing two fans into the room and opening windows and doors these measures were ineffective, and the temperature increased to 23.1°. The inspector acknowledges that a staff member remained in the room with the children when the increase in temperature was brought to their attention.
5. The temperature in the toddler room where children age two years were sleeping was recorded at 25.1°C which is outside the recommended range for safe sleep. Although efforts were made by staff to reduce the temperature such as opening windows and doors these measures were ineffective. The inspector acknowledges that two staff members remained in the room with the children during sleep time.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider has stated that an key code system has been installed at the side gate to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.

Infection Control:

2. The registered provider has stated that hand sanitisers have been installed in the care rooms and in the outdoor area to support hand hygiene practices and to ensure additional means of infection control are available
3. All cushions were removed and washed accordingly. A checklist for cleaning will include weekly cleaning of cushions and soft furnishings. If a cushion is stained and cannot be cleaned, it will be removed and replaced.

Safe Sleep:

4. The registered provider has stated that mobile air conditioners will be used in the cot room on days where the temperature exceeds the recommended level of 22°C
5. The registered provider has stated that mobile air conditioners will be used in the toddler sleep room on days where the temperature exceeds the recommended level of 22°C

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documentation was submitted by the registered provider and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Infection Control:

Supporting documentation was submitted by the registered provider and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Safe Sleep:

No Supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted by the registered provider will address the non-compliance. The regulatory requirement has been met. This regulation will be assessed on the next inspection.