

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS093		
Name of Service:	Little Saints Creche		
Address of Service:	Unit 4 Eaton House, Main Street, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D24 DF88		
Name of Registered Provider:	Gwen Woods Hughes		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	10/06/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	85	PM 68
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, 7 th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8.		
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern & 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		

Description of service

Little Saints Creche offers, sessional, part-time and full day care to children aged 0-6 years. The service operates from a two-storey building on the main street in Rathcoole, County Dublin. An outdoor area is located to the rear of the building. Children are allocated to one of eight rooms according to their age and stage of development. Two separate sleep rooms are available on the ground floor. The service opens between 7am and 6:15pm and operates the ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) scheme between 9am and 12pm.

Staffing

There are 27 staff employed to work in the service including the registered provider.

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 and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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*

(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 service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise.
- (b) The person in charge was on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or a named deputy to be present at all times of opening.
- (2)
- (a) & (b) Appropriate consideration had been given to references. Past employer references were available with a record of verification. References from other sources were available for adults who had only one past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults and were dated within the last three years.
- (d) International police vetting was available for all adults whom this was required.
- (4) All adults working directly with children held 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.

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) Nineteen adults were working directly with 85 children. The person in charge and deputy provided cover for staff breaks.

(2) The minimum adult to children ratio requirement was maintained. The staff roster provided for the minimum ratio requirements to be maintained at all times.

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 service was adequately resourced to support the children's learning, development, and well-being. The indoor environments were laid out with designated interest areas including role-play, construction, and sand/water areas. There was a variety of materials and equipment to support fine motor development including blocks, puzzles and mark-making items. All materials were stored visible and accessible to the children. Each room had developmentally appropriate books to support language development. Staff supported the children with activities including making play dough, painting and reading stories.

The Baby rooms had space for crawling and matted areas to support floor play. They were resourced with some equipment to support development including push/pull, cause and effect and sensory materials. All rooms had appropriately sized tables and chairs for mealtimes and table-top activities. Adult-sized chairs were available in the youngest rooms to support staff to hold the children when bottle-feeding or providing comfort. Areas with matting and soft seating were provided in each room for the children to rest or take a break from activities.

The registered provider and person in charge evidenced that an order had been placed for additional equipment and materials required in the Baby 2 and Wobbler rooms.

All children and babies were provided with an opportunity to play outdoors. The outdoor area was equipped with picnic benches, a play house and ride-on and push/pull toys to support gross motor skills. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children throughout the inspection.

(1)(b) The registered provider ensured that suitable care practices were in place. The adult's demonstrated knowledge of the individual children in their care including their likes, dislikes and whether they had any allergies. Children were comforted when they were tired or became upset with adult's holding them and speaking to them softly. Meals, snacks, and drinks were provided at regular intervals and a drinks station was provided in each room. Younger children were supported towards independence with opportunities and encouragement to self-feed. Infants were held when bottle-feeding and were offered bottles of milk according to their individual routines.

The adults supported the children to manage their personal care; they placed bibs on the younger children to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating; they helped the children to clean their faces and hands after eating; they checked the children's nappies regularly and changed them promptly when required. The adults used these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions. Children who used the toilet were supported towards independence.

Children attending the Baby rooms were placed to sleep according to their individual needs. Children attending the Wobbler and Toddler rooms were provided with an opportunity to sleep before dinner. All children were made comfortable for sleep; staff removed children's shoes and outer clothing and they offered soothers to those who used them. The environments were calm and conducive to sleep, with staff soothing the children as needed.

The staff used an app to communicate with parents/guardians in relation to the individual children's care. This included information relating to diet, sleep, and nappy-changes.