

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

|  |  |    |    |    |
|--|--|----|----|----|
| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>   | TU2015DS126  |    |    |    |
| <b>Name of Service:</b>  | The Little Childrens Centre  |    |    |    |
| <b>Address of Service:</b>   | St. Annes Primary School, Kilcarrig Avenue, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin  |    |    |    |
| <b>Eircode:</b>  | D24 DHY5   |    |    |    |
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>  | Valerie Pilkington   |    |    |    |
| <b>Service type:</b>   | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional   |    |    |    |
| <b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>  | 24/01/2024   |    |    |    |
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b>  | AM   | 43 | PM | 16 |
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>  | Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency,<br>Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown, County Dublin. |    |    |    |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>   | Olivia Quill and Fiona Carty   |    |    |    |
| <b>Title:</b>  | Early Years Inspectors   |    |    |    |
| <b>Authority to Inspect</b>  |  |    |    |    |
| 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>  | Not applicable   |    |    |    |

### Description of service

The Little Children’s Centre is registered to provide full day care, part- time and a sessional service to pre-school children aged from 0-6 years. The service is privately owned and operates Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00. The early years service is located in former classrooms of St. Anne’s Primary School in Tallaght Dublin 24. The premises were adapted to provide a childcare facility. There are five pre-school rooms in the setting named baby, wobblers, toddlers, pre-school and ECCE room. An outdoor play area is provided for the children to the rear of the building.

### Staffing

Eighteen staff are employed in the service including the registered provider. On the 24 January 2024 the registered provider was the person in charge and she did not work directly with the children. A chef was employed by the service to prepare food for the children attending and a receptionist was employed to work in the service. Eighteen adults in total were working directly with the children. Four of these adults were employed through the community employment scheme and three were on a student placement.

### 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;

9(2), and (4) –Management and Recruitment,

11 – Staffing levels,

16 (i) and (j), – Record in relation to pre-school service.

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

25 – First Aid and

26–Fire Safety.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 (j).

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

*(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

(2) The inspection focused on the recruitment records for twenty-one adults including records for three students who were present on inspection.

(a), (b) Thirty-four written validated references were provided from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all adults.

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

(4) Records were available evidencing that all staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a), (b) Three adults had no validated references on file. A second reference for another adult was unsuitable as it was from a friend rather than from a past employer or source other than a past employer as required. One adult had only one validated reference on file.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

All references were updated and validated. All staff have two validated references on file. The registered provider will make sure that any new staff, students, workers on employment schemes have two written references.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of validated references submitted.

## Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions submitted. The Regulatory requirement has been met.

## 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,*

## 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 day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were forty-three children attending the service being supervised by twelve adults on the day of inspection.
- (8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times during the hours of operation as per the staff roster.

## 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:*

*(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;*

## Compliance Information

- (1)
- (i) The staff roster was available and included the names of the staff present on the day of inspection and their hours of work.
- (j) A sample of medication records were reviewed. Details of medication administered to pre-school children was recorded correctly by staff with signed parental consent.

### 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), (b)

Children were provided with food and snacks at regular intervals. For morning snack children were served sliced apple, pear and rice cakes. At lunch time a hot meal of chicken curry and rice was served. Drinks of water and milk were offered with meals and snacks. Water was freely available to the children in the care rooms. Inspectors observed mealtimes were relaxed children and staff sat and ate their meal together. This promoted children's social skills. The adults engaged the children in conversation and provided help when needed. Bibs were provided for children in the Wobbler room to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet.

Children who wore nappies had these changed at scheduled times and in between when needed. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently. Inspectors observed staff using these times as an opportunity for warm one to one interaction.

All children were provided with an opportunity to sleep after their meal. Staff placed children who showed signs of tiredness to sleep earlier than the scheduled time.

Children were observed moving freely, exploring their environment, playing and engaging in activities. The children's rooms were laid out with designated interest areas including home-corners. Materials and equipment were appropriate for the developmental stages of the children and included stacking toys, cause and effect toys, puzzles, mark making materials and books. Cosy areas were available for the children to rest as required.

## Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

In the Toddler, Pre-school and Wobbler room cold water only was available in the wash hand basins. The temperature was recorded by the inspector as 10.5 degrees Celsius. Thermostatically controlled warm water should be available to the children to afford them comfort and to support hygienic hand washing practice.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a) A new water heaters were purchased and installed. The manager will check the water temperatures regularly.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of receipt from the plumber for work completed.

## Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions submitted. The Regulatory requirement has been met.

## 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:

- Entry to the service was safely secure to prevent unauthorised access and children from leaving the area unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Fire exits were unobstructed.
- All toys and play equipment used by the children was in good condition.

### Infection Control:

- The environment was clean and cleaning schedules were maintained by staff.
- A box was available to remove mouthed toys.
- Children’s hands were washed at required times including before eating and after using the toilet.
- Staff were observed to follow all the required infection control steps when completing nappy changing.
- A system was in place for sterilising soothers. After use they were stored in individual labelled containers.
- Pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of waste.

### Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take when giving medicine to children, including obtaining written parent/guardian consent. Records were available detailing medicines given. These included the signature of the staff member who gave the medicine and the staff who witnessed the medicine being given. The records had been signed by parents indicating the information had been shared.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Infection Control:

1. In the Baby room staff stated they make up bottles with formula powder measured and pre prepared by parents. This practice increases contamination risks to the babies and is contrary to the Food Safety Authority guidance.

#### Safe Sleep:

2. In the Wobbler room staff confirmed they did not maintain a written record of sleep checks on children for the 21 and 22 January posing a potential safety risk.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Infection Control:

1. All bottles are prepared according to the Food Safety Authority Guidelines. Staff will keep up to date with the food safety guidelines.

#### Safe Sleep:

2. The staff were spoken to about the importance of keeping a record of children’s sleep. The manager will ensure that staff are reminded regularly of keeping sleep records for every child that sleeps and they are checked every 10 minutes.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **Infection Control:**

Written evidence.

#### **Safe Sleep:**

Written evidence.

### **Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has been met. Practice will be reviewed on next inspection.

## 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) A person trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection. Six staff present on inspection had up to date First Aid Responder training certificates which were valid until April 2024 and August 2025.

(2)

(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service.

(b) A first aid box was available to the adults and 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.*

*(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 in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 24 January 2024.
  - (b) Records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms dated September 2023 and January 2024 respectively.
- (4) Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.