

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS218		
Name of Service:	Little Ladybird Ltd.		
Address of Service:	1 Main Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D24 VKV0		
Name of Registered Provider:	Iwona Siniarski, Marta Wybraniec		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date(s) of Inspection:	07/05/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	35	PM 36
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 X38W.		
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern and O. Quill		
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 Ladybird Ltd. is a full day, early years service for children aged 1 to 6 years. The service operates from a former commercial building which has been adapted for childcare and is located on the main road in Tallaght. It opens from 7am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. There are two pre-school rooms on the first floor and two pre-school rooms and a sleep room on the ground floor. The children were accommodated across three rooms on the day of inspection. An outdoor area is available at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are 12 staff employed to work in the service including both registered providers. Eight adults were present during the inspection including the person in charge.

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, safety and notifications and complaints. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(a) and (b) – Health, welfare and development of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection under this regulation included the Wobbler and Toddler rooms.

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 person in charge, 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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise.

(b) The person in charge and a named deputy were always on the premises during the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or a person who could deputise to be present at all times of opening.

(c) The service had a clearly documented management structure with staff roles outlined. Adults demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the lines of authority within the service.

The inspection focused on records for two staff who had been employed since the previous inspection in relation to regulations (2)(a)(b) and (d), (3) and (4). Records for all 12 staff members were inspected for regulation 9(2)(c).

(2) (a) Both staff members employed since the previous inspection had two past employer references with records of verification checks carried out.

(b) Not applicable as both staff members had a minimum of two previous employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all twelve adults. Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting had been sourced as required for both adults.

(3) Garda vetting disclosures, international police vetting and reference verifications were dated prior to the two adults commencing work in the service.

(4) Both staff employed to work directly with children held qualifications deemed equivalent to Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 by the Minister.

(7)(a) Staff reported they had been provided with appropriate information in relation to the service's policies and procedures. A record was kept of staff signatures indicating they had read and understood these. Records were available of staff inductions which included training on service procedures. The person in charge reported that supervision meetings are carried out with all staff. Records were available of these meetings.

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 with the children. There were 7 adults working directly with 35 children in the morning and 36 children in the afternoon. The person in charge was available to provide assistance if needed.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement for the age of children and type of service provided was always maintained.

(8)(a) There were at least two staff members on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two staff to be on the premises at all times of opening.

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:

(f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant

Compliance Information

The inspection focused on records in relation to four children who had an illness or allergy. Detailed records were available including signs and symptoms and any measures required by staff to manage the condition.

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

Basic Needs

Appropriate and suitable care practices were in place within the service. The adults demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They spoke kindly to them, listened to them and responded appropriately to their cues. Children were comforted when they became upset.

Meals and snacks were provided at regular intervals throughout the day. The children sat in groups when eating. Adults in the Wobbler room sat with the children, engaging them in conversation and promoting social skills. Bibs were provided to protect the children's clothes from becoming wet or soiled when eating. Drinks were always available within the rooms and were offered with meals and snacks.

Staff supported the children to use the toilet when needed. Children's nappies were changed at scheduled times and in between as required. Staff used these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions. The children slept in cots and low beds appropriate to their age and stage of development before dinner. They were made comfortable for sleep with staff removing their outer clothing and providing soothers for those who used them. Transitions between activities and care routines were well managed with staff explaining to the children what was going to happen next.

Supporting Relationships around Children

The adults fostered positive relationships with children by offering support through responsive interactions, attentive listening and gentle guidance. Group activities, such as shared meals and cooperative play, were designed to develop communication skills, strengthen social bonds and help children build friendships. Staff discussed maintaining connections with families to support children's emotional and social development. They reported there are opportunities for information sharing at drop off and collection with meetings arranged if needed. Photographs of the children's families were displayed to support children's connection between home and the service.

Physical and Material Environment

A variety of materials, toys and books were available to support children to engage in various forms of play and learning. The indoor areas had some interest areas to include a home corner and a sensory area. These were resourced with equipment and props to support imaginative and creative play and learning. Play activities were mainly child led. Children in the Toddler room were provided with various items of food including raspberries, carrots, mint and lime in an activity to create awareness of different senses. Puzzles and blocks were available on low level shelves easily visible and accessible to the children. Children’s artwork was displayed showing the children’s efforts and creativity are valued. Areas with matting and cushions were available for children to rest or take a break from activities.

The outdoor area was surfaced with impact absorbent matting and had equipment to support various forms of play including small slides, rocking toys and tunnels. Some natural elements had been introduced in the form of a small planting area and a sand table.

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:

Appropriate measures had been taken to safeguard the children. Cleaning products and cables were kept out of children’s reach. Heavy furniture was secured to prevent tipping. Emergency exits were kept clear to allow for timely evacuation in the event of a fire and staff members demonstrated an awareness of fire evacuation procedures. The front door to the service was secured to prevent unauthorised access or children leaving unsupervised. The rear outdoor area had a high perimeter wall with fencing and a secured gate.

Documented risk management plans were available where risks had been identified by staff. This included a risk management plan to prevent a child leaving the service from the front outdoor area due to the low perimeter wall and gate. The plan was always adhered to during the inspection which included having a minimum of two staff members with a maximum of seven children to allow for increased supervision.

Infection Control:

Appropriate measures had been taken to minimise the risk of infection spreading. The premises and equipment appeared clean and well maintained. Daily cleaning schedules were available and completed. Sanitary facilities were equipped to support handwashing. Staff guided children to wash their hands after toileting, after outdoor play and before meals. Children's nappies were changed in accordance with infection control procedures. Waste was properly managed using pedal-operated bins, ensuring hands-free disposal.

Administration of Medication:

Staff demonstrated an understanding of the procedures to administer medication safely if needed including obtaining written parent/guardian consent. Detailed records were available of medicines given. These had been signed by the person who gave the medicine and a witnessing staff member. All medicines were stored appropriately out of reach of children.

Safe Sleep:

All children slept in cots or low beds appropriate to their age and stage of development. The room temperatures were maintained between 16 and 20°C when children were sleeping. An adult remained in the rooms at all times when children were sleeping and undertook physical checks of the children at 10-minute intervals.

Fire Safety:

Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take in the event of a fire. The fire exits were clear from obstruction and the fire assembly point was signposted. Records were available of monthly fire drills undertaken to prepare the service to respond efficiently in the event of fire.

Outing:

The staff and person in charge reported children are not taken on any outings from the premises.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:

- (a) the death of a pre-school child while attending the service, including the death of a child in hospital following his or her transfer to hospital from the service;*
- (b) the diagnosis of a pre-school child attending the service, an employee, unpaid worker, contractor or other person working in the service as suffering from an infectious disease within the meaning of the Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981 (S.I. No. 390 of 1981);*
- (c) an incident that occurs in the service and that results in the service being closed for any length of time;*
- (d) a serious injury to a pre-school child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner whether in a hospital or otherwise;*
- (e) an incident in respect of which a pre-school child attending the service goes missing while attending the service.*

Compliance Information

The person in charge reported that no notifiable incidents had occurred since the previous inspection. Fifty-two records of accidents and incidents were reviewed; none of which required notification. The person in charge demonstrated an awareness of the incidents that require reporting to the inspectorate as outlined in the regulations.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
- (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-

- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
- (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with.

(5) The requirement in paragraph (4) is without prejudice to any requirement to retain the record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) under any other enactment or rule of law.

Compliance Information

(2), (3), (4) & (5) The person in charge reported that the service had not received any complaints since the previous inspection. The person in charge was aware of the requirements for recording and managing complaints including maintaining a record of complaints and the manner in which they are dealt with.