

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY115
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Name of Service:	Lir Childcare Centre
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Address of Service:	St. Berach's Place, Swans Nest Avenue, Kilbarrack, Dublin 5, Co. Dublin
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Furlong
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	20/01/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM	24
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Hosford and Á Dunne
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

Lir Childcare Centre is a community run full day care service located in a residential area in North Dublin which operates from 8:30am-5:30pm Monday to Friday. The service operates from a single storey building and is comprised of an office, kitchen, sanitary facilities, cot room and four care rooms; Baby room catering for children aged 10 months-1.5 years, Wobbler room catering to children 2-2.5 years, Toddler room catering for children aged 2.5-3 years and the Preschool room catering to children aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years. The service caters for 32 children aged 0-6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) scheme.

Staffing

The service employs 13 staff to work in the service to include the registered provider who is the service manager, a deputy person in charge, a cook and 10 childcare staff. Ten staff were present on the day of inspection including the registered provider, the deputy person in charge, a cook and 7 childcare staff.

Methodology

Tusla 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, premises, and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b)(c),(2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(2)(8)(a),
Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of child (1)(a),
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child and
Regulation 25 First Aid.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of child (1)(a) and Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child, as a result the inspectors spent time in the Baby room and Preschool room, and not in the Wobbler or 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.

Additional Information

Delays were encountered in the progression of the final inspection report due to a request from the registered provider for an extension to their submission date. The registered provider submitted their corrective and preventive actions along with supporting documentation to the inspectorate on the 28 February 2025.

Additional information was requested from the registered provider regarding an outstanding non-compliance in Regulation 9 on the 21 March 2025.

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.

(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)(c) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required throughout the inspection.

(b) The deputy designated person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived at the service and the registered provider arrived to the service soon after.

(2) It was confirmed by the registered provider that one new staff member had been employed in the service since the last inspection on the 22 February 2024.

The full file of one staff member was reviewed.

(a) Not applicable as no references were not from a past employer.

(b) Two written and validated references were available in relation to one adult from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 13 adults. The service has also 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) Documentation available demonstrated that the new staff member did not require police vetting as they had not resided outside of the jurisdiction for more than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to demonstrate that the new staff member working in the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

One police vetting remains outstanding for a staff member whose file was reviewed on the last inspection in February 2024.

(4)

There was no evidence to show that one staff member who was observed working directly with the 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.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d)

In response to the non-compliance the service has stated that the staff member is continuing to follow up on the outstanding police vetting but is finding it difficult to obtain. The staff member is awaiting an appointment with the relevant embassy.

(4)

In response the service has stated that the staff member has re-registered to complete their level 5 and will be finished in May 2025. Until then they are not currently including them in the staff-child ratios.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(d) Documentary evidence of an appointment with the relevant embassy for the 8 April 2025.

(4) No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

Following completion of the corrective and preventive action process the non-compliances as identified remain outstanding.

Following a request made to the registered provider on the 21 March 2025 for documentary evidence to address the outstanding non-compliance in Regulation 9(2)(d) evidence was submitted to the inspectorate on the 24 March 2025 to demonstrate that the staff member has an upcoming appointment with the relevant embassy on the 8 April 2025. The registered provider will update the inspectorate on the process. The outstanding non-compliance in relation to regulation 9 will be reviewed 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.

(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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there were 6 adults working with 28 children in the morning and 6 adults working with 24 children in the afternoon.

(2) The adult to child ratios were maintained on the day of inspection as outlined below.

- **Baby room-** 2 adults were caring for 4 children aged 10 months-1.5 years in the morning and 3 children in the afternoon.
- **Wobbler room-** 1 adult was caring for 4 children aged 2-2.5 years in the morning and 5 children in the afternoon.
- **Toddler room -** 1 adult was caring for 4 children aged 2.5-3years in the morning and afternoon.
- **Preschool room-** 2 adults were caring for 16 children aged 2 years 8 month-5 years in the morning and 12 children aged 2 years 8 month -5 years in the afternoon.

(8)(a) Documentation available demonstrated that two adults were present on the premises during the operation of the early years' service.

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:

- The service provided all the snacks and meals eaten by the children. Breakfast of cereal, milk and fruit was available from 8.30 to 9am, a hot meal of tuna pasta with tomato and cheese was served at 11.30-12pm, an afternoon snack at 2pm consisted of grapes, oranges, oat biscuits and water, with an evening tea available at 3.30pm. Alternative snacks and meals were available to the children if required with extra portions offered if needed. Children were offered water or milk at meals and babies were given milk between meals depending on their routine.
- Staff were observed engaging with the children in a positive and friendly manner. The adults provided children with comfort when they became upset, holding them and speaking to them in soft tones.
- Nappy changing was completed on a set schedule and as needed to ensure the children's comfort.
- Children were settled to sleep when they showed signs of tiredness and had outer clothing removed to ensure their comfort needs were facilitated. Soothers were offered to children who used them when they were being placed to sleep. Staff provided the children with reassurance and comfort where required when they were settling them to sleep, speaking gently to them.
- All the children enjoyed outdoor play during the inspection with appropriate clothing and footwear made available.

Physical and material environment:

- The Baby room was well laid out with materials and equipment stored on low accessible shelving. The children were supported in their play with the opportunity to explore their environment and develop their skills of crawling and walking.
- The Preschool room was bright and inviting for the children with areas of interest such as home area, construction space, tabletop and rest area supplied with supporting equipment to support and encourage the children to explore and expand on their individual interests.

- The outdoor area was surfaced with a poured material with equipment available to include cars, scooters, ride on horses, climbing frames and balance beams. The children had the freedom to explore the area while being supported by the adults.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care. Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed to use gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour.
- Staff described how they record information about each child's day using a daily record sheet detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities. This information was shared with parents at collection time.
- Mealtimes were observed to be sociable occasions with extra food being offered if children requested it. Children's faces were washed following mealtimes, clothes were changed if wet or soiled and all nappies were changed at set times and when required. Staff sat with the children during mealtimes and engaged in conversation which created a sociable and inclusive environment.
- The play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led. Staff were observed supporting the children's learning, sitting and engaging with the children and using prompts to extend play experiences. Children all accessed the toilet independently during the inspection and staff supported younger children where required. Staff demonstrated kindness and warmth during interactions observed by the inspectors. Comfort was offered to children promptly when required and the children appeared happy and content throughout the inspection.

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:

- External doors were monitored by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. Access to the early years' service was restricted to authorised persons by means of a controlled access system and this system also prevented children from leaving the area unsupervised. The outdoor areas were secured.
- Staff maintained the arrival and departure time of each child in the service, this ensured the safe evacuation of children in the event of an emergency.
- The materials and equipment observed in the service were observed to be suitable and appropriate for the children to use.
- Staff ensured that no clothing or jewellery that could cause a potential risk of choking or strangulation was present on the children while they attended the service.
- The Preschool room and outdoor area were observed to be suitable for the children during the inspection, no risks or hazards were identified.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available at the wash hand basins used by the staff and children.
- The service was well maintained with cleaning schedules present in the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- Staff carried out nappy changing as per best practice guidelines and the service policy.
- Individual storage was available for the storage of sheets used by the children during sleep time in the Toddler room.
- Soothers were available for children that required them and were sterilised daily and stored in individually named containers for each child.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep care practices observed during the inspection were consistent with best practice guidelines. For example.
- Four cot mattresses had safety labelling.
- The temperature of the cot room while children slept was recorded to ensure it was maintained between the recommended 18-22°C. The temperature of the cot room was recorded as 21.9°C at 10.28am while two children slept.

- An accurate sleep record was maintained for four children that slept in the Baby room and recorded each child's colour, breathing and position every ten minutes.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits within the service were unobstructed during the operation of the service.
- Documentation available demonstrated that fire drills were completed monthly. This ensured that staff and children were familiar with the emergency routes to take in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Visibility strips were not present on the glass doors in the Baby room. This increased the potential risk to a child of walking into the doors.
2. An adult chair and a sofa in the Baby room was torn exposing the foam. This did not allow for easy cleaning and posed a choking hazard should a child ingest the foam.

Infection Control:

3. Six cot mattresses did not have wipeable covers.

Administration of Medication:

4. On review of 14 administration of medication records available the following was observed.
 - The child's date of birth was not documented on 14 forms.
 - The dosage of medication to be administered was not recorded on 2 forms.
 - More than 1 medication was recorded on 3 forms.
 - The signature of the staff member that witnessed the medication administration was not recorded on 7 forms.
 - The signature of the parent following administration of the medication to confirm that they were made aware of the administration was not recorded on 12 forms.
5. Medication that was administered to a child twice daily in the Baby room did not have their name, date of birth and medication dosage documented on the medication to ensure that an accurate amount of medication was administered while they attended the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. In response to the non-compliance the service has stated that visibility stickers have been placed on all the windows. They will ensure that extra visibility stickers are always present on the doors and windows.

- To address the non-compliance the service has responded that the torn corners have been covered with extra strong tape. Maintenance checks will be done on all equipment.

Infection Control:

- Six new waterproof mattress protectors have been purchased and will be placed on the cots.

Administration of Medication:

- New medication forms have been placed in all the rooms. Staff were given instructions that only one medication per form and all forms are to be filled out every day for all medications administered.
- To address the non-compliance the parent of the child was notified and the correct medication with the child's correct name has since been brought in and signed for. All staff to double check names and details at all times before administering medication.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographic evidence.
- No evidence submitted.

Infection Control:

- Photographic evidence submitted.

Administration of Medication:

- Photographic evidence.
- Corrective actions address non-compliance.

Summary Comment

Following completion of the corrective and preventive process the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified.

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

- (2)
- (a) The first aid boxes within the Baby room and Preschool room were suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous position.
- (b) The first aid boxes were available for use at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) A staff member with up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training was not available within the service. It is acknowledged that staff had FAR certificates with an expiry date of 14 January 2025. The service has planned to renew certification on the 8 and 9 February 2025.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) In response the service has stated that all staff have since completed a 2-day refresher First Aid Responder course and the manager has also completed a paediatric first aid course. Reminders have been set for all staff to renew the first aid course every 2-3 years.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) Documentation dated 25 February 2025 to confirm that 12 staff completed First Aid Responder training and are awaiting certification.

Summary Comment

Following completion of the corrective and preventive process the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified.