

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY122			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little People's Academy Ltd			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Eccles Court, Hill Street, Dublin 1, Co. Dublin			
<b>Eircode:</b>	D01 X773			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Aifric Paul			
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	07/01/2026			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	36	PM	33
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Á Dunne & E Hosford			
<b>Title:</b>	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 People’s Academy is a private Childcare service which offers full time, part time and sessional education and care to children aged from 0 to 6 years. The service operates from a purpose-built building on the ground floor of residential apartment accommodation and is situated in an urban, residential area of Dublin 1. The hours of operation are from 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday, operating inside the registered hours of 7.45am to 6.15pm. The service has six care rooms, namely; Wobbler 1 room, Wobbler 2 room, Toddler 1 room, Toddler 2 room, Preschool 1 room and Preschool 2 room. The service has one designated cot room. The children have access to an outdoor area to the rear of the service

## Staffing

The registered provider employs 18 adults in the service – the area manager, person in charge, deputy person in charge, 14 childcare staff working directly with the children and a cook. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 27 and 32.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of a child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child.

Regulation 11 Staffing levels was assessed across all rooms.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included Toddler 1, Toddler 2, Preschool 1 and Preschool 2 rooms and did not include the Wobbler 1 and Wobbler 2 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

This inspection was triggered by information received by the inspectorate.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the area manager, person in charge, deputy 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.*

*(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;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

### Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The registered provider ensured that the service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The person in charge and the deputy person in charge were present during the inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff were aware of this.
- (2) It was confirmed by the person in charge that six new childcare staff members had been employed in the service since the last inspection on the 12 February 2025. The files of these six new staff members along with Garda Vetting disclosure for one staff member whose file was reviewed on the last inspection were reviewed.
- (a) Nine written and validated references were available from a past employer.
- (b) Three written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the seven adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was available for six adults who had lived outside of the State for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) Documentation was available to show that the six adults who worked directly with children attending 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 Disability and Equality.
- 7)(a) Through discussion with the area manager and the person in charge, new staff members were provided with induction training which included review of the policies and procedures used within the service and training provided on room documents and procedures in the service. Evidence was also present to demonstrate ongoing supervision at six months from starting for new staff. On discussion with recently appointed staff member, the staff member was able to describe the induction process, training received and the system in place regarding the review of the service's policies and procedures.
- Documentary evidence available demonstrated:
- All staff had completed online safeguarding children training either prior to starting in the service or for continuous training.
  - The service undertook regular meetings with staff to review any issues and updates that had occurred in the service. These meetings were with individual staff members, with room leaders and staff members of individual care rooms addressing mobile phone use, review of care room routine, planning class review and discussion for new academic year.

- Ongoing training in policies was evident with signed documentation demonstrating recent review of the mobile phone policy and the code of conduct policy.
- The service had two recent in service training days 5 August 2025 - whereby all staff were provided with additional time for in person and online training, for example , improvement and resources for care room environments given by an external agency and on 2 January 2026 online courses of Quality and Regulatory Framework, Health and Safety, Food Hygiene, Paediatric First Aid, Allergy awareness, Fire Safety, Teamworking Skills and Manual Handling were completed.

### 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 was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as follows:

There were 12 adults working with 36 children in the morning and there were 10 adults working with 33 children in the afternoon.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service as follows:

Morning:

- Wobbler 1 Room - 2 adults to 2 children aged between 1 years to 1 year 6 months,
- Wobbler 2 Room - 2 adults to 3 children aged between 1 years 6 months to 2 years,
- Toddler 1 Room - 1 adult to 5 children aged between 2 years to 3 years,
- Toddler 2 Room - 2 adults to 4 children aged between 2 years to 3 years,
- Preschool 1 Room - 2 adults to 4 children aged between 3 years to 4 years

- Preschool 2 Room - 3 adults to 18 children aged between 4 years to 5 years,

Afternoon:

- Wobbler 1 Room - 1 adult to 2 children aged between 1 years to 1 year 6 months,
- Wobbler 2 Room - 1 adult to 3 children aged between 1 years 6 months to 2 years,
- Toddler 1 Room - 1 adult to 5 children aged between 2 years to 3 years,
- Toddler 2 Room - 2 adults to 3 children aged between 2 years to 3 years,
- Preschool 1 Room - 2 adults to 4 children aged between 3 years to 4 years,
- Preschool 2 Room - 3 adults to 16 children aged between 4 years to 5 years,

The person in charge, deputy person in charge and area manager were available in a supportive role were required.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times, as evidenced by the roster.

### 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*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

##### Basic Needs:

- The service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals and a hot meal to the children. The inspectors observed the hot meal, supplied by an external food company, of mango chicken curry and rice served between 11.00am and 11.15am to the children. A snack of crackers was given at 2pm and at 3pm afternoon snack, made in the service kitchen, was served which was ham or cheese sandwiches with fruit. Water and milk were available in each care room for the children to drink.
- The transitions between activities such as nappy changes, sleep time, mealtimes, free play and outdoor play were observed to be calm and relaxed with staff available to care for the individual needs of the children.

- Children’s need for sleep and rest was met through the provision of comfortable rest areas available. Cots and low beds with individual bedding were available to the children who required sleep. At sleep time, the rooms were darkened and soft music played to provide for a restful environment.

### Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed to have respectful, warm and responsive interactions, engaged with and sat with the children at mealtimes and during play time activities of modelling dough and colouring.
- Staff members supported each other in the provision of care to the children.
- Communication with parents is through completion of daily report forms for each child with details of each child’s sleep, food intake and other information required and also through a message application on a phone.

### Physical and Material Environment

- Low level shelving and child sized furniture supported children’s independence.
  - The materials and equipment provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment available to them.
  - Cosy areas were present in all rooms offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day.
  - The outdoor play environment to the rear of the premises were fully enclosed, the surface of which was covered with artificial grass There was an overhead shelter to enable the children to access the outdoor area during inclement weather. The outdoor toys were suitable and available and included a climbing frame with a slide, a playhouse, blackboards, a slide, a mud kitchen, ride on tractors, ride on bikes and seesaws.
- (3) No practices that were deemed disrespectful, harmful or neglectful were observed during the inspection in the care rooms inspected.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. Children in Wobbler 1 and Wobbler 2 rooms were not provided with the opportunity to enjoy outdoor play during the inspection, which is at variance with the services Outdoor play policy and Early Years Curriculum Policy and Statement.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

To ensure that the Wobbler room can consistently access the garden both, in the morning and in the afternoon, a change has been implemented in the garden-time roster.

The start time of the Wobbler garden session has been delayed by 30 minutes to avoid coinciding with children's sleep times, as a number of children may still be asleep at the originally scheduled time. As a result, the Wobbler garden time has been adjusted.

The sleep routine remains unchanged and continues to take place between 11:30 and 13:30. Although the service has a sleep routine in place, as per our Safe Sleep Policy, some children may choose to sleep outside of these times and therefore are supported to do so. As part of the daily routine, children wake at different times, with some waking earlier than others as late as 13:30. In the event that any child remains asleep in the Wobbler room at the time the garden session begins, the Manager or Assistant Manager (or any staff member out of ratio) will remain in the Wobbler room until the last child has awakened, ensuring appropriate supervision and check time each 10 minutes during sleep time at all times while the rest of the group accesses the garden.

The outdoor play policy has been reviewed to ensure it is up to date and fully supports the revised garden schedule and will be gradually introduced to the staff, ensuring their understanding and appreciation of its importance. Written communication was issued to all families outlining the requirement to provide and maintain waterproof clothing (wellington boots, waterproof trousers and waterproof jacket) in line with Tusla and HSE guidance and the service's Outdoor Play Policy. While many families had already provided the required items, all families were reminded to ensure consistency and full compliance across the service.

Preventative Actions taken:

1. Daily Documentation:

The Wobbler, Toddler and Preschool Garden access will be recorded daily in the garden's planning sheet to provide evidence that outdoor play is taken place consistently.

2. Roster review:

The garden roster will be reviewed monthly by management to ensure it meets children's needs and regulatory requirements. Adjustments will be made as needed.

3. Staff Briefing:

All staff informed of the new garden schedule and the procedure for supervising children who are still asleep on 30 January 2026. Responsibilities will be clearly during staff handovers and team meetings.

4. Management Oversight:

The management team will perform spot checks to ensure that the garden access schedule and supervision procedures are being followed consistently.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

Outdoor schedule and checklist, sign in and sign out, outdoor play policy updated, evidence of training with staff  
30 January 2026

**Summary Comment**

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 19, has been adequately addressed.

**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:**

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children.
- Windows of the service were secure and inaccessible to children.
- Cleaning materials were stored out of children’s reach on high shelves.
- There was no trailing flexes present.
- The outdoor area was adequately secured to prevent an unsupervised child from exiting and an unauthorised adult from entering.

**Safe Sleep:**

- The sleep needs for children under 2 years of age, were facilitated with access to cots for sleep.
- The sleep needs of children over two years of age were met through the provision of low floor mats.
- Shoes and clothing were removed from children while they slept.

- Ten-minute sleep checks were completed on the children for colour, breathing, position while children slept.

### Part VI – Safety

#### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

During the inspection it was observed that staff supervised the children while in the care rooms, when using the sanitary facilities and when transitioning to the outdoor area located to the rear of the building.

### Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

#### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) *A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) *the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
  - (b) *the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
  - (c) *the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c) There was a complaints policy available detailing the procedures to be followed for making a complaint, the manner in how the service deals with a complaint, and the procedures for keeping the complainant informed of this process.

(2)

- (a) The service had a record in writing of any complaints made in respect of the service.
- (b) The service had documentary evidence to demonstrate that any complaints received were dealt with according to the service complaints policy

- (3)
- (a) Documentation was available of any complaints made against the service and the way in which they were dealt with.
- (b) These records were available for inspection by an authorised person