

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY194
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	St. Helena's Childcare Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	St. Helenas Childcare Centre, St Helena's Road, Finglas South, Dublin 11.
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D11 YP92
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jean Savage
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20/02/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	40	PM	13
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C Kerrigan and E Griffin
<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

St Helena’s Childcare Centre has been operating from its current premises since 2008. The service is registered to provide a full day care service to a maximum of 80 children from 2 to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday and opening times are from 8.45am to 3.30pm daily.

The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme, which runs from 9am to 12pm daily. The two-storey purpose-built premises comprises of nine care rooms each with their own sanitary areas, a playroom, a kitchen, dining room, a reception area and an office. Upstairs there is one sensory room and a library room. The outdoor areas are located off each care room.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs 24 adults to work within the service, to include nineteen early years workers, one administration staff, two cooks and two handymen. A student was also present on the day of inspection. The registered provider facilitated the inspection and was available to staff within 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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under.

- Regulation 15 (1)(3)(c) Record of pre-school Children,
- Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of the Child.
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of Child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included Junior Room, Room 2, Room 4 and Room 5.

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, 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

(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.

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise if required.
  - (b) A review of the roster showed that a named person in charge or the deputy is rostered to be on the premises at all times during the service opening hours.
- (2) The files of twenty-six adults working within the service, to include the registered provider, nineteen early years workers, two cooks, two maintenance workers, one administration staff and a student were reviewed on the day of inspection.
- (a) The registered provider ensured that there were thirty written and validated references available from a previous employer for the adults working within the service.

- (b) The registered provider ensured that there were twenty-two written and validated references were available from a source other than a previous employer for the adults working within the service.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all twenty-six adults working within the service. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
  - (d) (d)Police vetting was available for two adults who had resided in a country other than Ireland for a period longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that references and Garda vetting procedures were completed for twenty-four adults' prior to being allowed access or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) The register provider and the nineteen adults who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed, held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (3) The registered provider did not ensure that reference check procedures were completed prior to two adults being allowed access or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The registered provider stated that staff will not start within the service until reference check procedures are completed.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Documentary evidence was submitted and reviewed.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 9.

## 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) The registered provider ensured an adequate number of adults were working with the children in the service at all times throughout the day. Nineteen early years staff were available in the building to meet the care needs of forty children who were present on the day of inspection.

(2) The registered provider ensured that the adult to child ratios were maintained within the service on the day of inspection. This was further evidenced in the roster.

(8) (a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times during the operational hours of the service. This was also evidenced in the roster.

### 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:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that a written record was kept for each children attending the pre-school service. The written records of eighteen children were reviewed and found to be fully completed and contained the following information.

- (a) The registered provider ensured that name and date of birth was completed in each child's record.
- (b) The registered provider ensured that the date on which a child first attended the service was recorded.
- (d) The registered provider ensured that the name, address and telephone number of the parent or guardian along with an emergency contact person for whom could also be contacted was recorded in the child's file.
- (e) The registered provider ensured that an authorised person for the collection of each child was recorded.
- (f) The registered provider ensured the details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child relevant to their care within the service was recorded.

- (g) The registered provider ensured the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner was recorded.
  - (h) The registered provider ensured that a record of vaccinations was kept.
  - (i) The registered provider ensured that written consent was present for children needing appropriate medical treatment in the event of an emergency.
- (3) (c) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was available on the premises for inspection by the inspector.

### 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) The registered provider ensured the child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service, for example:

#### Basic Needs:

- Children were provided with regular meals and snacks. This included a hot meal prepared and cooked onsite. On the morning of the inspection children in the care rooms were served a snack of ham sandwiches and a drink of milk, with alternative options of crackers being given if needed. Savoury mince and mashed potatoes was given for lunch with an alternative available for children who do not eat the meal offered. The transition to mealtime was observed to be a timely experience for the children, at a pace suited to their needs.
- Nappy changing was not observed on the day however through conversation with staff nappy changing was completed on a scheduled basis and as needed. A number of children in the Junior room were supported with their toilet training journey, positive praise was given to each child's efforts, with cues and prompts given in a child centred manner.

- There was a rest area available in the care rooms if the children needed to engage in more restful activities.
- Children were provided with appropriate clothing for outdoor play, independence with self-care skills were prompted with children being encouraged to put on hats and warm coats for outdoors themselves. This facilitates comfort in play experiences and promotes independence.
- Strategies such as observation, distraction, clear instruction on what was unacceptable, and appropriate supervision was used to support children's behaviours. Staff were able to inform the inspectors of the strategies used to assist children manage negative behaviours in a positive child-centred approach. For example, in the outdoor area one boy showed signs of tiredness and was irritable with his behaviour escalating to shouting. Staff showed an awareness for his individual needs and gave him an alternative which best suited his needs, he returned indoors where he immediately relaxed.

### Supporting Relationships:

- A key worker system is in place in the service and key groups are displayed within the classrooms. A key worker system allows staff to develop in depth knowledge about the children in their group and fosters nurturing relationships helping children to feel confident.
- The adults in the service were observed to interact with the children in a responsive, warm, respectful manner.
- Staff were observed to speak to each other in respectful and warm manner.
- Staff reported that information such as toileting, food, and sleep is shared with parents daily through conversations at drop off and collection. Staff reported an open-door policy for parents, so parents are informed of their child's day. The service also maintained a learning journal for each child, this is shared with the parents bridging the gap between service and home.

### Physical and material environment:

- The furniture provided in the room was low level and appropriate for children attending with toys, equipment and play materials easily accessible and visible to the children on low-level units which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- There was a range of equipment available including mark making, a home corner with associated props to facilitate imaginative play experiences, stacking, building, connecting and threading toys to facilitate creative play, cars and tracks for transporting and books to facilitate language and early literacy development.

- Images of the children and their families were displayed throughout the room which promoted a sense of identity and belonging.
- The children had access to the outdoor play environment throughout the day. This is scheduled but also available to children if and when they needed. This area had absorbent flooring, tyres, mud kitchens, tricycles, wooden trains, giving an array of options to develop gross motor skills.

### 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:

- The main entrance to the service was secure upon the inspector's unannounced arrival at the service. Access was granted via a doorbell system in which a staff member answered, therefore preventing access to the children from unauthorised persons, this also prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The care rooms opened into corridors which were accessed via a coded keypad. Preventing children from absconding and the unauthorised access of people into the care rooms.
- Hazardous materials such as cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- The ambient room temperatures in the service were kept between the recommended 18-22°C.
- The outdoor area was fully secured and enclosed with fencing and high walls.

##### Infection Control:

- The service was clean and well maintained throughout. Cleaning schedules were on display through the service outlining frequency of cleaning.
- Toilet roll was hygienically stored and in easy reach of the children, preventing potential cross contamination.
- Thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap and single use paper towels were in use throughout the service for hand drying purposes, ensuring good handwashing practices.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medications are not routinely given within the service, but staff demonstrated knowledge on the procedure for medication administration if required.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for twenty-six adults working within the service. However, vetting disclosures for six of these adults were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'

### Infection Control:

2. Pedal bins were not in use within the care rooms sampled, children were observed to dispose of used tissues by placing their hands into the bins, this is a potential area for cross contamination.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. The registered provider has ensured that Garda Vetting disclosures have been updated. The registered provider has stated that all Garda Vetting renewals will be completed every two years, with six weekly reviews of files to be commenced to ensure compliance.

#### Infection Control:

2. The registered provider has purchased new pedal bins for the service with broken bins to be replaced immediately.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence has been submitted and reviewed.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

### 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) Persons trained in First Aid to include First Aid Response FAR were available to children during the operational hours of the service.
- (2) (a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position within the premises.  
(b) The first aid box was readily available to the adults caring for the children attending the pre-school service.

### 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.*
- (2) *The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*
- (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) The registered provider ensured that a record was kept in writing of fire drills within the service. The last recorded fire drill was dated the 17 February 2025.
  - (b) A record was available indicating the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment with records demonstrating it was last serviced in June 2024, and the number, type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms throughout the service, which were last serviced on the 6 November 2024.

- (2) (c) The registered provider ensured that the fire drill and maintenance records were available for review by the Inspector.
- (4) A notice of procedures was displayed throughout the service indicating the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

*A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the premises was adequately ensured as a full day care service for the maximum number of children registered. The certificate reviewed had an expiry date of 27th of March 2025.