

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY284		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ladybug Childcare LTD		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	85 Ranelagh Road Ranelagh Dublin 6		
<b>Eircode:</b>	D06 FX53		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Elaine Quane		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	29/01/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	79	PM 73
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Early Years Inspectorate Tusla-Child and Family Agency Loughlinstown Health Centre Loughlinstown Drive Co. Dublin A96P3Y6		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Olivia Quill and Jackie Mayock		
<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

This private childcare facility was established in 2006 and has been operated by the current registered provider since 2011. Care is provided on a full day care basis for children aged 0-6 years. The service operates Monday to Friday from 08:00hrs to 18:00hrs.

The premises are located in an urban area of Dublin south city in a period residential building which has been reconfigured to accommodate the childcare service. In total six care rooms are provided. Four care rooms are located in the main building namely the Baby, Wobbler, PreMontessori, and Toddler rooms. Two dedicated cot rooms are available on the ground floor and another is located on first floor return. There is an adapted two-storey building to the rear of the premises with two additional pre-school rooms for children attending the Junior and Senior Montessori rooms. A large outdoor space is provided to the rear of the premises.

## Staffing

In total nineteen staff are employed to work in the service. The registered provider does not work in the service. On the 29 January 2025, eighteen staff were present including the designated person in charge. Seventeen staff worked directly with the children and the designated person in charge provided support for staff breaks.

## 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

The inspection was *unannounced* and focused on the area of governance, records and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations.

9(1)(a) -(d), (2) and (4) Management and Recruitment,

11(1), (2), (8)(a) Staffing Levels,

15(1) Record of a Pre-School Child,

16(1)(k) Record in relation to pre-school service

19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,

however, on inspection additional non-compliance was identified under Regulation 29 Premises. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1), 16 (1)(k), and 19(1)(a), (b). As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby, Wobbler, Toddler and Pre-Montessori rooms and did not include the Junior and Senior Montessori 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 inspector wishes 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

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present at all times throughout the inspection.

(2) The inspection included a review of files for any new staff employed since the last inspection on the 10 of October 2023. In total thirteen new staff were employed. The inspection also included a review of Garda vetting disclosures for all staff employed in the service. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b) Of the twenty six written validated references that were required, seventeen were available from a past employer and nine were available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed in the service. 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 required for thirteen staff members and was available for these staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

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

### 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 seventy-nine children attending the service being supervised by seventeen adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times as evidenced by the staff 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;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of twelve records were reviewed for children who were attending the service. The records reviewed contained the following information:

- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
- (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) There was an area on the registration form where the date when a child would cease to attend the service will be recorded.
- (d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service were also available.
- (e) There was authorisation for the collection of the child.
- (f) The record available supported the recording of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child.
- (g) The name and telephone number of each child's medical practitioner was recorded.
- (h) A record of immunisations received was recorded.
- (i) There was written consent for appropriate medical treatment of a child in the event of an emergency.

## 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:*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) (k) The registered provider ensured that a written record of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child was recorded by staff. A sample of thirty accident and incident records were reviewed. All forms were completed correctly and signed by staff, the manager and by parents.

## 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*

*(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*

*(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)

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that all meals are provided by the service. Children are offered breakfast on arrival and a fruit snack is provided during the morning. A hot meal of chicken korma and rice was served for dinner and an afternoon meal is provided. Younger children were given bibs for dinnertime. Children were encouraged to feed themselves.

Staff were observed cleaning children's noses as required and children's faces and hands were washed after dinner. Children's nappies were changed as required. There was a designated nap time for children attending the Baby, Wobbler and Toddler rooms. The children were made comfortable for sleep with staff removing their shoes and outer clothing and providing soothers to those who used them. The environments were calm and conducive to sleep, with staff sitting with the children and soothing them as needed during this time. Staff interacted warmly with the children in their care throughout the inspection. Staff were observed to use gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour.

Staff described how they communicate with parents regarding their child's day using an online application detailing information relating to diet, sleep, and nappy-changes. Staff also communicate with parents at arrival and collection times.

Care rooms were arranged to provide a range of play materials and areas of interest this allowed children freedom to play and explore. Areas of interest included small world toys, construction toys, jigsaws, home corners, and books. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Each area was adequately resourced with a variety of material.

A fully enclosed outdoor area was located to the rear of the premises. Children from the PreMontessori, Junior and Senior Montessori rooms were observed playing in the outdoor area during the morning.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

1. The inspector observed that there was inadequate planning for transitions at times in the PreMontessori room as demonstrated by the following examples:

- (a) Children returned to their care room after outdoor play at 11 am. Staff told children to sit down. A story was read but several children were not engaged in the story and were presenting as restless. On numerous occasions a staff member was heard telling children to 'sit down', 'sit properly in your chair, dinner is coming'. It was thirty minutes before dinner arrived. Staff asked children not to start eating until all children had a meal placed in front of them. The first child served was hungry and unable to wait and started eating. It was about five minutes before all children were served.

- (b) Staff were observed to put the children's sleep beds down at 11.05am and children did not go to bed until after 12.11pm. This practice curtailed the children's movement in the room.
2. Drinking water was not freely available in the PreMontessori room and no water was provided at mealtime. It is acknowledged the manager brought water to the room 11.56am.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

##### 1(b)

1. (a) The staff use a transition song to signal the end of outdoor play and we introduced a staggered entry system (2 smaller groups at a time). A staff member is assigned to supervise handwashing while the other two support children removing their coats. Children are encouraged to take their coats off, staff give them all the time they need to do this at their own pace.

Staff have introduced a transition activity before meal - one group of children are engaged in storytime, a more interactive book is chosen so staff can ask children questions to maintain their interest. A second group of children that are not showing interest in story time have been offered colouring and or puzzles/jigsaws.

When food is being brought to the room in a big tray, the children are encouraged to help the staff with serving the food, encouraging peer modelling, with the older children helping the younger ones. The children presenting as hungry can begin to eat as soon as they are served instead of waiting for everyone. Staff conducted training with an external training agency to help them during transition times. A staff meeting will take place whereby this training will be incorporated into our own service and how best to manage transitions within the complexities of the service we deliver.

We will ensure meals arrive more promptly after children return from outdoor play to avoid wait times. Children can spend more time outdoor instead of returning to the classroom before the food is ready to be served. Staff will be provided with regular training on engaging children effectively and using positive reinforcement instead of repeated commands. Implement relaxing, calming techniques (e.g. deep breathing, stretching) before sitting down for a story to help children settle.

- (b) Staff were reminded of the appropriate timing for setting up the sleep beds, ensuring that children have enough space for movement and play before nap time. The manager provided training on best practice for managing nap transitions in a way that minimizes disruption while maintaining children's freedom of movement.
2. Water is available at all times for all the children in the pre-Montessori classroom. There is a jug filled with water and cups available for all children at the water station in the room. All staff have been reminded of the importance of always having the jugs filled with water available at all times throughout the day for the children in all rooms.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Certificates of training completed by staff and photographic evidence.

### **Summary Comment**

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

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*  
*(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required,*

### **Non-Compliance Information**

- (d) The registered provider did not ensure that the premises was maintained and repaired as evidenced by;
1. The paint in the Junior Montessori room was chipped off the wall in several areas within the room.
  2. In the Junior Montessori room part of a corner of a pillar was damaged exposing the wire mesh beneath.
  3. In the Junior Montessori room there was a crack in the wall beneath the window.
  4. In both the Junior and Senior Montessori room there were gaps on the wooden flooring.
  5. In the Toddler room the paint was chipped on the dado panelling beneath the window and on the skirting boards.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d)
1. Painter booked in over the Easter break.
  2. The pillar has been repaired/fixed.
  3. Crack in the wall beneath the window was fixed.
  4. Both juniors and senior rooms, gaps on the wooden flooring will be repaired over the Easter break.
  5. The paint on the skirting boards and on the dado panelling beneath the windows in the toddler room will be rectified over the Easter break. A maintenance checklist has been devised and put into place by the manager who will feedback this information to the registered provider and items will be actioned immediately.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence and email confirmation of maintenance work to be completed over Easter.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance once completed. The maintenance work completed will be reviewed on next inspection.