

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

waTUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY378
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Name of Service:	Saint Ultans Childcare Project
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Address of Service:	St. Ultan's Childcare Project, Cherry Orchard Avenue, Cherry Orchard, Dublin 10, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D10 NY53
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Name of Registered Provider:	Amanda McCoy
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	19/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	56	PM	40
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Duff 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
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Description of service

Saint Ultans Childcare Project is registered to provide full day, part time and sessional care to children aged between 0-6 years. It operates within Saint Ultans primary school in Cherry Orchard, Dublin 10. Two sessional services are operated from 8:45- 11.45 am and 12.45 pm – 3.45pm. There are 8 rooms within the school building, and 3 further rooms within the school grounds. On the day of inspection 10 rooms were open. Separate sleep rooms are available for children attending the Maple (Wobbler) and Cherry blossom (Baby)rooms.

Staffing

There are 26 staff employed to work in the service including the person in charge. The registered provider does not work directly with the children but is present within the school building.

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, information and records and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(a-c) (2) (a-d) (4)-Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels.

Regulation 19 (1)(b) Health, welfare and development of child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of child.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(b). As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Birch room, the Beech room, the Ash room, the Cherry blossom room and the Palm room.

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.

(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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

(a)(b)

Documentation was reviewed for 2 staff members employed in the service since the last inspection dated 12 June 2024. Records were also reviewed for a student who was present on a school placement. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for all staff members employed in the service. The following documentation was available;

Of the 6 written and validated references that were required, 2 were available from a past employer and 4 were available from a reputable source.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for 26 staff members employed to work in the service. Garda vetting disclosures from all staff members were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Documentation reviewed showed Police vetting was not required for 2 new staff members employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 12 June 2024 as they had not lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(4)

Records were available evidencing that 2 new staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. 1 student did not require a qualification as they were employed under a work placement programme.

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.

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 22 staff members looking after 56 children.

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-

(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)(b)

The inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place. The children moved freely in all rooms – exploring their environment, playing and engaging with each other and the staff. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed children by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. Language used by the staff members was observed to be encouraging, supportive and informative. Individual daily reports were kept throughout the day to give to parents/guardians to provide for continuation of care. Parents were observed in the service during drop off and collection times and staff shared information about the children with their parents at these times.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to a new activity and for mealtimes.

Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the day these provisions were prepared on site by a cook, including a hot meal. Drinks were readily available within the care rooms. Mealtimes were social occasions with children and sitting together, staff provided children with help when needed. Younger children were supported to eat independently, and bibs were worn during meals to protect the children's clothes from becoming soiled or wet. Children were assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times. Areas were provided within all rooms where children could rest or take a break from activities. Older children used the toilet independently and children wearing nappies had these changed regularly. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm one to one interactions with the children. Children spent time outdoors throughout the day and were dressed appropriate to the weather.

Non-Compliance Information

In the Palm room the transition from lunch to sleep time was observed to be unsettled and disorganised.

1. At approximately 12:33 two children were placed into their cots to rest by staff. The children were left unattended to self-settle. During this time, both children were observed jumping in their cots. Although

staff entered the cot room briefly, they did not remain present with the children during the settling period.

2. Another child displaying signs of tiredness, at 12:30 did not have his needs met in a timely manner, as he was not offered an opportunity to sleep. Upon discussion, staff indicated they intended to wait until two other children had settled before placing him to rest. The child was eventually placed at 13:14 to sleep following prompting by the inspector.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The registered provider has stated an additional member of staff has been scheduled to support staff in the palm room during transitions. The staff member will also stay with the children in the cot room to help them settle to sleep. A staff meeting was held where all staff had the opportunity to discuss transitions.
2. The registered provider has stated that through discussion with staff, a plan has been developed to ensure all children's needs are met, the additional staff member scheduled to support the room will ensure this plan is effective.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. This regulation will be assessed on the next 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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorized persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. In addition, the outdoor play area was securely gated restricting unauthorized persons from gaining access to this area and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.

- Toys and equipment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- The outdoor area was observed to be suitable and safe with domestic bins stored out of children's reach and all outdoor play materials maintained and in good condition free from hazards.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored in a locked press or out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Soothers were kept in individual labelled containers.
- Both the indoor and outdoor environment were maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, and pedal operated bins.
- The children and staff members washed their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection.

Administration of Medication:

- A sample of medication records were reviewed. The forms were completed correctly. This included ensuring written consent was obtained from parents or guardians, having a second staff member present as a witness during administration, and maintaining detailed records shared with parents or guardians upon collection.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep logs were maintained in the dedicated sleep room and care rooms where children slept, and individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position every ten minutes. The required temperature range of 18 - 22°Celsius was maintained while children slept.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the palm room, the appropriate room temperature of 18-22 degrees was not maintained throughout the inspection, the temperature reached 25.1 degrees. This poses a risk of overheating to children.

Infection Control:

2. In the sanitary area in the willow room the nappy changing mat was observed to be torn with foam exposed which prevented adequate cleaning and posed an infection control risk.
3. In the sanitary area in willow room, the lacquered surface around the nappy changing mat was observed to be worn and could not be cleaned effectively.

- In the chestnut room, a cloth towel was available in the sanitary area. Staff reported that some children use this communal cloth towel when drying their hands, this poses a potential risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The registered provider has stated that staff will actively try to reduce the temperature in the rooms by opening windows and pulling blinds down when necessary. A quote for an air conditioning system has also been obtained. The service has applied to a funding body for support to purchase the air conditioning system.

Infection Control:

- A new nappy changing mat has been purchased and is in place in the nappy changing area in the willow room.
- The Lacquered surface around the changing mat has been repaired and repainted.
- The cloth towel has been removed from the sanitary area in the chestnut room, paper towel will be used at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. This regulation will be assessed on the next inspection.

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 the full day care service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review provided cover for 138 children and was valid until the 03 December 2025.