

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY387
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Babes in the Wood Creche
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Cedar Brook Walk, Cherry Orchard, Dublin 10, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D10 W297
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Maria Sobczyk
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	17/11/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	61	PM	47
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	H. Sutherland and S Quigley
<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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Babes In The Wood operates from a purpose built, single storey premises situated in the urban area of Cherry Orchard, Dublin 10. The service provides full day care, part-time, and sessional care and education for children aged 0 to 6 years. Opening hours are 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday.

The premises includes five preschool rooms along with a dedicated sleep room. A large enclosed outdoor play area is available to the children to the rear of the building. A registered school age service is also provided.

### Staffing

There are currently 19 adults employed in the service including the person in charge, the cook, and one adult employed to work in the school-age service. The registered provider does not work in the service. On the day of inspection, there were 17 adults present, including the person in charge, deputy person in charge, the cook and 14 adults working directly with the children.

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Wobbly 1, Wobbly 2, ECCE and the Baby 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 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.*

*(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 when required.
- (b) Both the designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge were on the premises when the inspectors arrived at the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place, identifying lines of authority and accountability, as well as the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee. This was confirmed during conversations with staff.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection, and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that four adults had been employed since the previous inspection. Three of the adults were employed to work directly with children. The requirements of Regulation 9 (2) (3)(4) were reviewed in respect of the adults. In addition, Garda vetting for 10 staff members whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

- (a) Five written and verified references were available from past employers.
- (b) Three written and verified references were available from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 14 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 one adult who had lived outside the state for a period of six months as an adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed provided evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had been carried out prior to the four adults commencing employment in the service.

(4) Documentation was available to demonstrate that the three adults working 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 equivalent by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

### 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.*

*particular reference number 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) On the day of inspection, there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children to meet their care needs.
- (2) The minimum adult-to-child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection. In the morning, 14 adults were caring for 61 children, while in the afternoon, 9 adults were caring for 47 children. The person in charge and the deputy person in charge were also available to provide support when required.

### 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

The inspectors observed appropriate and suitable care practices within the service. Staff were responsive to children’s needs, and daily routines were carried out in a consistent manner. Children were observed moving freely around the care rooms, with resources stored at an accessible level, allowing them to find and return items of interest with ease. This supported children in making choices and promoted independence.

Regular meals and snacks were served to children and staff reported that the service provides breakfast, snacks, and dinner, while parents supply an evening snack for children attending on a full-day basis. Children attending only the morning session brought their lunch from home. During mealtimes, children were encouraged to feed themselves, and older children were observed clearing their plates after meals, promoting self-help skills. Bibs were placed on younger children and babies to protect their clothing. Water stations were available in each care room, and children were offered drinks throughout the inspection.

Staff were observed using songs to support transitions. For example, staff in the Wobbly 1 room sang songs at tidy-up time, while staff in the ECCE room played a handwashing song to support the change in activity.

Children’s nappies were changed both on schedule and as needed, with staff interacting warmly with children during this time. Inspectors found that babies sleep routines were managed on an individual, needs-led basis, in line with their home routines. Older children were supported to rest at a designated time following their snack. Appropriate rest areas were available in the rooms for older children to use if needed. The rooms where children slept were darkened to create a suitable rest environment, and staff provided support and reassurance as required. Inspectors observed that conflicts between children were managed in a timely and appropriate manner. Staff intervened promptly to redirect behaviour, offered reassurance, and supported children in resolving situations safely.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

### Compliance Information

- The furniture and equipment in the care rooms were observed to be adequate for the number of children in each care room.
- Low-level tables and chairs were available, allowing children to sit comfortably during meals and while participating in tabletop activities.

- Toys and equipment were available to support various forms of play including, imaginative, construction, physical and manipulative play. These were arranged on low-level shelving ensuring ease of access.
- The equipment was observed to be clean and well maintained.

### 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 entrance to the service was secured preventing unauthorised access or children leaving the service unsupervised.
- The outdoor area was enclosed by a high fence with locked gates preventing children from accessing the roadway or unauthorised individuals accessing the area.
- Cleaning materials were stored safely out of children's reach.
- Highchairs were observed to be in good condition and fitted with appropriate safety harnesses.

##### Infection Control:

- The service had a system in place for the sterilisation of mouthing toys.
- Children's nappies were changed in accordance with infection control procedures.
- Wash hand basins were provided in the bathrooms, with thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap and single-use paper towels.
- Foot pedal bins were used to dispose of waste.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to administer medication to a child if required.
- Medicine consent forms were available for use when required.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Documented sleep checks were carried out at 10-minute intervals.
- The room temperature for children under 12 months was maintained between 16-20°C.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clearly signed and were unobstructed for the duration of the inspection.
- Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the care rooms.
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### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The lock on a fridge in the baby room was open. The fridge contained items of food and over the counter medication. This was highlighted to a staff member, and the lock was closed immediately.
2. Phone cords were not safely secured and out of reach of children. The cords of the phones in the ECCE room and Wobbly 2 room were within reach of children.  
Inadequate safety measures pose a risk to children's safety.

#### Infection Control:

3. A sofa used by the children in the Wobbly 2 room was observed to be heavily soiled, posing the risk of the spread of infection within the care environment.

#### Safe Sleep:

4. Safe sleep practices were not adhered to in the Wobbly 1 room. A child under the age of two was observed sleeping on a low-level stackable bed. In addition, there was no sleep plan available. This practice poses a risk to the child's safety, as it does not align with current safe sleep guidelines for children under 24 months.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. The importance of ensuring that safety procedures are followed was discussed with the Baby room team and addressed with all staff during a staff meeting.
2. The phone cords have been safely secured out of reach of children and staff members have been reminded to look out for hazards in the care rooms and report them to management immediately.

#### Infection Control:

3. The sofa was immediately removed and disposed of. Staff members were reminded to report any areas of concern to management.

#### Safe Sleep:

4. Cots will be provided for all children under two years of age. All staff members have been made aware of the procedures to ensure measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of children attending the service, and that the environment is safe.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

Supporting documentation received and reviewed.

**Infection Control:**

Supporting documentation received and reviewed.

**Safe Sleep:**

Supporting documentation received and reviewed

**Summary Comment**

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed and the regulatory requirement has been met.