

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL090				
Name of Service:	Eileen's Little Scholars				
Address of Service:	39 Willow Wood Grove, Hartstown, Clonsilla, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin				
Eircode:	D15 NDH9				
Name of Registered Provider:	Eileen Francis				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	16/10/2024				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>8</td> <td>PM</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </table>	AM	8	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin
Title:	Early Years Inspector
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

Eileens little Scholars is a sessional service located in a residential area. The service provides sessional care and education to children aged 2-6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 9:00am to 12:00pm for the morning session and 12:30pm to 3:30pm for the afternoon session. The service is located in a purpose-built building at the rear of the registered provider's home with direct access to an outdoor play area in the garden.

Staffing

The registered provider employs two staff to work directly with the children in the service two of whom are employed through the Access and Inclusion scheme. On the day of the inspection the registered provider and two staff were present. The registered provider works both directly with the children and oversees the day-to-day operations of 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1), (2) and (4)-Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11 (1), (3) and (8)-Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-School Child.

Regulation 16 Record in Relation to a Pre-School Child.

Regulation 19 (1)(a)-Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of Child.

Regulation 25 First Aid.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety measures.

Regulation 28 Insurance.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the care room and the outdoor play area. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under: Regulation 15, Regulation 16, Regulation 19 and Regulation 23.

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 registered provider, 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.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.
- (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.
- (2) The files of the registered provider and two staff who work in the service were reviewed.
 - (a) Two written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Four written and verified references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and two staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

- (d) International Police vetting was not required as the registered provider and two staff members had not lived outside of the state for six months or more as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the registered provider and two staff members who worked directly with the children held 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.

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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore 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 there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children. The registered provider and one adult were working with eight children during the morning of the inspection and the registered provider and two adults during the afternoon of the inspection.
- (3) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection as follows:
- During the Morning:**
- There were two adults caring for eight children aged 2 ½-5 years old.
- During the afternoon:**
- There were three adults caring for six children aged 2 ½-5 years old.
- (8)(a) The registered provider ensured there were always two adults on the premises. 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.*

(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

(1) A sample of ten children's registration records were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a)-(i) was maintained for each child.

(3) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there was a record kept in writing of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualification, and experience of the person in charge and adults working were displayed on the wall of the care room for the attention of parents/guardians.
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered were displayed on the wall of the care room for the attention of parents/guardians.
- (c) details of the adult to child ratios in the service were displayed on the wall of the care room for the attention of parents/guardians.

- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service was displayed on the wall of the care room for the attention of parents/guardians.
- (e) the facilities available were displayed on the wall of the care room for the attention of parents/guardians.
- (f) the opening hours and fees were displayed on the wall of the care room for the attention parents/guardians.
- (g) the required policies, procedures and statements of the service were available on request.
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child were available in the care room.
- (i) details of staff rosters were available in the care room.
- (j) a book which details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent was inspected on the day. Four completed medication of administration records were reviewed. All details were included.
- (k) a book which details any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service was inspected on the day. Seven accident/incident records were reviewed. All details were included.
- (3) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

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) **Basic Needs:**

- Children brought snacks from home. Alternative snacks and drinks were available if required. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment. Children's own drinks were available within their reach throughout the session.
- Identity and belonging were promoted in the service. For example, there was a 'Family Wall' display, a 'Community Wall' display and the children's artwork was displayed throughout the care room. In addition, each child had their own labelled coat hook.
- There was a cosy area observed in the care room for the children to relax in as required. The cosy area was equipped with soft seating, soft cushions and a selection of books for reading and relaxation and each

child had their own soft padded cushion to sit on for story telling time. In addition, the outdoor area had a bench present for the children to sit and rest during outdoor play time.

- Children were observed to access the outdoor play area this supports their social, cognitive, gross and fine motor development.

Supporting Relationships:

- At snack time the children were observed to help set up the tables, this included the helper of the day giving out drinks and snacks. In addition, after snack time the children were asked to put away their lunch box and drink in their bag for going home time. This promoted independence.
- During snack time the staff engaged in social conversation with the children, promoting a relaxed atmosphere. In addition, children were given sufficient time to finish their snack.
- Language and literacy were supported in the care room through discussion and stories. For example, the staff member read a story book which was related to an art activity the children had prepared that morning. This promoted conversation and the children were observed to join in with actions and miming at story time and the children were given ample opportunity to ask questions during story telling time.
- The transition from one activity to the next was supported. There was a daily visual timetable displayed in the care room and staff were observed to give children verbal cues and chat to the children in advance about what activity was coming next.
- The service used an electronic communication application to communicate with parents daily and update them on their child's activities. The service had an 'Open Door' policy, and the inspector observed staff greeting parents who entered the care room at arrival time and staff updating parents verbally on their child's day in the service at collection time.
- Transition between home and the service were supported. The registered provider discussed how the service holds an 'Open Day' before the children began in the service. This provided the children with an opportunity to meet their new teacher and friends. In addition, the service has a settling in period during the first two weeks of term where parents/guardians are welcome to stay while their child settled in.
- There was evidence the service followed a weekly curriculum plan to meet the children's individual learning needs. In the care room, there was a short-term curriculum plan and staff discussed how this plan is developed based on the children's emerging interests.

Physical and Material Environment:

- There was a sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in the care room.
- There was a variety of play materials and equipment accessible and available to the children suitable to their age and stage of development. Materials and equipment were stored in photographic labelled boxes and were grouped thematically to include construction, connecting materials, toy animals, jigsaws, puzzles, building blocks, transport and music equipment. These materials and equipment encouraged independent spontaneous play experiences. In addition, there was a home area with a play kitchen with supporting equipment and dress up clothes and props available which encouraged imaginary play, conversation, and interactive play.
- An outdoor play area with a soft ground surface was available for the children. The equipment and toys available included planting pots, a slide, a construction table with props, a toy three storey carpark with a box of cars and an outdoor play kitchen with supporting equipment providing learning opportunities for children.

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 unannounced at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorised 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 unauthorised persons from gaining access to this area and to prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Staff were aware of choking hazards, including grapes. The inspector observed staff check containers at lunchtime for uncut grapes and any potential choking hazards.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Radiators were secured securely up high on the wall and were inaccessible to children.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of the reach to the children.

- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary area was equipped with liquid soap, warm water and hand drying facilities. The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.
- Toilet rolls and hand paper towels were hygienically dispensed.
- A pedal bin was evident within the care room and sanitary area.
- The window was open in the care room to allow fresh air to circulate.
- Perishable food items were observed to be stored in the fridge.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, it was observed that the emergency exit door was clear from obstruction. This helps ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency evacuation.

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) The service provided evidence that an adult was trained in First Aid Response was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school. Two adults trained in first aid response were present and working with the children on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the 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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drill took place on 17 September 2024.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced on 17 September 2024. Smoke alarms were serviced on 19 March 2024.
- (2)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- (4) Procedures detailing the steps to take in the event of a fire were displayed on the wall in the care room.

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 service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for eleven children the service is registered to cater for at each session with an expiry date of 27 March 2025.