

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D.: TU2015FL147

Name of Service Links Childcare

Address of Service: Abington Woods, Swords Road, Malahide, Dublin.
K36WV32

Email Address: gillian@linkschildcare.ie

Name of Registered Provider: Gillian Kelly

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	✓	Part-Time	✓	Sessional	✓
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change:	Change in number of children from 110 to 121 (Additional Room) Change in number of staff from 30 (as stated on register) to 20 staff
Proposed Number of Children:	121
Recommended Change Following Inspection:	121 Children, 20 Staff
Registered change:	Change in number of children from 110 to 121 children Change in number of staff from 30 (as stated on register) to 20 staff

Date of Inspection: 0 8 0 4 2 0 2 6

Inspection undertaken by: Y Kelly

Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5, The Nexus Building, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Ballycool, Dublin 15 D15CF9K

Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 121 Children
Date of Registration	22 May 2026

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Links Childcare is one of multiple services privately-owned and operated by the registered provider. This service operates as a full day care, part-time and sessional service and caters for children from 3 months of age until they commence attendance in primary school. The service operates from 7.30am to 6.30pm each weekday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.30am to 12.30pm daily for 38 weeks of the year. School-aged children up to 12 years of age are also accommodated in the service which operates for 51 weeks each year. The service is proposing to increase the number of children attending the service from 110 to 121 and to change the number of staff employed from 30 to 20.
Premises	The service is conducted from a purpose-built premises which is located on the ground floor of an apartment block in a residential setting in Malahide north county Dublin. The service consists of 6 care rooms, 2 sleep rooms, kitchen and an 'activity street' used as an additional dining and play area. An enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises. The service is proposing to provide 7 care rooms and 1 cot room, by converting 1 sleep room into a care room.
Staffing	There is a service Manager, Deputy Manager and an Assistant Manager employed in the service to coordinate the day-to-day operational management of the service. In total there is a staff team of 20 staff members. There is a chef employed to work in a catering capacity. The registered provider does not work in the service.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Methodology	The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises. The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the management team, 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.

Requirement met:

(1)(a) The requirement has been met.

There is a designated person in charge on a daily basis. There is a named person to deputise as required.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider is aware of the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in Part 2 of Schedule 6 and would ensure that an adequate number of adults would at all times work directly with the children in the service.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

(1) *Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—*

- (a) *having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*
- (b) *there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*

(3) *A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—*

- (a) *a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises or*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) The care rooms were resourced with a broad range of play materials and equipment to facilitate children to initiate and sustain meaningful play activities. Interest areas were clearly defined and included well-resourced home corners, with dress up materials, tabletop and small world areas, book and cosy corners, construction areas, arts and crafts and mark making areas. The play materials were stored on shelving and are visible and accessible to the children.

(b) Rest areas were available in the care rooms to enable a child to rest and take a break from activities throughout the day if required. These areas included a sofa, mats, rugs, cushions, and books for rest and relaxation. There is a cot room in the service with a total of 8 standard cots provided for a child aged less than 2 years to sleep in. In addition to this, 10 cocoon beds are provided for children aged 15 months and over who can use these beds based on their developmental needs and with parental agreement. There are 24 stackable beds available for pre-school children aged over 2 years of age who require sleep in the service.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

(3)(a) The service has a fully enclosed outdoor play area at the rear of the premises which is divided into three areas. Outdoor play areas included a large play boat, large play bus, playhouse and a wooden kitchen for dramatic and imaginative play. There was a large plastic slide with steps, a tunnel, small seesaw and ride on bikes which provided opportunities for challenge, risk and fundamental movement skills. There was a tuff tray with chalk for mark making. There were plastic building bricks for construction play and a soft mat for children to sit and relax. This area is secured and is surfaced with artificial grass.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

A three-week menu is available in the service to include breakfast, snack, dinner and tea for children attending on a full day care basis. Hot meals are cooked in the service kitchen by the chef.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

There are no hazards observed by the inspector that would impact the health, safety or welfare of the children attending the service. Appropriate measures have been undertaken in the service to ensure the safety of the children.

- Access to the service was through use of a fingerprint scanner or a bell in place at the entrance to the Early Years service and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

- The external doors, windows and outdoor play area were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- The furniture and equipment were in good condition and suitable for use by the proposed age groups.
- Cleaning agents were inaccessible to children and stored safely out of the reach of children.
- Thermostatically controlled running water was available at the wash hand basins in the service.
- The fire assembly point is clearly marked at the front of the service.
- The outdoor play area is fully enclosed and secured at the rear of the premises thus preventing a child from exiting the area.

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.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider has ensured that a person trained in first aid is available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. There is evidence available in the service to show that 4 staff members hold in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training. It is acknowledged that 1 staff member also holds current paediatric first aid training.

(2)(a)(b) First aid boxes were suitably equipped and stored in readily accessible and conspicuous positions on the premises and are available at all times for the children if necessary. There were 3 first aid boxes available in the Baby Room, laundry room and the kitchen.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) A record was maintained of fire drills which are completed on a monthly basis in the service. Written records of fire drills are kept. The last fire drill took place on the 06 March 2026.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. The fire extinguishers were serviced in January 2026, and the Fire Detection and Smoke Alarm System was serviced in March 2026.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire are displayed in the service.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

The registered provider ensured that the full day care service had adequate insurance cover for up to 121 children and is valid until 27 March 2026.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,
- (b) safe and secure,
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(a) The premises appeared to be in a good condition throughout.

(b) The premises appears safe and was found to be appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the Early Years' service. A fingerprint scanning system was in place at the entrance to the Early Years service.

(c)

Lighting:

The premises is adequately lit by means of natural lighting supplemented by artificial lighting.

Heating:

The premises is heated by a gas-fired central heating system with radiators throughout the building which are placed out of children's reach.

Ventilation:

Windows allow fresh air to circulate in the care rooms. There are air conditioning units in the cot room and the proposed Penguin Room (Room 7).

(d) The premises was in a clean condition and in a good state of repair. A pest control contract was in place in the service.

(e) Adequate and suitable sanitary accommodation including nappy changing facilities are available in the service.

- There is a nappy changing facility with 3 nappy changing mats and 1 adult sink adjoining Room 1, Jellyfish Room (Baby Room).

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

- There is a sanitary accommodation adjoining Room 3, Dolphin Room (Toddler Room) consisting of 2 nappy changing mats, 1 toilet and 1 wash hand basin.
- There is a sanitary accommodation adjoining Room 4, Seahorse Room (Pre-school Room) consisting of 2 toilets and 2 wash hand basins.
- There is a sanitary accommodation between Room 5, Starfish Room (Pre-school Room) and Room 6, Sea turtle/Whale Room consisting of 4 toilets and 4 wash hand basins.
- In total there were 7 toilets for children and 7 wash hand basins for children.
- There were 3 staff toilets, and 4 staff wash hand basins are provided in the service.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*
- (4) *Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides—*
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and*
 - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met. There is adequate clear floor space available for 121 children.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

(1) The registered provider ensured that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the service.

(2) The minimum amount of clear floor space is available in the care rooms as the table below demonstrates.

Room	*Clear floor space available
Room 1-Jellyfish Room (Baby Room)	31.23m ²
Room 2-Octopus Room (Wobbler Room)	43.48m ²
Room 3-Dolphin Room (Toddler Room)	41.97m ²
Room 4-Seahorse Room (Pre-school Room)	46.88m ²
Room 5-Starfish room (Pre-school Room)	46.66m ²
Room 6- Sea Turtle Room (Pre- school Room-AM) Whale Room (School Aged Children-PM)	45.69m ²
Room 7-The Penguin Room (Pre-school Room)	18.60m ²

*Based on Schedule 7 Minimum Space Requirements Full day care service or part-time day care service.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	The above table illustrates that the minimum clear floor space is available in the care rooms of the service to accommodate 121 children. (3) The registered provider ensured that a minimum space of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service on a sessional basis. (4)(a) The minimum clear floor space is available for the duration of the sessional pre-school service. (b) The minimum clear floor space is available for a full day care service or a part-time day care service.
--	--