

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL157
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Name of Service:	Little Apples Pre School
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Address of Service:	21 Riverwood Chase, Castleknock, Dublin 15
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Name of Registered Provider:	Judith Rogers
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Area 1 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Harte
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).

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Description of service

Little Apples Preschool is a privately owned sessional service located in a residential area of Dublin 15 and is operated from the registered provider's home. There is one large care room that leads directly to the outdoor area located at the back of the premises. The service is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 18 children aged 2 to 6 years old Monday to Friday on a sessional basis offering a morning and afternoon session.

Staffing

The registered provider employs two staff members to work in the service. On the day of the inspection the registered provider was present with two staff members, all work directly with the preschool 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.

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

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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*

(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-

- (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*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that;

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) Documentary evidence and conversation with staff showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.

(2) Following a review of the roster and conversation with the registered provider, it was established there were no staff new to the service since the last inspection held on the 05 December 2023 when all staff files were reviewed. Th garda vetting disclosures of three existing staff members were review.

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- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service to meet their care needs.
- (3) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Two staff were allocated to work directly with 10 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 following practices were observed in place to support the children attending:

- On arrival to the premises the atmosphere was calm and pleasant, this continued throughout the inspection. Staff used low tones and child friendly language when engaging with the children.
- Children had access to the outdoor area throughout the morning of the inspection and staff ensured they were appropriately dressed to play outside.
- Lunchtime was a social occasion as children sat with their peers and staff and joined in conversation. Staff assisted children to open their lunches as required.

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- Staff assisted a child who wanted to access their drink during play outdoors.
- Children were reminded about toileting and staff offered assistance as necessary.
- A small foot stool was present in the sanitary area to assist children reaching the toilet and sink. This supported independence and self-care skills.

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 service entrance was secured when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service. Entry was monitored and managed by the staff which restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The outdoor area was observed maintained and free from hazards.

Infection Control:

- Windows were open allowing fresh air to circulate.
- Children's lunch from home was observed to be appropriately refrigerated.
- The tables were disinfected following lunchtime.
- Children had individual drink beakers.
- A record of cleaning schedules was maintained and completed up to date.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff confirmed no child in attendance required emergency medication and none was stored on the premises.

Fire Safety:

- The fire evacuation procedure was clearly displayed.
- An accurate attendance record was maintained of children attending. This practice supports safe evacuation in the event of an emergency.

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Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The water temperature in both sanitary areas used by the children exceed 43°C and posed a potential risk of injury to children. This non-compliance was observed on the previous inspection. The preventative action was not maintained in line with the information provided to the inspectorate following the last inspection.
2. The radiator in the children's sanitary area closest to the garden had a surface temperature exceeding 43°C. This radiator is low level, uncovered and accessible to children. This posed a potential risk of injury.
3. Two large storage units present in the care room were not anchored to the wall and posed a potential risk of injury.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A qualified plumber attended the service and adjusted the hot water temperatures and scald prevention devices on both sinks located in the children's sanitary areas. The water temperatures are now within the recommended safe limits. Management will continue to monitor these areas daily to ensure compliance and the ongoing safety of all children attending the service.
2. The temperature on the radiator located in the children's sanitary area closest to the garden has also been adjusted to ensure the surface temperature no longer exceeds safe limits. Management will continue to monitor these areas daily to ensure compliance and the ongoing safety of all children attending the service.
3. The two large storage units located in the care room have now been securely anchored to the wall to eliminate any potential risk of injury to children. Management will continue to monitor these areas daily to ensure compliance and the ongoing safety of all children attending the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Invoice
- Photographic evidence

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance's identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed.

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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.*

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider did not ensure a person trained in first aid responder (FAR) was available to the children at all times during the operating hours of the service. On the day of the inspection there was no staff member present who held a valid FAR certificate. It is acknowledged there was a person present with an expired certificate.
- (2) (a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was not available. A review of the first aid box showed there was no burn dressings available. A suitably equipped first aid box including two burn dressings should be available at all times to support the care and safety of children attending the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) A First Aid Responder refresher course has now been booked. A note of all training will be monitored monthly.
- (2) (a)(b) Following the inspection burn dressings have now been purchased and added to the first aid box to ensure compliance with requirements. Burn dressings have been added to the First Aid checklist for monthly checks.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Receipt of booking
- Photographic evidence

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance's identified under Regulation 25 have been addressed. This will be reviewed on next inspection.