

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL180				
Name of Service:	Sutton Little People				
Address of Service:	33A Baldoyle Road, Sutton, Dublin 13.				
Eircode:	D13 H2R2				
Name of Registered Provider:	Brendan O'Brien				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	12/02/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>35</td> <td>PM</td> <td>35</td> </tr> </table>	AM	35	PM	35
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Harte and T. Nelson
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

Description of service

Sutton Little People is a privately operated childcare service based in a purposely adapted residential unit in Dublin 13. The service offers full day care to children aged 0-6 years from 7:30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE). There are five care rooms in the service namely Wobbler room 1 which caters for children aged 12-18 months, Wobbler room 2 which caters for children aged 18-24 months, Toddler room which caters for children aged 2-3 years, Junior Montessori room which caters for children aged 3-4 years and Senior Montessori room which caters for children aged 3-4 years. The service also has a kitchen, an office, staff room and the necessary sanitary facilities. An enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the service

Staffing

The registered provider employs nine staff all of whom were present on the day of inspection including the person in charge, 7 childcare staff and a cook. The registered provider does not work in the service but did attend the service briefly on the day of inspection.

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, safety, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations;

Regulation 11(1)(2); Staffing Levels,

Regulation 16 (1)(i); Records in relation to the preschool service,

Regulation 19(1)(b); Health, Welfare and Development of child,

Regulation 23; Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of child,

Regulation 26(1)(a)(b); Fire Safety Measures,

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 and Regulation 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Wobbler room 2 and the Toddler 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 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that an adequate number of staff were available to ensure the needs of the children were met at all times during the day. The following was observed;

- Between 8.45am-9.25am a staff member was not available to provide a warm greeting for children and families arriving to the service. Children were observed to walk themselves from the main entrance to their care rooms as staff waited by the edge of the care room doorway unable to leave the room.
- At 8.52am a toilet training child required assistance. A staff member exited a room to assist the child leaving two children in the care room unattended as no additional staff member was available to offer support. It is acknowledged the toilet is located in the hallway adjacent to the care room.
- Between 12.30pm -1.00pm five staff members were caring for 35 children aged between 1-4 years. Six staff members were required to meet the required ratios based on the individual ages of the children present.

(2) One staff member was caring for 6 children aged 1-2 years between 12.30pm -1.00pm who were sleeping in cot room 1 and cot room 2. Two adults were required based on the age of children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(2)

Interviews were held and two new staff members were hired by the company. These staff are due to start once garda vetting disclosures have been received. Communication with parents has confirmed a reduced attendance for the mid-term break over easter. Sutton Little People will ensure the correct adult to child ratio is met at all times. Sutton Little People will also ensure to plan ahead to cope with staff shortages should they arise.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Staff details.
- Creche schedule.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 11 remain outstanding until additional staff have begun working in the service. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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:

- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (i) A copy of the service roster which detailed the daily working hours and lunch breaks of each staff member was available.

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) Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed, as evidenced by the following:

- The staff interacted with the children in a calm and kind manner. Appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication such as low tones, eye level contact, smiling, touch and other strategies were observed. Staff used techniques such as labelling and repetition to support language development for young children.
- Children were observed to access the outdoor area on the day of the inspection providing opportunity for fundamental gross motor movements.
- Staff joined children at the table during mealtimes. A selection of fruit including apple, orange and banana was served at snack time. This was observed to be appropriately sliced for young children and additional portions were offered.
- Children's drinks were present during mealtimes and staff encouraged children to drink regularly during their meal.
- Staff responded promptly to a child who became upset. They offered hugs for comfort and the child's teddy from home.
- Children from the preschool room were observed toileting with the door closed over supporting privacy.

Non-Compliance Information

1. A staff member was observed to place a child into a cot for sleep while wearing a wet top. When the inspector brought it to the staff members attention the child's top was changed prior to them settling for sleep. Soiled clothing should be changed promptly to support the children's comfort throughout the day.
2. Nappy changing practices carried out in the Wobbler 1 sanitary area did not protect the privacy and dignity of the children. The door to the Wobbler 1 sanitary area remained fully open during nappy changing practices and the children were visible to passersby in the corridor.

- Two children who transitioned from the Wobbler 2 room to the Toddler room did not have a comfortable mealtime experience. The children were positioned at a table which reached chest height when the children sat down and was not suitable to their size. Suitably sized furniture supports the children's comfort and self-care skills such as feeding.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- A meeting was held with the registered provider, manager of the service and staff member. The staff member has been made aware of the error made on the day of inspection and is aware to check children's clothes thoroughly before nap times. All staff members have been reminded to thoroughly check children's clothing and to change if wet or dirty to support the children's comfort throughout the day.
- The sanitary area for the wobbler 1 room is now being closed over during nappy changes to protect the privacy and dignity of the children. Communication has been made to all staff members to close over the door during nappy changing times. A sign has also been put up outside the sanitary area to close the door while in use.
- We have begun to use highchairs for children who are too small for the toddler room chairs during mealtimes to ensure they have a positive, comfortable mealtime experience perfect for their height. To prevent this happening again, communication was given to all staff members to be aware of this if children need to go to different rooms for any mealtimes.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Record of staff communication.
- Signage.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance's identified under Regulation 19 have been addressed.

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 secure on arrival this prevented unauthorised persons entering the building and prevented children leaving the building unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents were safely stored and inaccessible to children.
- No trailing flexes or cables were observed.
- Finger pinch protectors were observed on doors

Infection Control:

- Children's drink beakers were individually labelled.
- Children were supported with handwashing promoting effective hand hygiene practices.
- Waste was inaccessible and foot pedal bins were observed in the sanitary areas supporting infection control practices.
- Nappy changing mats were observed to be in good condition and suitable for use.

Safe Sleep:

- An ambient room temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in rooms where children over 1 year of age were sleeping.
- Staff were observed completing physical sleep checks and maintained a record that was populated at the time of check.

Fire Safety:

- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the service.
- Fire exits were observed unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The water temperature in the sanitary area used by Senior Montessori and the Wobbler 2 sanitary area was not maintained at maintained at 43°C or less to prevent scalds. The following was observed:
 - Water temperature in Senior Montessori sanitary area at 2:00pm was 45°C

- Water temperature in Wobbler 2 sanitary area at 1.37pm sink 1 was 44.8°C and sink 2 was 45.6°C
- 2. A staff handbag was accessible to children stored in an unlocked press in the Wobbler 1 room which posed a potential risk of injury.

Infection Control:

- 3. A staff member was observed to blow on children's food during a mealtime. This posed a risk of cross contamination.
- 4. A storage unit in the Wobbler 1 room sanitary area was observed damaged with chipboard exposed. This prevented effective cleaning and posed an infection control risk.
- 5. A mattress used during sleep time for a child from the Wobbler 2 room was not fitted with a protective cover or waterproof wipeable lining which prevented adequate cleaning and posed an infection control risk.

Fire Safety:

- 6. Attendance records were not maintained in a clear and concise manner to reflect the children present. Children were observed to be recorded in multiple attendance records which led to confusion for staff. During discussion with the inspector the staff were unclear on which children they had present in their care. This posed a safety risk in the event of an emergency.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- 1. At present to immediately rectify the potential risks of scald's we have the Senior Montessori children using the other 3 available sanitary areas for the time being. We have our builder maintenance man coming to the service to assess and give advice on how to control the water temperature. Water temperature readings will be carried out.
- 2. The staff member has been made aware of the potential risk of injury with an exposed bag left accessible for the children. Since the inspection a new lock for the press has been provided. To prevent this from occurring again all staff have been reminded to put their belongings upstairs in the staff room.

Infection Control:

- 3. To correct this situation immediately a meeting was held with the staff member about the importance of cross contamination was discussed and a clear understanding has been made between the staff member,

service provider and manager. All staff members have been reminded to avoid blowing on the children's food posing the risk of cross contamination.

4. To immediately rectify this non-compliance the exposed chipboard was sealed in order to prevent the risk of infection control. To prevent this non-compliance reoccurring again the cleaning sheet for general area including changing room have been updated to check for any exposed chipboard.
5. Extra mattress protectors were purchased by the service. To prevent this non-compliance from reoccurring again staff members have been advised to let creche manager know if replacement mattress protectors are needed in order to have a sufficient amount at all times for all cot-beds.

Fire Safety:

6. To immediately correct this non-compliance a transfer sheet for each attendance record book in our service was created. This transfer sheet is used throughout the day should children change or move rooms. To prevent this non-compliance reoccurring again in the future the creche manager will monitor the use of attendance records and transfer sheets in order to have no safety risk in the event of an emergency and to also have a clear understanding of where children are at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographic evidence.
- Record of staff communication.

Infection Control:

- Photographic evidence.
- Record of staff communication.
- Receipt.
- Cleaning record.

Fire Safety:

- Template transfer sheet.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the action and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed.

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 firefighting 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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that the following records were maintained;
- (a) A record of monthly fire drills showed that the last fire drill had taken place on 8th January 2025.
 - (b) A record of servicing and maintenance for the firefighting equipment was serviced on 5th February 2025 while the smoke alarms were serviced on the 31st January 2025.