

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL195
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Wonders Pre-School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Hyde Park FC, Balbriggan Town Park, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	K32 X251
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Laura Housely
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	15/01/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	AM Coyle
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

Little wonders Preschool is a sessional preschool service which has been in operation since 2013. The service is located in the clubhouse of Hyde Park Football club which is situated to the rear of Glebe North football club in the centre of Balbriggan, north Dublin and has exclusive use of the football clubhouse during the operational hours of the service. The service provides sessional preschool care and education to children from 2 years until they commence attendance at primary school participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9:30am to 12:30pm Monday to Friday. An outdoor area is located to the side of the service.

### Staffing

The registered provider and three staff members work directly with the pre-school children in the service. Two staff members are employed in the service to reduce the adult to child ratio, and when necessary, to work with children with additional needs, in posts funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.

### 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 9,11, 15, 19, 23,24, 25 and 29. however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 – record of pre-school child.

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*

*(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge of the service.
- (b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection.

The files for 4 staff members including the registered provider and 3 staff members who work directly with the children were reviewed.

- (2) (a)&(b) Two validated written references were available for all staff members whose files were reviewed.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 4 staff members whose files were reviewed.
- (3) Not applicable as following a review of the staff files it was confirmed that no staff members had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.
- (4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 4 staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with the children in the service held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications 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.*

*(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.*

*(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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratio was correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- There were 14 pre-school children aged 3 years 4 months to 5 years being cared for by 4 staff members.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times, verified by the staff roster maintained at the service.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sampling process was used in relation to the children's records. All 7 sampled registration forms were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

### 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;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

*(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)(h) The children's attendance was recorded on a daily basis in the service.

## Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) In respect of 2 staff members, there was no recorded history of past employment and relevant experience available for inspection. Therefore, it was not possible to determine whether the available references had been obtained from their most recent employers in accordance with Regulation 9(2)(a), (b) and (d).

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective Action

(1)(a)

Regarding information on staff manager now has references in place and validated. Along with CVs.

### Preventive Action

(1)(a)

Manager will continue to make sure that there will always be 2 references in place and validated along with CVS on all staff members.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Two Curriculum vitae.

## Summary Comment

The evidence submitted by the registered provider in relation to regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service has been reviewed and accepted.

### 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) Each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service in relation to the following:

##### Basic needs:

- On arrival, the children attending were engaged in meaningful play-based activities. The staff members were present and joining in with the children's play, providing encouraging and nurturing interactions to children and supporting them to locate and set up materials to extend their play. Children appeared comfortable and confident to make choices about their learning, and the staff members were responsive to the children's ideas and requests.
- Parents of the children provide food for snack time. The staff members sat with the children engaging them in conversation whilst they enjoyed their morning snack helping and support to the children as needed.
- The children were accompanied to the sanitary facilities in the adjoining corridor by one of the staff members when they needed to use the bathroom. Children who required nappy changing were attended to promptly.
- A comfortable rest area comprising of a low sized corner couch in addition to a tented area with cushions and soft toys was available for the children to take a break from activities.
- The staff members were observed supporting the children's choice when they chose to change or opt out of activities. For example, after morning snack the majority of the children engaged in play-based activities in an area of the care room, two children who chose not to engage in this play activity were readily facilitated to engage in an alternative play option.

##### Supporting relationships around children:

- The 4 staff members were consistent in their interactions with the children, providing regular praise and encouragement, asking open ended questions to give the children opportunity to express themselves and their feelings and ensuring that each child in the session was happy and engaged in activity.

Children were also spoken about with positivity, and the staff members demonstrated awareness and understanding about children who needed additional help and support to participate in their preschool experience in a meaningful way. These practices and attitudes support children to feel safe, secure and respected.

- The children appeared confident and relaxed in their environment and were observed naturally forming small groups and engaging in a range of tabletop and floor play activities during the inspection.
- The staff members were observed to communicate well with each other regarding the children's needs, this supports the provision of consistent care for children.
- The staff members were observed taking the opportunities to interact with parents at collection time and update them on their children's day in the service.

### **Physical and material environment:**

- In the care room resources were easily available and accessible on low level shelving. The children demonstrated familiarity with navigating their environment to access the toys and play resources they chose to play with.
- The care room was bright and visually appealing with play materials and equipment which were well organised within the various areas of interest in the room. Areas of interest within the room included a home area with a well-resourced kitchen, an assortment of dolls, doll care items, a dressing table, hair care and make up items along with dress up materials all of which supported the children's imaginary play. Transportation toys including a range of cars and trains were provided alongside a play garage and a large wooden tepee. A sensory table containing dried rice provided the children with the opportunity for sensory play and a wide selection of books supported the children's language development which was further enhanced by storytelling and singing.
- An enclosed outdoor area to the side of the service is available for the children to use. The area is surfaced with grass and provided space for running and free movement. Additional play resources are brought to the area for the children to use.

### 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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children on high shelving and in locked cupboards.
- The service's designated emergency exits were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided to support effective hand hygiene in the sanitary accommodation in the service.
- With the exception of the non-compliance identified below, the children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating and after the use of the toilet.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. A trampoline was available and in use in the care room, this is a safety risk.

##### Infection Control:

2. A pedal-operated bin was not available for the disposal of nappies in the sanitary accommodation where nappy changing took place.
3. The services nappy changing policy was observed not to be followed as evidenced by the following:
  - Children did not have their hands washed following nappy changing.
  - The staff member did not wash her hands following each nappy change.
  - A staff member did not wear a disposable apron when changing children's nappies.
4. The children's lunches were not placed in the fridge on the children's arrival to the service This increased the risk of bacteria multiplying to levels which could result in food poisoning.

5. The paper towel in the service was not hygienically dispensed. The roll of paper was subject to repeated handling, this is an infection control risk.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective Action

##### General Safety:

1. Manager removed the trampoline after the inspector left on the day.

##### Infection Control:

2. Manager has replaced the nappy bin for a pedal bin.
3. Generally it is common practice for staff to wash hands after changing a nappy and wear aprons when changing nappies, however the staff in question while she did wear gloves she was nervous and did not wash hands or wear an apron which was provided.
4. Staff did neglect to put lunches into the fridge.
5. Registered provider has purchased a hand roll dispenser for the children to take for themselves in order to stop more hands on the paper.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of pedal operated bin.

Photograph of paper towel dispenser.

#### Summary Comment

The evidence submitted by the registered provider in relation to regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child has been reviewed and accepted.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The service maintained accurate details of the children's attendance during the inspection. Throughout the care rooms in the service the attendance records were accurately maintained to reflect the children in attendance.

### 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) A person trained in first aid including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service as evidenced in the staff roster and the in-date FAR certification provided for inspection.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions on the premises, out of the reach of children.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*
- (b) safe and secure,*
  - (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*

#### Compliance Information

- (b) The premises appeared safe, and the front door and side gate were 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.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (c) The ambient temperature in the care room and in the sanitary accommodation was below the optimum care room temperature of 18-22°C, with the temperature maintained between 12 – 13.5°C for the duration of the inspection.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) Registered Provider did apply for a grant from DCYA to install a heating system, but unfortunately, she was refused. It was extremely cold on the day of inspection. However, now they have more heaters, and it is warm.

### Preventive Action

(c) Registered provider will continue to apply for grants to get heating installed and make it their business to make sure the environment is warm.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Record of ambient air temperatures of care room indicating that temperature is maintained at 18- 20 °C

Photograph of additional heaters in care room.

## Summary Comment

The evidence submitted by the registered provider in relation to regulation 29 - Premises has been reviewed and accepted.