

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL270
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Name of Service:	Small World Pre School
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Address of Service:	Phibblestown Community Centre, Phibblestown Road, Ongar, Dublin 15
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Eircode:	D15 XT85
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Name of Registered Provider:	Bernie Smith
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	25/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	N/A
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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, D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	JA. McKimm
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

Small World Preschool is one of three services owned by the registered provider, which provides a sessional service for children aged between two years and six years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. The service is located on the first floor of a community centre.

This service is currently operating from 9.00 am to 12:30 pm There are three care rooms -the Red Butterfly room, the Yellow Butterfly room and the Caterpillar room. In addition, the service has a sensory room and an indoor hall which is accessed weekly and daily access to an astroturf pitch, a basketball court and an enclosed outdoor play space. There is sanitary accommodation for children on the first floor and sanitary accommodation and a staff room on the ground floor.

Staffing

The registered provider who is the person in charge employs a total of thirteen staff to work in the service. This includes a deputy person in charge, one ancillary staff member who works as cleaner and eleven early years practitioners. On the day of inspection the registered provider, the deputy person in charge and eight early years practitioners.

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.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Records of a preschool 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.

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Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN0261	25/05/2026	Translated police vetting was not available for one staff member who had direct access to children and was working directly with children.
Status	Action was taken by the registered provider immediately following the service of the Immediate Action Notice. The provider submitted a detailed response with corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate. This statutory notice is closed	
Improvement Notice IN0270	25/05/2026	The registered provider did not ensure the safe administration of emergency medication which posed a significant risk of safety.
Status	Action was taken by the registered provider immediately following the service of the Notice and the provider submitted a detailed response with corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate. This statutory notice is closed	

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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 if required.
 - (b) A named person in charge or a person to deputise is rostered to be on the premises at all times during the service opening hours.
 - (c) Staff were clear around their roles and responsibilities and reporting structures within the service.
- (2) A review of paperwork and discussion with management showed that there are currently thirteen adults employed by the registered provider to work within the service and that six new staff members have been employed since the last inspection. These staff files were reviewed. Garda vetting for the registered provider

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and seven adults with expired garda vetting was also reviewed. In addition, garda vetting was reviewed for the external contractor who was present in the service on the day of inspection.

- (a) There were eleven written and validated references available from a past employer.
 - (b) There was one written and validated reference from a person other than a previous employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for fifteen adults. However, one vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that the five adults employed within the service to provide direct care to the children whose records were reviewed, held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Ireland Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (d) See Statutory Notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IAN 0261 served.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children throughout the inspection. There were nine adults caring for thirty-three children on the morning of inspection.
- (2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children.

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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-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (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 a full record (1) (a-i) was maintained for each child.

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

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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

The following activities, interactions, materials and equipment was observed to support children's learning and development;

Basic Needs

- Children's needs were met in a warm caring responsive manner, as a result children were observed to be confident in their environment for example, they showed the inspector their artwork and were keen to talk about their day.
- Children's sense of identity was promoted throughout the care rooms. For example, there was a 'birthday date' display, the artwork of the children was displayed throughout the care rooms, and children had their own individually labelled coat hooks.
- Snack time was observed to be a social experience as children sat with both staff and their peers. Children brought their snacks from home and were given ample time to enjoy their snack.

Supporting Relationships

- Children's autonomy and independence was promoted. For example, children were encouraged to engage in various jobs for example helping with hand washing routines and giving out snacks to other children before snack time.
- Staff actively engaged with the children throughout the day and joined them in conversation and play. The interactions were calm and pleasant. For example, activity times and snack times were observed to be sociable events and staff chatted amicably with the children.
- Staff were observed to speak to each other in respectful and warm manner.
- Staff discussed how parents are welcomed into the service. The inspector observed staff to chat with parents at arrival and collection times.

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Physical and Material Environment

- The furniture provided in the rooms was low level and appropriate for children attending, with toys, equipment and play materials easily accessible and visible to the children which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- There was a variety of age-appropriate play materials available to the children to support a range of play experiences such as role and imaginary play, small world play, construction and mark making.
- The children accessed a range of outdoor play spaces on the morning of inspection including an astroturf pitch, an enclosed outdoor play space and indoor hall.
- Children played on the astroturf pitch with a range of outdoor toys to facilitate physical play experiences including hula hoops, soft balls and bubbles. The enclosed outdoor play area with a soft ground surface was also accessed by the children. Equipment and toys available included an outdoor play kitchen with props, a sand pit and slides.

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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspector, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured with keypad access to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The enclosed outdoor play areas were secured reducing the risk of unauthorised access. Children who were brought out to the outdoor play areas from indoors were observed to be supervised.
- Cleaning products were inaccessible to children.
- The care rooms remained closed with an internal lock fitted and in use throughout the inspection therefore preventing children from exiting the service into the adjoining corridors unsupervised.
- Resources for play in the care room were maintained and suitable for use.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Children lunches brought from home containing perishable items were appropriately refrigerated.

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- Warm running water, liquid soap and single use paper towels were in use throughout the service for hand washing purposes, ensuring good hand-washing practices. Children were observed to wash their hands before snack time.
- Foot operated pedal bins were observed to be used by children and staff for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities.

Administration of Medication:

- No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- The emergency evacuation exits were observed to be unobstructed throughout the inspection. The children's attendance book was monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present. This ensured a safe evacuation of the children and staff in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for a staff member. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'. This posed a safeguarding risk. It is acknowledged an application for renewal had been submitted.

Infection Control:

2. A centre square of the flooring in all three care rooms had a sticky residue and an indentation where dust and dirt had accumulated which posed an infection control risk to children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Service is awaiting garda vetting for staff member to be processed. The management team have developed a document to track the Garda Vetting expiry dates for all staff members. This document will be monitored regularly to ensure that renewal applications are submitted at least three months prior to the expiring date, helping to maintain compliance and minimize the risk of delays in the vetting process.

Infection Control:

2. The centre square of flooring in all rooms has been thoroughly cleaned. The existing tape used to secure the square was removed, the space was vacuumed, cleaned and new tape has been applied to ensure a clean and

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tidy finish. To help maintain the condition of the area, mats have now been placed over this area. These areas will be monitored closely and included on daily checklist risk assessment checklists.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Evidence outstanding.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the corrective and preventive actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under regulation 23 will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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) There was documentary evidence to show that four adults held certification in First Aid Response training and that one adult was rostered to be available at all times to the children attending the preschool.

(2) (a)(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available to the adults caring for the children and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the care room.