

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL335
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Name of Service:	Tyrrelstown's Little Stars Crèche and Montessori
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Address of Service:	Unit 1 Block A The District Centre The Plaza town Centre, Tyrrelstown Town Centre, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ewa Hetnal
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/04/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	36	PM	36
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne & E Griffin
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.
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Description of service

Tyrrelstown Little Stars Creche and Montessori was established in 2012. It is one of 4 services owned by the registered provider. This service provides full day care and sessional care to pre-school children from 0-6 years. The service operates from 7.00am-6.30pm. The service has 5 care rooms: Wobbler room (18months -2years), Playgroup Junior room (2 - 2.5years), Playgroup Senior room (2.5years - 3years), Pre Montessori room (2 years 8 months to 4 years 6 months) and Montessori Room (3 - 5 years). The service has one sleep room with seven cots. There is one enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the premises which the children have daily access. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE).

Staffing

On the day of Inspection, the person in charge, ten childcare staff, one staff employed under the Access Inclusion Model (AIM) and one chef were present. The person in charge was present in a supportive role to all care rooms and the registered provider was not present 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 the regulations.

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4)

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(2)(8)

Regulation 16 Record in relation to Preschool service (h), (i), (j), (k)

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

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

Regulation 29 Premises (c)

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 Record in relation to Preschool service, and Regulation 23 - Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child and Regulation 11- Staffing Levels was assessed across all of the open rooms on the day of inspection.

The scope of the inspection included two rooms – Wobbler room and Montessori room and did not include the Playgroup Junior room, Playgroup Senior room or Pre Montessori 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.

Additional Information

03/04/24

An Immediate Action notice was issued to the service in relation to the following:

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child.

The water in the wash hand basin in the Montessori room was not thermostatically controlled. Please see details in the body of the report.

04/04/24

The registered provider responded addressing the non-compliance.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

(2) The files of 16 staff members were reviewed as part of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b) Thirty-two written and validated references were available in relation to the 16 staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 16 staff members employed. The service also demonstrated compliance, with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for eight staff members who have lived outside the State for longer than six months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the 15 staff members who worked directly with children attending the service held a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

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 were 12 adults, including the person in charge working with 36 children.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection.

Room	Type of Service	Age Range in Years	Children Present	Adults Present	Minimum number of adults required
Wobbler room	FDC	1 year 6 months to 2 years	5 *FDC	1	1
Playgroup Room Junior	FDC	2 years to 2 years 6 months	5 *FDC	1	1
Playgroup Room Senior	FDC	2 years 6 months to 3 years	6 * FDC	1	1
Pre Montessori-Room	FDC	2 years 8 months to 4 years 6 months	8 * FDC	2	1
Montessori Room	FDC	3 years to 5 years	12 * FDC	3	2

The person in charge was available to provide support to the care rooms during care routines including mealtimes, sleep times and nappy changing.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that two adults were always present on the premises.

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.
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent.
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (i) Details of staff rosters on a daily basis were available on the day of inspection.
- (k) Twelve accident and incident forms were reviewed and were completed in full.

Non-Compliance Information

- (j) On review of nine medication administration forms with a total of 50 single medicine administrations, the following information was missing:
- No parental preconsent form available for the administration of one prescribed medication administered to a child on arrival to the service.
 - Parent preconsent signature on the medication administration form was missing on two forms.
 - Parent signature to acknowledge administration of medication was missing on three forms for 10 single medicine administrations.
 - The second staff witness signature was missing on one form for one administration.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(j) All medicine administration forms were updated with missing signatures. The service has reviewed their policies with staff and appointed a senior member of staff to ensure all forms are signed. Parents will be reminded daily, through the service electronic application about a form to be signed.

Supporting documentation submitted

(j) Evidence of training completed by staff submitted

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 16, the non-compliance outlined above has been addressed.

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)

Basic Needs:

- The service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals and a hot meal to the children. On the day of inspection, the inspectors observed a morning snack of fruit - apple, banana, oranges and watermelon at 10am, a hot meal of chicken casserole, with rice and vegetables was served at 11.50am in the care rooms, afternoon snack was planned for 2.30pm. Extra food and different dietary requirements were available if required.
- Water was available in each care room for the children to drink.
- Mealtimes observed were relaxed and sociable events for the children with time given to sit at low tables appropriate to their ages, to eat meals with care and attention provided to each child supporting independence and wellbeing.
- Nappy changing and toileting were respectful and positive experiences for the children, and staff were observed to encourage the children to be independent in managing their personal care such as handwashing.
- Children's need for sleep and rest were met through the provision of comfortable rest areas available. Cots and low beds with individual bedding were available to the children who required sleep and the rooms were darkened to provide for a restful environment.
- Children had access to the outdoor play area during the day of inspection.

Supporting Relationships:

- During lunch time, staff were observed to sit with the children while they ate their lunch creating a relaxed and social environment promoting social interaction.

- Staff were observed to be interested in the children and their play, and interacted with them in a playful, engaging manner. They were responsive to the children and were observed to give them choices regarding their play activities.

Physical and Material Environment

- The rooms were bright and inviting play spaces.
- The furniture provided in the rooms was low level and appropriate for the children attending. The toys, equipment and play materials were easily accessible and visible to the children, this nurtured children's independence and ability to make decisions.
- The care rooms in the service were designed with the age and stage of development having been taken into consideration. Children were observed to take part in free play and group work for example in the Montessori room, animal rescue extended to animal drawing followed by animal play setting up a jungle ending with animals in water. The layout of the rooms facilitated choices as the toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and were visible and accessible to the children. The Montessori room had a sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played, completed tabletop activities and ate in the room. Cosy areas of soft floor mats or rugs with cushions and books in good condition for rest and relaxation were present. There was equipment to reflect the children's interests and their emergent curriculum.
- The play materials and equipment were stored in boxes and on low shelves to include: arts and crafts materials directly accessible to the children; home areas with play kitchens with supporting equipment and play food, play washing machine, cash register , range of construction toys to include wooden puzzles, plastic building bricks, stickle bricks, connects, building blocks, work bench with play work tools; toys for transporting such as cars, trucks, trains with train tracks and small world play toys of dolls houses with furniture, animals and dinosaurs; for imaginary play dress up clothes, instruments.
- The outdoor play environment to the rear of the premises was fully enclosed and surfaced with artificial grass divided into two areas; - In area 1, the equipment and toys available included two slides, a tunnel, balancing plank, tyres as a climbing frame, water sensory play toy on wall, chalkboard on wall, a mud kitchen and sand pit with supporting equipment and in area 2 for younger children a playhouse , a small slide, sensory table ; all providing learning opportunities for children.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The inspector observed several battery-operated toys in the Wobbler room not working, which included music teddy, activity centre of a walker and two battery operated books, stand up bear and a toy guitar which reduced the play experience for the children. This was a non-compliance from the last inspection 4th April 2023 and the CAPA action has not been sustained.
2. While it is acknowledged there was a family wall display on the wall of the Wobbler room, it was not displayed at a height visible to the children in this care room, limiting the availability to the children and no Family or Birthday books were available in this room. This was a non-compliance from the last inspection 4th April 2023 and the CAPA action has not been sustained.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Batteries replaced, switch off/on buttons double checked, if working. Daily check list for battery operated toys added to the morning check list routine. Senior member of staff will review check lists are completed weekly.
2. Family and Birthday Books updated and placed at level available for the children of the Wobbler room. During monthly inhouse room inspections, the service manager will make sure all Family and Birthday Books are updated, in good condition and available to children at their level at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Copy of Daily Checklist submitted.
2. Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 19, the non-compliances outlined above 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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- Emergency exits in the service were clear and unobstructed.
- The safety devices were secured on all the windows of the Wobbler, Playgroup Junior and Playgroup Senior rooms.
- All flexes were secure and safely out of reach of children.
- The temperature of the care rooms was maintained within the recommended ambient temperature of 18 - 22°C.
- The outdoor area was enclosed securely.
- The outdoor play equipment and materials were observed to be safe and suitable for use by the children.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included soap and paper towels.
- Nappy changing facilities were available for the children and nappy changing was completed for the children, at set times or when required in accordance with the service policy.
- Seven mattresses had removeable wipeable covers present.

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep needs for children under two years of age, were facilitated with access to cots for sleep.
- The sleep needs of children over two years of age were met through the provision of low beds.
- Shoes and clothing were removed from children while they slept.
- Children were provided with cellular blankets for sleep.
- 10-minute sleep checks were completed for each child's position, colour and breathing pattern.

Fire Safety:

- Fire Drill records showed that the service had completed monthly fire drills, the last fire drill took place on the 28th of March 2024.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Thermostatically controlled warm water was not available in the Montessori room, the temperature of the water recorded by the inspector was 54.7° C at 10.51am, this exceeds the recommended hot water temperature of 50°C maximum, which posed a risk to the safety of children as two children were observed to use this sink at 11.25am to wet sponges to clean chalk boards. An Immediate Action Notice was issued and response from the registered provider received.
2. Children attendance books were not monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present in each care room as follows:
 - In the Wobbler room, there were five children observed to be present at 10.48am. On review of the attendance book there were only four children marked in as present. The staff member was unsure of which child had not been marked in.
 - During sleep time in the service, the following was observed :
 - At 12pm, two children from the Pre Montessori room and one child from the Playgroup senior room who did not sleep were moved to the Montessori room and were not noted in the Montessori attendance book as being present in this room and were not marked out of the care rooms they came from.
 - At 12.06pm, one child who left the Montessori room to sleep in the Pre Montessori room was not marked out of the Montessori room or noted as being present in the Pre Montessori room.

This reduced the effective evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Infection Control:

3. Thermostatically controlled warm water was not available in the Playgroup senior room, the temperature of the water recorded by the inspector was 13.1° C at 15.36pm. Cold water is not conducive to effective handwashing.
4. In the Wobbler room, handwashing was not observed after outdoor play or before and after mealtimes.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Thermostat checks were added to morning check list. These check lists will be reviewed by the service manager, weekly to ensure these have been completed.
2. All staff was reminded about proper attendance record keeping for all children at the service through the day. The Service manager will ensure to check attendance records are kept up to date, daily.

Infection Control:

3. Thermostat checks were added to morning check list. These check lists will be reviewed by the service manager, weekly to ensure these have been completed.
4. On 22 April 2024, the hand washing policy was given and reviewed by staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Copy of daily checklist and water temperature record submitted.
2. Evidence of training completed by staff submitted.

Infection Control:

3. Copy of daily checklist and water temperature record submitted.
4. Evidence of training completed by staff submitted.

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 23, the non-compliances outlined above have been addressed.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(d) The service was observed to be clean, maintained and repaired as required, for example:

- In the outdoor play area, the artificial grass surface was observed to be even and all areas fully accessible to children.
- The countertop around the four wash hand basins in the sanitary facilities of the service was clean, washable or wipeable and in good repair.

(e) The service was observed to be equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities, for example:

- Thermostatically controlled running water was available in the four hot taps of four newly installed wash hand basins in sanitary facility of the service since the last inspection on 4th April 2024.