

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:	15/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	32	PM	31
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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 Hosford
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 is registered to operate from 7.00am to 6.30pm but is currently operating from 7.00am to 6.00pm. The service has 5 care rooms: Wobbler 1 room (1 year to 2years), Wobbler 2 room (2 years to 3 years), Playgroup room (2 years to 3 years), Pre Montessori 1 room (3 years to 5 years) and Pre Montessori 2 Room (3years to 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.

Staffing

The registered provider, person in charge, six childcare staff, one staff employed under the Access Inclusion Model (AIM), a chef and a maintenance person are employed in the service. The registered provider and person in charge were not assigned to a care room but were available to assist staff and children when required. One transition year student on work experience was 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 9, 11, 19, 23, 25 and 26.

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child.

Regulation 11 Staffing levels was assessed across all rooms.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Playschool room and Preschool 2 room, it did not include Wobbler 1 room. Wobbler 2 room and Preschool 1 room were closed.

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 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 registered provider confirmed that there were four new childcare staff employed since the last inspection on 3 April 2024. The files of the four new childcare staff, the maintenance person and one student and Garda vetting disclosures for 11 staff were reviewed.

(a) Six validated written references were available from a past employer.

(b) Six validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 11 adults employed in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for four adults employed in the service who had lived outside of the state for six consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to demonstrate that four adults working directly with children in the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) The registered providers ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service. On the morning of the inspection there were 9 adults working directly with 32 children aged between 1 to 6 years and in the afternoon of the inspection there were 8 adults working with 31 children aged from 1 to 6 years.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection, as follows:

- In the Wobbler 1 room, there were 5 children aged 1 year to 2 years being cared for by 1 adult, in the morning and in the afternoon.
- In the Playschool room, there were 10 children aged 2 years to 3 years being cared for by 2 adults in the morning and one student and by 2 adults in the afternoon.
- In Preschool 2 room, there were 17 children aged 3 years to 5 years being cared for by 4 adults in the morning and 3 adults and one student in the afternoon.

The registered provider and the person in charge were present and available in a supernumerary role to support for care rooms, nappy changes and breaks.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured, and the weekly staff roster demonstrated that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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:

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

(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.

(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 details of the children attending the service to include their time of arrival and departure were recorded accurately.

(i) A staff roster was available, and it reflected the staff present in the service, lunch and break cover.

(j) Details of 10 medication administration records were reviewed and the required information was recorded.

(k) Details of 10 accident and incident records were reviewed, and the required information was recorded.

(3) The required records were available to the inspectors during the inspection.

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

Basic Needs:

- The service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals and a hot meal to the children. Breakfast is served 7.00am to 9.00am and morning snack at 10.00am. On the day of inspection, the inspector observed a hot meal served at 11.30am in the care rooms cooked by the chef, which was pasta, tomato sauce and cheese. At 2.30pm, afternoon tea was served which was ham and cheese sandwiches, with yogurts and fruit. Additional portions and alternative food were available to the children when required
- Water was available in each care room for the children to drink.
- The transitions between activities such as sleep time, mealtimes, free play and outdoor play were observed to be calm and relaxed.
- Cots and low beds with individual bedding were available to the children who required sleep. The cot room and playgroup room were darkened to provide for a restful environment.
- Children had access to the outdoor play area during the day of inspection.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed to be engaged with and sit with the children during play time and have positive interactions during play activities of playdough and supporting equipment. They were responsive to the children and were observed to give them choices regarding their play activities.
- Staff were observed to have respectful, warm and responsive interactions with the children through the use of clear directions, soft tones and positive non-verbal communication strategies such as being at the children's level.
- Communication with Parents is through electronic application, email, newsletter and with verbal updates at drop off and pick up times.

Physical and Material Environment

- 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. Sufficient number of low tables and chairs to

accommodate children whilst they played, completed tabletop activities and ate in the room were available. Child sized furniture supported children's independence.

- Family and Birthday wall displays and books were available to the children providing a sense of identity and belonging.
- The materials and equipment provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment available to them.
- Battery operated toys were in working order for children to enjoy their cause and effect.
- Cosy areas were present in the Playschool room and the Preschool 2 room offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day.
- The outdoor play environment to the rear of the premises was fully enclosed, with an artificial grass surface. Materials available included climbing frames, slides, balls, a tunnel, balancing plank, tyres as a climbing frame, chalkboard on wall, a mud kitchen and sand pit with supporting equipment, all providing learning opportunities for children

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.
- No trailing flexes were observed in the service.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- Blind cords for blinds on windows were observed to be safe and out of reach.
- Room temperatures were kept between the recommended 18 °C to 22°C.
- The outdoor area was a safe and secure environment with play equipment and materials clean, in good condition and suitable for use by the children.
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Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition throughout, with the premises and equipment observed to be visually clean.
- At all handwashing facilities for hand hygiene in the service thermostatically controlled warm water, soap and paper towels and pedal operated lidded bins for disposal of paper waste were available.
- Handwashing was observed after nappy changing, after bathroom visits, after outdoor play and before and after mealtimes. #
- Seven mattresses had removeable washable wipeable covers present.
- During sleep time, cots in cot room and low stackable floor beds were positioned with the recommended 50 centimetres between each child

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep needs for children under 2 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 stackable beds and floor mats.
- The temperatures of the cot room and care rooms were documented and maintained between the recommended temperatures of 18-22 °C while children over 1 years old slept.

Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed

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

(2)(a) and (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) On review of the staff files and the service roster it was observed that the three staff members with in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training was not available to the children at all times during the service operation hours. No staff member with FAR training was available to the children from 5.15 pm to 6.00pm on the day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) Management will ensure the roster will have adequate staff members with FAR training available during the service's operational hours. Additional staff are being booked to attend a FAR training course.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) None

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 25, has been adequately 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) (a) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 19 November 2025.
- (b) A record was available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment demonstrating it was last serviced 13 January 2025 and for the number, type and maintenance of the smoke alarms in the premises, which were last serviced 11 November 2025.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were displayed in a conspicuous position in the service