

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL339
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Waterville's Little Stars
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	1 Kilmore Terrace, Waterville, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D15 Y592
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Katarzyna Wlodarska
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	23/01/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	51	PM	47
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Griffin and T. Nelson
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

Waterville's Little Stars provides a full day care, part time and sessional service. A service is provided to children aged between 2 and 6 years old. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 7:00am and 6:30pm. The service participates in the Early Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and the sessions run from 9.00am to 12.00pm and from 1.15 to 4.15pm. The service is located in a two-storey building in a residential and commercial area of Dublin. There are five care rooms in operation; these are Play group 1 and 2 and Pre-school 1 which are located on the ground floor. Pre-school 2 and 3 are located on the first floor. There is an enclosed rear area of the property which allows children to access outdoor play. A kitchen and sanitary facilities are also onsite.

### Staffing

Waterville's Little Stars is one of the seven early years services owned by the registered provider. The registered provider does not work in the service. A total of sixteen staff are employed in the service including the area manager who provides support to the service when required and two staff members who are employed in ancillary roles (cook and cleaner). On the day of inspection there was a dedicated person in charge, a deputy person in charge and twelve staff working directly with the children when the inspectors arrived in the morning. The area manager arrived shortly after and remained for the duration of the 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

The Regulation 9(1)(2)(4)-Management and Recruitment.

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

Regulation 15-Record of a Pre-School Child

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

Regulation 23-Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of Child.

Regulation 25- First Aid

Regulation 26- Fire Safety Measures

Regulation 28- Insurance

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under: Regulation 15, Regulation 19, Regulation 23 and Regulation 26. The scope of the inspection included Play Group Room 2 and the Preschool 1 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 person in charge, the area manager, 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
- (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)(b) The service had a named person in charge and designated person to deputise in their absence if required.

A review of the roster demonstrated that a person in charge or a deputy was on the premises during the operational hours of the service.

(c) A clear management structure was in place in the service and staff and management were aware of their role and responsibilities.

(2) The files of sixteen adults were reviewed; one area manager, two auxiliary staff and thirteen adults who work directly with the children. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

(a)(b) Thirty-two written and validated references were available in relation to sixteen adults.

(c) All sixteen adults had up to date Garda Vetting Disclosures.

(d) Police vetting was available for nine adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the area manager and thirteen adults who worked directly with children attending 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 or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) International Police vetting was not available for one staff member who had resided in two states outside of the jurisdiction for more than six months as an adult. It is acknowledged that the International Police vetting was applied for the next day 24/01/24. However, this documentation needs to be in place before a staff member begins employment in the service.

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

(2)(d)

#### Corrective Action

- Police Vetting was applied for the day after the inspection 24/01/2024.

#### Preventive Action

- The service provider along with the Manager will make sure no employee starts within the service until all required documents are in order prior.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- Email evidence to show that the staff member has sought Police Vetting from the two states required.

### Summary Comment

The non-compliance under Regulation 9(2)(d) remains outstanding until the police vetting disclosures have been processed and submitted to the inspectorate. This regulation will be reviewed at the next 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.
- (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) There was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children on the day of inspection.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection as follows:

##### During the morning:

Playgroup 1 Room – One adult caring for five children aged between 2 years to 2 years 8 months.

Playgroup 2 Room – One adult caring for six children aged between 2 years to 2 years 8 months.

Preschool 1 Room- Three adults caring for twelve children aged between 2 years 8 months to 3 years six months.

Preschool 2 Room – Three adults caring for sixteen children aged between 3 years six months to 5 years.

Preschool 3 Room -Three adults caring for twelve children aged between 2 years 8 months to 5 years.

##### During the afternoon:

Playgroup 1 Room – One adult caring for five children aged between 2 years to 2 years 8 months.

Playgroup 2 Room – One adult caring for six children aged between 2 years to 2 years 8 months.

Preschool 1 Room- Two adults caring for twelve children aged between 2 years 8 months to 3 years six months.

Preschool 2 Room – Two adults caring for fifteen children aged between 3 years six months to 5 years.

Preschool 3 Room -Two adults caring for nine children aged between 2 years 8 months to 5 years.

(8)(a) Two staff members were present at all times in the service as evidenced from examination of the staff roster and staff reported hours of attendance.

### 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-*

- (c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Eighteen children's registration forms were requested for review. There was a record in writing containing the following particulars:

- (a) The name and date of birth of the child was available for eighteen children.
- (b) The date on which the child first attended the service was available for eighteen children.
- (c) Provision to record the date on which the child ceased to attend the service was available for eighteen children.
- (d) The name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service was available for eighteen children.
- (e) Authorisation for the collection of the child was available for eighteen children.
- (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 was available for eighteen children. Details of the child's siblings, likes and dislikes were also recorded.

(g) The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner where the family has registered with a general practice was available for eighteen children.

(h) Record of child's immunisation information available for eighteen children.

(i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency was available for eighteen children.

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

### 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) The following observations are examples on how each child's learning, development and well-being was observed being facilitated during the inspection:

#### Basic Needs:

- Staff were observed interacting with children using low tones and in a supportive manner. In the playgroup 2 room a staff member was observed to support a child who was running around the room. The staff member said *"I see you running, will we do a workout. What would you prefer yoga or dancing"*. This modelled positive interactions and support for the child.
- Child led play was promoted under the support and supervision of staff. For example, in preschool 1 room the inspector observed children playing with a box of natural sensory materials: sand, coloured rice, wood chips, stones and leaves. Whilst some of the children were engaged in this activity others were observed to explore the room freely while the adults observed in a supportive role.
- The service promoted healthy eating. For example, children in the preschool 1 room were observed to eat healthy snacks from home at morning snack time. This included yoghurt, fruit, wraps, cheese, and crackers. At dinner time children were observed to be eat brown bread, vegetable soup and salad which was prepared in the service. Staff discussed how there is an alternative snack for children if required.

- Water was available to the children in the care rooms throughout the day. Children had their own water bottles. Children were also observed to be offered a choice of milk and water at mealtimes.
- Childrens behaviours were managed appropriately. For example, In the preschool 1 room staff were observed to support children to develop strategies around managing conflict. Children were given clear guidelines on what kind of behaviours are appropriate and children were encouraged to use their words to think of ways to resolve conflict.
- Nappy changing was done routinely three times a day and as needed to ensure the child's comfort.

### Supporting Relationships:

- Children were given sufficient time to enjoy their snacks and dinner. Staff were observed sitting with children during their meals. This facilitated mealtimes to be a social occasion for children to engage with peers and staff.
- Language used by staff was observed to be kind, considerate and supportive. For example, in the playgroup 1 room the inspector observed a child who is in the process of toilet training being positively encouraged to use the toilet.
- The service promoted identity and belonging. A staff in playgroup 2 was observed speaking to a child in their mother tongue language which supports inclusion, comfort, and identity. In the preschool 1 room there was an alphabet wall display displaying the various languages spoken by children attending. Children's artwork, birthday wall and family wall were displayed in both rooms. This supports children to transition from home to the service and promotes a sense of identity and belonging.

### Physical and Material environment:

- The furniture provided in the rooms were low level and suitable to the needs of the children. Equipment was visible and accessible enabling the children to independently access their choice of activity. For example, toys and equipment in the preschool 1 room were organised into defined areas of interest in the care room with a variety of supporting Montessori equipment available in each area. This variety of equipment allowed the children to engage in a range of learning experiences. For example, practical life, language, sensorial and mathematics experience.
- Staff managed and supported transitions in the service, for example, staff in the preschool 1 room were observed to provide advance notice using a visual timer to the children when activities were coming to an

end. Staff in playgroup room were observed to give verbal notice in advance of transitions. There was also a visual daily plan on display in both rooms.

- Children’s language development was supported through small group discussions, songs, and storytelling. For example, the children in preschool 1 room were observed to learn about the days of the week and the weather. Staff discussed how each circle time begins with welcoming each child by name and asking them how they are feeling that day. This was observed during circle time.
- In playgroup 2 room independence was supported throughout the day. Children were observed to partake in cleaning up toys and equipment before snack time. Children were also observed to be given jobs at snack time to help, the helper was given the job of handing out plates/snack at snack time.
- The outdoor back garden used by the children had ride on vehicles, pull along toys, kitchen with props, a Wendy house, two climbing walls and natural resource equipment: water, wooden logs, and pipes.

### Programme of Activities:

- The staff member in the preschool 1 room showed the inspector the visual daily routine on the wall. This timetable had pictures of each of the activities during the day. Staff explained how this timetable helped children to become familiar with the daily routine.
- The children were observed to be partners in the programme of activities, staff were observed asking the children to choose what activity they would like to participate in during activity work time.
- In the play group 1 room the inspector observed an up-to-date weekly curriculum plan which focused on all aspects of child development and included the emerging interests of the group.

## 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 securely locked on arrival to the building and remained locked throughout the day which prevented unknown persons entering the premises and prevented children leaving the service unsupervised.
- The external outdoor play area was secure with surrounding walls and securely gated reducing the risk of unauthorised access. Children who were observed to be adequately supervised during outdoor play.
- Electrical cables and flexes were adequately secured out of reach of the children.
- Cleaning supplies were secured on a high shelf out of reach of the children.

##### Infection Control:

- Each sanitary accommodation was equipped with soap, warm water, and hand drying facilities.
- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Clearly written individual medical care plans were available to enable staff to identify and accurately administer medication and treatment when required. From discussion staff were familiar with individual care plans in place for children.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Staff were aware of safe sleep procedures. A staff member in the preschool 1 room explained how they ensure a safe sleeping environment, removing additional clothing before sleep.
- Sleep checks were completed every 10 minutes by staff members during sleep time of children. Staff recorded each child's position, skin colour and breathing pattern.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in the care rooms where children were sleeping.
- Lighting was subdued in both sleep rooms and soft music was played.

##### Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, it was observed that all emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This helps ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of a fire.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. There was a tall unit in a corner of playgroup 2 which was not secured to the wall and appeared unstable. It is acknowledged that this unit was secured the following day on 24/01/2024.
2. A bespoke piece of play equipment used to develop sensory and fine motor skills, which required supervision by staff when in use was observed to be accessible to the children. There was no risk assessment available to support its safe use. This posed potential risk of injury to the children. It is acknowledged this piece of equipment was put out of the children's reach on the day of inspection and the service carried out a risk assessment on 24/01/2024 which requires an adult to be beside the child while using it.

#### Infection Control:

3. On the day of the inspection, a staff member was observed not to wear an apron and to open the nappy pedal bin with their hands during three nappy changes. This increased a risk of cross infection.
4. Five of the mattress beds used for sleep time were observed to be torn with the inside foam exposed. This is not in line with the service safe sleep policy which stated that the service uses easy to clean and disinfect mattresses for sleep. This increased a risk of cross infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### General Safety:

##### Corrective Action

1. The service arranged that the unit was fixed to the wall the next day 24/01/2024.
2. The registered provider has stated that the play equipment was put out of reach of children and will only be used under full supervision. The registered provider has stated that the service carried out a risk assessment.

##### Preventive Action

The registered provider alongside the manager will carry out risk assessments on furniture regularly and prior to introducing new equipment to the children.

#### Infection Control:

##### Corrective Action

3. The registered provider has stated that all staff had retraining of the nappy changing policy. This was conducted the next day on 24/01/2024.

4. The registered provider has stated that 12 new sleep mats were ordered and arrived on 06/02/2024. The old mats have been replaced and are disposed of.

### **Preventive Action**

The registered provider alongside the manager will regularly ensure observations and reviewing of policies and procedures are conducted at staff meetings. This will be included in the induction period also. The registered provider alongside the manager will carry out risk assessments and checks on the sleeping mats regularly.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **General Safety:**

- Photographic evidence of the unit secured to the wall.

#### **Infection Control:**

- Photographic evidence to show that all staff signed off on retraining of the nappy changing policy.
- Receipt for new sleep mats.

### **Summary Comment**

The registered provider through the corrective and preventive actions taken has addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

## 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) The service provided evidence that a person trained in First Aid Responder training was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school. Five adults held an up-to-date certificate in First Aid Responder Training.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) The service did not ensure that they had suitably equipped first aid box for children. The first aid box did not include paramedic shears and the sterile eye pads and individually wrapped wound dressings had an expiry date of 2014. It is acknowledged the service ordered four new first aid boxes on 24 January 2024.

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

(2)(a)(b)

##### Corrective Action

- Four new first aid boxes ordered the following day.

##### Preventive Action

- The registered provider has stated that the registered provider alongside the manager will ensure that the first aid boxes are checked and fully stocked on a monthly basis.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

- Evidence of receipt for four new first aid boxes.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider through the corrective and preventive action taken has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 25.

### 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 fire fighting 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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drills took place on 17 January 2024. Records showed that there was a fire drill for the 57 children in attendance at 2.06pm.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced in September 2023 and the smoke detection system in November 2023.
- (4) A procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was on display in prominent positions at the premises.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

*A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for 66 children the number of children the service can accommodate at one time and an expiry date 27 March 2024.