

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH076
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Name of Service:	Pugwash Bay LTD
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Address of Service:	12 Oakvale Park, Bay Estate, Dundalk, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A91 P406
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Name of Registered Provider:	James Moore
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	06/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre, Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Flood
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Pugwash Bay Ltd Bay Estate is one of a chain of 6 Pugwash Bay services operated in Co. Louth and Co. Meath in addition to a further 9 early years services operated by the registered provider nationally. This service is in operation in its current location since December 2008. The service is registered to cater for a maximum of 38 pre-school children to provide Sessional, Part-time and Full Day Care services to pre-school children from 2 years to 6 years of age.

The service is located in a residential area in Dundalk, Co. Louth. The premises is a purposely developed 2 storey domestic dwelling with 3 rooms in operation namely The Sunflower Room, The Poppy Room and The Daisy Room. The service has an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises which is divided into 3 separate areas. Ancillary accommodation consists of sanitary accommodation, a kitchenette, office and a utility area.

Staffing

There are 9 staff employed in this service, including the regional area manager, 7 childcare staff who work directly with the children and 1 staff member who works with children attending the school aged service.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance and as a result, the scope of the inspection included The Daisy and Poppy Rooms.

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 would like to acknowledge the cooperation of the regional area manager, 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

(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 designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. The person in charge who is also the service manager and a named person to deputise were on the premises when the inspector arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

(c) When questioned staff were familiar with the management structure within the service and the roles and responsibilities of the various staff members.

(2) Nine staff files including the regional area manager, 7 childcare staff and 1 staff member who works with children attending the school aged service were presented for inspection and reviewed:

(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for all 9 members of staff.

(c) A processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for all 9 members of staff. The registered provider adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that all members of staff who work directly with the children held at least the minimum required level 5 childcare qualification on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service at 10:40. The following were observed:

- **The Sunflower Room:**

There were 8 preschool children aged 2 years 11 months to 4 years with 1 member of staff.

- **The Poppy Room:**

There were 7 preschool children aged 2 years 11 months to 3 years with 1 member of staff.

- **The Daisy Room:**

There were 9 preschool children aged 3 to 4 years with 2 members of staff.

The person in charge was also present and provided assistance in the care rooms and relief cover for breaks and nappy changing.

The regional area manager for the service group arrived on the premises at approximately 12 midday was present in the service for the remainder of the inspection.

(8)(a) Following a review of the available documentation e.g. staff rotas and children's attendance records, the information demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

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,

Compliance Information

There were 3 rooms in operation on the day of inspection namely the Sunflower Room, Daisy Room and Poppy Room. A sampling process was used and as such The Daisy Room and Poppy Room are the subject of this assessment.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service:

On the day of the inspection all children were attending the service on a sessional basis.

Basic needs:

- A 'rolling snack time' was observed in operation. The children choose when to eat their snack which supports child-led learning and independence. All snacks were provided by the parents, and perishable items were appropriately stored in the fridge. The children's drinks bottles were stored on a low-level

accessible shelf where the children could access them when they required a drink, thereby promoting their independence and choice.

- All children who were toilet trained were encouraged to be independent with toileting. Discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required, with gentle reminders given about hand washing.
- The children accessed the soft areas to sit and read a book or to lie down and rest and take a break from activities.
- The children from all rooms had free movement in the care rooms. The rooms were developed with a variety of specific areas of interest, where the children were observed to access spontaneously and with familiarity.
- All children had a change of environment to the outside areas. Appropriate outdoor wear was observed in use and the children were supported to be independent putting on and taking off their coats and hats.

Supporting Relationships

- The staff were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner. Soft tones, plus positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children and staff. For example: *“That’s amazing....I love it when you share...”*. *“...you love pink...don’t you. Can I get a picture of you with that pink bottle.....maybe we can make one of your own tomorrow...?”*
- Individual plans were observed in use for children who required additional supports or medical care. The staff when questioned discussed a range of supportive strategies that were being used and how this information was shared with parents and guardians.
- The staff reported that communication with parents is conducted verbally at collection and drop off, by email and social media. There was a parents notice boards with information in the hallway. A communication book is also used for information sharing about the children’s daily needs, appointments or collection information.
- Learning journals are in development for the children in all rooms and these include photographs and written information about the children’s interests and how their interests are supported and extended in the playroom. The journals are collated throughout the year and are sent home as a ‘keepsake’ at the end of the year.
- It was reported that team meetings occur in the service on a regular basis and that the staff have allocated weekly protected time for curriculum planning. Staff supervision is also provided by the service

manager and it is reported that ongoing professional development for staff is encouraged and supported in the service.

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

It was observed that the registered provider has taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service including:

General Safety:

- The external and internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the Early Years' service.
- The outdoor play areas were gated and secured with walls and fencing to prevent a child gaining unsupervised access to a roadway or other source of danger. The service manager confirmed that one section of the outdoor area is currently not in use for safety reasons and is due to be redeveloped.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.
- The staff were observed to accompany the children to the front door at collection time.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- A 'traffic light' system was observed in use when a group of children and staff were going up & down the stairs.

Infection Control:

- Effective hand-washing practices were observed during the inspection, after toileting, outdoor play and prior to snack time.
- Good environmental cleaning practices were observed during the inspection, with tables being wiped down prior to lunch, snack times and after activities.
- Pedal operated waste bins were observed in use and were appropriately maintained on the day of the inspection.
- Mouthed toy boxes were available in the care rooms for the removal of toys used by the children.

- When questioned the staff were able to describe the service's procedure for the cleaning and maintenance of toys and equipment in the service. Up to date maintenance records and risk assessment documents were on display in the service and available for inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- No child was observed to sleep during the 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) The registered provider ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, on the premises at all times. Three FAR certificates were reviewed and a confirmation email that an additional 2 staff members had recently completed their FAR renewal training.

(2)(a)and(b) An adequately stocked first aid box was available on the premises and stored in an easily accessible location out of the reach of children.