

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH194
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Name of Service:	The Little Kingdom Daycare
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Address of Service:	Newtown, Beauparc, Navan, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	C15 E671
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sharon Brereton
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	18/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM	18
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham
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

The Little Kingdom Daycare Service is established since 2007, the service is situated in a rural setting. The service provides full day care, part-time day care and sessional service for preschool children from 2 years to 6 years and operates from 08.00 hrs to 18.00 hrs. The service comprises of 1 pre-school room with open access to two other rooms where areas of interest are developed, a kitchenette area within the main playroom and children's sanitary accommodation. The outdoor play area is located at the back of the service with direct access from the main pre-school room.

Staffing

Seven staff are employed in the service including the registered provider. All the staff provide direct care to the children.

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.

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

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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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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*

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Seven staff files were reviewed.

Fourteen validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

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(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 7 adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All staff members provided direct care to children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6) (a) One staff member was employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

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 morning of the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) On the day of inspection, the following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity:

- The Preschool rooms had 24 children ranging in age from 3 years to 5 years being cared for by 6 childcare staff. Eighteen children were attending on a full day care basis and 6 children were attending a sessional service.

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(8) (a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present at 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

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Children were observed engaging in tabletop activities, art and crafts and free play; with children afforded the opportunity to choose and change activities if they so wish.
- Mealtimes in the service were observed to be a social and pleasant experience for the children. Staff sat at the table whilst the children ate engaging them in conversation and providing assistance to the children as required.
- Children's nappies were changed regularly in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Staff members were responsive to the children's cues should they need to use the toilet, with discreet supervision provided and gentle reminders regarding hand washing offered. Children sought out staff members who readily acknowledged and encouraged the children's efforts and accomplishments.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff encouraged the children to engage positively with each other by adopting simple social rules such as turn taking, sharing in play activities and resolving minor disputes. Challenging behaviour when presented was dealt with in a calm and caring manner and the children responded well to distraction and re-direction.
- Children were provided with movement breaks throughout the session and staff were observed taking the lead from the children and always accommodating their choices.
- Birthdays are celebrated in the service with children forming a walking birthday train around the front of the service, with the birthday child leading the train and a birthday cake after snack time.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

Compliance Information

(1)(b) Cosy areas consisting of soft seating/mats were available if a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. Children were accommodated to sleep on stackable beds in the reading area, if required.

(3)(a) The outdoor space was enclosed with fencing and a secure gate. The surface area consisted of grass, and a hard surface area. A covered area was also available to accommodate children outside in all-weather types.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The indoor environments were inviting and offered the children a rich context for varied multi-sensory learning experiences. The children had access to multi-sensory play in the morning such as playdough, water and sand. The book corner was furnished with soft furnishings, which supported the children to relax and engage with the books. Materials and equipment were available on low level shelving in the care areas. This assisted children to select and replace items of interest independently. Areas available in the rooms included, home corner, table top activities, construction areas, arts and crafts were available.

Some of the equipment in the outdoor spaces included blackboards, small slides, balance beams, tyres, ride on toys, construction area, tunnel, play kitchens and a climbing frame.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a menu plan with a selection of meals ranging from meat, fish and poultry with a variety of snacks. For the children attending the service on a full day care basis 10.45-11.00am children had a morning snack taken in from home consisting of fruit and sandwiches.

The dinner was served at 3.00pm, consisting of homemade lasagne. Ham and cheese sandwiches were also available for the later snack.

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 front door of the service was secured, a staff member answers the door to facilitate visitors to gain access. This practise minimised the risk of unauthorised persons gaining access to the service.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelving or secured cupboards, out of the reach of children.
- Toys and play equipment were safe for the age group using them, in good condition, and free from pinch and crush points, exposed bolts or sharp edges.
- High- level fencing was provided in the outdoor play area, at the side of the building.

Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- Temperature of the care room while a child slept was between 18 to 22° C.
- A sleep log was available to record the position, colour and breathing pattern on all sleeping children at 10 minutes intervals.
- Children sleeping on sleep mats were supervised at all times.

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Fire Safety:

The following Fire Safety practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- All emergency exit doors were accessible in the event of an evacuation.
- Fire drills were recorded on a monthly basis.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Four staff members garda vetting disclosures 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'.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The registered provider has submitted the garda vetting renewals for the four staff members.

The registered provider will submit garda vetting renewals prior to the expiry date going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Garda vetting renewals received by the Inspectorate for the four staff members.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the noncompliance in regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

Compliance Information

(1) Records demonstrated that the date and time of attendance and departure in respect of each pre-school child were recorded on a daily basis.

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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 persons had completed up to date First Aid Responders course and were available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) and (b) A suitable equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises

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) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 13/02/2026.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was last serviced in 12/05/2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) A servicing record was not maintained of the mains powered smoke alarms. This was also a non-compliance in the previous inspection on the 8th October 2024. The corrective actions submitted following that inspection failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The registered provider has submitted the smoke alarms maintenance records for the service.
The registered provider will get the smoke alarms serviced prior to their expiry date in the future. A reminder has been set up to ensure this noncompliance does not occur again.

Supporting documentation submitted

The maintenance record for the smoke alarms has been received by the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The assurances and response from the registered provider have been accepted by the Inspectorate. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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 that the service was adequately insured for 27 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2025 to the 27/03/2026.