

# TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015OY005

**Name of Service:** Little Wishes Pre-School and Afterschool Service

**Address of Service:**  
 Ballyhearth  
 Clonfanlough  
 Athlone  
 Co. Offaly  
 R93 XK72

**Email Address:** lesleykeenaghan@hotmail.com

**Name of Registered Service Provider:** Lesley Keenaghan

**Type of Service Registered:** Part-Time

**Date(s) of Inspection:** 0 4 0 3 2 0 2 2

**No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:** AM 25 PM 10

**Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:** Early Years Inspectorate,  
 Tusla, Child and Family Agency,  
 Primary Care Centre,  
 Church Avenue,  
 Tullamore, Co. Offaly.

**Inspection undertaken by:** D. Molloy  
**Title:** Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health, Welfare and Development	Safety

**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

<b>Description of Service</b>	<p>Little Wishes Pre-School and Afterschool Service is a privately operated early years' service located the rural towns land of Ballyhearth in Clonfanlough, Co. Offaly.</p> <p>The service operates as a part time sessional service and has an enrolment of twenty -eight children. The age range of children currently enrolled in the service is from three to five years of age. This service operates from 09.30am to 02.00pm. daily from Monday to Friday. The service has been in operation since 2008.</p>
<b>Premises</b>	<p>This Early Years' Service operates from a premises connected to the registered providers domestic dwelling which is used for the sole purpose of operating an early years service. It consists of two pre-school rooms, a rest room, a kitchen, a reception area, cloak room, and three toilets and three wash hand basins for children's use. The extensive outdoor play area is divided into two separate areas and is located at the back of the premises. Parking is available on the public road outside of the premises.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>Three adults in addition to the registered provider were present on the day of inspection. The registered provider facilitated the inspection.</p>
<b>Methodology</b>	<p>Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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.</p> <p>The findings on inspection are based on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information obtained through examination of documentation</li> <li>• Direct observation</li> <li>• Discussion with relevant staff</li> </ul> <p>This inspection was unannounced and focused on areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required.</p> <p>The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service.</p> <p>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.</p>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<p>The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.</p>

## GOVERNANCE

### Part III - Management and Staff

#### Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that—
- the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
  - 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—
- consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
  - consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
  - 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
  - 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.
- (6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who—
- has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and
  - is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date
- (6A is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of "paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)" for "paragraphs (5) and (6)", and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): "
- (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:

Following review of the service files and further to discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed that one new staff member had been employed in the service since the last inspection.

(1) (a)

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

(b)

The designated person in charge was present during the inspection.

## Part III - Management and Staff

### Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

(2)  
The registered provider had ensured that each employee was suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of the children. Records were available to show that the following was in place in respect of the new staff member.

(a) consideration of references from each person's past employer, and their most recent employer.

(b) consideration of references from a reputable source.

(c) consideration of the vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012.

(d) Police vetting from police authorities outside this state was not required.

(4)  
All adults working in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(6) (a)(b)  
Not applicable as no employee had signed a declaration on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 to the effect that they intended to retire from employment in a pre-school service.

(6A)  
One staff member was working with children under the Access and Inclusion Model, (AIM) scheme.

## Part III - Management and Staff

### Regulation 10 - Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures, and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

Compliance Information:	<p>The registered provider ensured that the required written policies procedures and statements of the service were in place including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Years Services Self-Assessment Checklist, staff Covid declaration statements, protocol for visitors and return to work safety protocol.</li> <li>• An Infection Control Policy in line with the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) Guidance for Settings Providing Childcare during the Covid-19 Pandemic was in place.</li> <li>• The hand washing policy reflected Covid-19 requirements.</li> <li>• A site-specific Risk Management policy had been devised and was available in the service and had been updated to include recent Covid-19 recommendations.</li> </ul>
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## 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)—  
 (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

#### Compliance Information:

- (1)  
The correct adult to child ratio was maintained during the inspection.
- (2)  
There were 25 attending the service, being cared for by 5 adults including the registered provider. Ten children were attending on a part time basis. Children were allocated to 2 playrooms.  
The person in charge facilitated the inspection which commenced at 10.20am. The following pods were operational in the service.
- Room 1. This room accommodated 16 children aged 4 years 5 years of age, who were being cared for by 3 staff members.
  - Room 2. This room accommodated 9 children aged between 3 to 4 years, who were being cared for by 2 staff members.
- (8)(c)  
Not applicable as the service does not operate single-handedly.

## 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:

#### BASIC NEEDS:

- Lunches were correctly stored in the fridge prior to snack time. Children brought in healthy lunches from home in keeping with the healthy eating policy including sandwiches, brown bread, fresh fruit, dairy products, and each child had their own water container from which to drink. Children staying in the service until 2pm brought in an additional meal to have after the morning session had finished.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

- It was observed that snack time was a relaxed experience with children sitting at the tables chatting together. Each child was allowed enough time to finish their lunch in their own time before moving to next activity.
- All children had opportunity to take fresh air and play outdoors during the course of the inspection.

#### SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- Staff displayed patients and kindness towards all the children and listened to their points of view and encouraged their conversations. Staff showed positive regard for the children and were familiar with children's preferences and individual personalities. Staff used the child's name, making eye contact and spoke in a positive tone to the children bending down to the children's level.
- Although parents/guardians could now be permitted to enter the service following changes to Covid-19 recommendations they mainly remained at the entrance gate at drop off and pick up times for additional precaution. Parents connection to the service was encouraged through online communication and regular newsletters. An appointment with the registered provider to discuss individual child's progress could be arranged on request.
- External links had been forged in the service by their connection to and engagement with the national AIM support development team and local county childcare committee.

#### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The play area had been divided into 2 separate sections and included a roofed area at the back wall of the premises which offered shelter where children could play outdoors while in shelter. The children had each planted a daffodil bulb for their homes and these were budding and beginning to bloom in the sheltered area.
- The outdoor area was spacious, securely fenced and was multi surfaced with wood chip, grassed area, cemented area for riding bikes, trikes, and other ride on toys and an area for climbing equipment, balance equipment. Recycled tyres were also used as play equipment, an area for potting and planting herbs and flowering plants was provided at the end of the play area.
- The indoor rooms were bright and cheerful well maintained and decorated with children's artwork and posters. The rooms were spacious, well stocked and were arranged using a child centred approach. Special interest areas including home corner, library area, arts and crafts area, construction areas and cosy rest areas. The children's work on their "ice-experiment" was depicted on the wall and the proof of their "volcano experiment" was on display on the nature table.

## 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:

- A system of controlled entry and exit was in place at the main entrance. The service was secured for the safety of the children within, to prevent unauthorised entry and to prevent the exit of a child unsupervised.
- A system of pest control was in place in the service.
- Cleaning and infection control products were readily available to staff while at the same time cleaning products and cleaning equipment were stored out of the reach of children.

#### INFECTION CONTROL:

- The registered provider was the Covid-19 Officer and held responsibility for the implementation of the Covid-19 requirements and changes to procedures as were required.
- The service rooms were ventilated by means of openable windows. Foot operated pedal bins were in place in the pre-school rooms for the hygienic disposal of waste.
- There was an adequate supply of paper hand towel and liquid soap in the sanitary accommodations. Hand sanitiser was available in wall mounted units at the entrance to the service and at locations throughout the premises.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

- A site specific, general administration of medication policy and procedure document had been devised and was available in the service. No medicine was administered during the inspection.

#### FIRE SAFETY:

- The fire exit routes in the premises were unobstructed. A fire assembly point was in place outside the service.

## 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)  
A staff member trained in First Aid Response was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a)  
First aid boxes were stored in easily accessible and conspicuous positions.
- (b)  
A first aid box was available for use at all times in the pre-school service.

## 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 for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022.
- (b)  
A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment was serviced in November 2021. The fire alarm system was serviced on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.
- (4)  
A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.