

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



**Tusla I.D.:** TU2015WD041

**Name of Service** Little Darlings Childcare Centre

**Address of Service:** Carraig An Ard, Six Cross Roads, Waterford City, Waterford, X91 K440

**Email Address:** denise@littledarlingschildcare.ie

**Name of Registered Provider:** Denise Foley

<b>Type of Proposed Service:</b>	<b>Full Day Care</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Part-Time</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Sessional</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Drop-In</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Childminding</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Temporary</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Proposed change:** Change in service type from full day to full day and sessional  
Change in number of children from 59 to 80 children (within existing rooms)

**Proposed Number of Children:** 80

**Recommended Change Following Inspection:** Approve change in service type and change in number of children can accommodate to 80, of which a maximum of 70 can attend for full day care.

**Registered change:** Change in service type from full day to full day & sessional  
Change in number of children from 59 to 80 (Max 70 full day) children

<b>Date of Inspections:</b>	0	9	1	0	2	0	2	5
	2	7	1	1	2	0	2	5

**Inspection undertaken by:** E Cullen

**Title:** Early Years Inspector

**Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:** Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City, Waterford.

### Rationale for Inspection:

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### Proposed Change of Circumstance

**Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office**

<b>Registration Status:</b>	<b>Registered Full Day &amp; Sessional Service for 80(Max 70 Full Day) Children</b>
<b>Date of Registration</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> December 2025</b>

### Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

<b>Description of Service</b>	Little Darlings is a privately run service which has been in operation since 2008. It caters for children from 1 to 6 years of age on a full day care basis. The service participates in Early Childhood Care and Education and National Childcare Schemes. Opening hours are from 08.00hrs to 17.30hrs.
<b>Premises</b>	The service operates from a single-story purpose-built early years facility in a residential area on the outskirts of Waterford City. The building accommodates five early years rooms, a full catering kitchen, sleeping facilities, adult and children's toilets with a nappy changing room. A storeroom for hazardous materials and laundry and an office. The outdoor play area is safely secured at the rear of the building on the grounds of the premises.
<b>Staffing</b>	The registered provider is the owner and manager of the service. The service employs fourteen early years staff. Two part time cooks, contract cleaners and one administrative support person are also employed in the service.
<b>Methodology</b>	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes: Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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>	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part III - Management and Staff

	<p>Child and Family Agency Act 2013</p> <p>Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016</p>	<p>Version 05 Implemented- Aug 2022 EYI-IR12.23 F07 FFP (CIC)</p>	<p>2 of 7</p>
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### 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.

**Requirement met:**

The registered provider is the designated person in charge, and a named deputy is employed onsite.

### 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.

**Requirement met:**

The registered provider is familiar with the Child Care Act 1991 (early years services) Regulations 2016, Schedule 6 Staff: Child ratios and will ensure that there are adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children attending the service.

### 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—

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(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 or

**Requirement met:**

(1)(a) The service comprises of five early years rooms which are well laid out and well resourced. The furniture and equipment have been used to create well defined interest areas with ample space in each area for children to play, explore and work together in pairs and small groups. Consideration has been given to the age and stages of development of children in each of the rooms. Interest areas included: cosy library areas, role play areas, construction areas and creative areas.

(b) There are designated areas in each room with couches and soft furnishings, where children can rest and relax during the day. A designated sleep room is available off the wobbler room. There were four cots available for children under 2 years of age and fifteen low-level beds for children over the age of 2 years who required sleep. Two additional floor beds are available on the premises; however, they are not currently in use.

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(3)(a) The service's outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises. This area can be directly accessed by children in the toddler and senior preschool two rooms.

### 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.*

**Requirement met:** All food and drink are provided by the service onsite. A healthy eating policy is in place, and a four weekly menu is rotated.

### 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.*

**Requirement met:**

**General Safety:**

The entrance door to the service is secured with a keypad and buzzer entry system while children are in attendance to ensure no unauthorised persons can gain access or children cannot exit unsupervised. The external play areas are secured with high level fencing. A storage room and high-level storage units have been identified for storage of hazardous materials such as cleaning products out of reach of children.

**Infection control:**

The service has an infection prevention and control policy in place. Warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were available to support hygienic handwashing throughout the service.

The service, materials and equipment were well maintained and clean. There was a cleaning schedule in place which detailed the frequency and method of cleaning of toys, equipment, fixtures, fittings, and surfaces.

**Safe Sleep:**

The registered provider has ensured that an adequate safe sleep policy is in place. Staff are familiar with safe sleep guidelines.

### 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.*

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<b>Requirement met:</b>	<p>(1) There are four staff members currently trained as First Aid Responders (FAR) and all other staff members are trained in first aid for children. Consideration is given to the rostering of staff members to ensure a person trained in FAR is present on the premises during operational hours.</p> <p>(2)(a)(b) Suitable and fully equipped first aid boxes were available on the premises and stored in an easily accessed central locations.</p>
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### 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.

<b>Requirement met:</b>	<p>(1)(a) Records were available on the premises for recording of fire drills and the registered provider was familiar with the requirement to carry out monthly fire drills.</p> <p>(b) A record of firefighting equipment was available for inspection; maintenance was last completed on 12 August 2025. The smoke alarm system was last maintained on 22 April 2025.</p> <p>(4) A notice of procedures to be followed in the event of a fire is displayed in each room and the fire assembly point had been identified.</p>
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### Part VI – Safety

#### Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

<b>Requirement met:</b>	<p>The service demonstrated insurance cover for a Full Day Care for 72 children. The insurance policy commenced 02 September 2025 and will expire 27 March 2026.</p> <p>The Registered Provider must ensure that adequate insurance is in place prior to the commencement of the change. The change approval is contingent on the registered providers compliance with Regulation 28.</p>
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## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

### Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,
- (b) safe and secure,
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

#### Requirement met:

(a) The premises is a purpose-built single storey building. The registered provider confirmed that they were not aware of any structural defects.

(b) The premises was safe and secure. The access points were kept secured to prevent unauthorised access. The outdoor area was enclosed and gated. Access to the premises were via a securely locked door and external gate.

(c) The rooms were well lit by natural light. The windows were openable to allow for natural ventilation. Lighting was supplemented by artificial light. The premises were heated by a gas boiler system which was last serviced in March 2025.

(d) The rooms, fixtures and fittings appeared to be clean, well maintained and in a good state of repair. There were cleaning schedules in place for the service.

(e) The service had two toilet cubicles and one wash hand basin, available in the main corridor off the classrooms and two toilet cubicles and one wash hand basin off the senior preschool room for use by early years children.

The designated nappy changing room off the toddler room had two nappy changing units and two wash hand basins available. This area also had one staff toilet.

An accessible toilet with toilet and wash hand basin in the main corridor functioned as a staff toilet. This room also contained an overflow nappy changing facility and children’s toilet.

#### Requirement not met:

(e) There was insufficient sanitary accommodation for toilet trained children for the proposed increase in numbers in the junior preschool, senior preschool one and senior preschool two.

#### Response from Provider:

The registered provider installed additional wash hand basins in each sanitary area for children. A new toilet and wash hand basin have been installed in the junior preschool room. There are now a total of five toilets and five wash hand basins for sole use by children in the service.

#### Summary Comment:

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider and reviewed by the inspector on day two of inspection address this requirement.

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### Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

#### Requirement met:

(1) The early years rooms provide adequate clear floor space for the 59 children the service is currently registered for.

(2) There is sufficient clear floor space in the existing early years rooms for up to 80 children attending on a mix of sessional and full day care basis, of which a maximum of 70 children can attend for full day care hours at any one time.

Room	Total clear floor space	Age range children	Max FDC	Max Sessional
Wobbler	17.7m <sup>2</sup>	1-2 years	5	N/A
Toddler	39.6 m <sup>2</sup>	1-2 years 2-3 years	5 10 Room total: 15	N/A
Junior Preschool	44.5 m <sup>2</sup>	2-3 years 3-6 years	19	22
Senior Preschool One	30.5 m <sup>2</sup>	3-6 years	13	16
Senior Preschool Two	43.2 m <sup>2</sup>	3-6 years	18	22
		<b>Total</b>	<b>70 FDC</b>	<b>80 Sessional</b>