

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015WW119

Name of Service: Little Green Giants

Address of Service: 2 Lott Lane, Ballydonera, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow

Eircode: A63 HN66

Name of Registered Provider: Gemma Greene

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 21/10/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	35	PM	32

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke and R. Phillips
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable N/A

Description of service

Little Green Giants is a privately operated service located in a detached domestic dwelling which has been adapted for use as a creche. The service is located in the village of Kilcoole, County Wicklow.

The service provides care and education to children aged 1 to 6 years of age, on a full day care, part-time and sessional basis. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 07.30 hrs and 18.15 hrs (including a sessional Early Childhood and Education Scheme (ECE) service from 09.00 hrs to 12.00 hrs for 38 weeks of the year).

A school aged service is also provided for children for the duration of after school hours and during school holidays.

There are five care rooms, a sleep room, a cot room, a kitchen and a staff room in the building.

The service office is located to the front of the premises. Children have access to an outdoor area which is located at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs thirteen adults in the service. Twelve adults were present on the day of inspection. Six members of staff were working directly with the children; the registered provider and deputy person were super numary on the day of inspection.

The remaining staff members were the full-time chef, an office administrator and two adults who supports the adults working in the care rooms.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15 Record of pre-school child

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child. (1)(b)

Regulation 24 Checking in and out and Record of Attendance.

Regulation 25 First Aid.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety

However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child (General Safety and Infection Control)

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the 21 October 2025 in relation to regulation 9 (2)(c). One adult did not have Garda Vetting available on the day of inspection. The registered provider responded on the 22 October 2025, and this response was accepted by the inspector.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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

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

Following a discussion with the registered provider and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that thirteen adults are employed in the service, the registered provider also works in the service. The adults employed include the full-time chef, an office manager and two non-qualified staff who are not counted in ratio. These files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived and the registered provider arrived a short time later. There was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of fourteen adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for thirteen adults.

(d)

International police vetting was available for one adult working in the service who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Eleven staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(c)

There was no vetting disclosure available from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in respect of one adult working in the service. An Immediate Action Notice was issued on the day of inspection and the registered provider responded the next day and their response was accepted by the inspectors.

(4)

Two adults working directly with the children in the service, did not hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(c)

We did contact Early Childhood Ireland on the day of the inspection and received the garda vetting disclosure the next day which we immediately sent to the inspectors. Not having staff garda vetted in unacceptable and should not have happened and will not occur again in the future.

(4)

Management team have been fully informed that no unqualified staff (even from the afterschool room) can assist staff in the pre-school rooms during the day.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(c) & (4)

Photographic evidence of the required Garda vetting for one adult, a copy of one staff member attending their level 5 training in childcare and a copy of the memo sent to all staff about garda vetting and unqualified staff was submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The above actions have addressed the non-compliances found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 9 and will be reviewed on 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)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were eight adults employed to work directly with 56 children on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)
The registered provider ensured that there were two adults on the premises at all times. This was confirmed by reviewing the staff roster.

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)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The registered provider ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The registered provider ensured that there were appropriate and suitable care practices in place within the pre-school.

Children were given the opportunity for free play during the morning, and children's participation was encouraged in all activities throughout the day.

All the children have to opportunity to access the outdoor area for long periods during their day.

The transition between one activity and the next was smooth and unhurried, aided by the language used by the adults to the children. Positive reinforcement of children's behaviour contributed to a pleasant environment for the children in the service. One to one attention was given to a child when required, in addition, support was given to children so that they remained included in activities.

A strong ethos of teamwork was evident from observing how staff members worked together.

The relationships between the adults and children reflected a sense of belonging, inclusion, connectedness and diversity.

There was a suitable cosy area in each pre-school room, with rugs, soft furnishings, cushions and books for children to use should they require it during their day.

Children's parents are spoken to on an individual basis at collection time.

Parents are encouraged to make direct contact with the pre-school, should they have any concerns or issues.

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 main door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspectors to the service.
- All toys examined were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in each pre-school room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- There were sanitary areas located in the pre-school service. There was warm running water at 30°C, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- A foot pedal bin was available in each sanitary area and in the pre-school rooms for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other waste matter.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.
- Hand washing by the adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and outdoor play.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

On the day of inspection between 13:11 and 13:32 there were two children asleep on low level beds in the designated sleep room. While it is acknowledged that the children were checked in on by an adult every 5 to 7 minutes, no one adult remained in the room with the children. Safe sleep of children in low level beds, requires an adult presence, in the sleep room while children are sleeping.

Infection Control:

On the day of inspection, the nappy changing practices were not seen to be effective for infection control purposes. One staff member failed to remove their gloves until after a nappy change was completed, this included using nappy cream with the soiled gloved hands. The Nappy Changing Procedure was posted in a

conspicuous place in each sanitary area and the Nappy Changing Procedure was robust to ensure good infection control practices.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

A staff member is now rostered to sit in the room with the children as they sleep on the low beds at nap time. When a staff member from the room goes on lunch another staff member now signs into the room and remains with the children and signs out when the sleep time has finished. Managers will monitor the staff on the CCTV to ensure the toddler sleep room is always staffed while the children sleep.

Infection Control:

The error in changing the nappy did highlight our need to refresh our training in this area. This training was carried out with all relevant staff on 22/10/2025. Managers will regularly bring the nappy changing policy to the attention of staff both informally during routine feedback and formally through supervision and impress upon staff the importance of infection control for both the children who attend and indeed the staff themselves.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence of children being supervised while sleeping along with signed supervision sheets were submitted with the CAPA response.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of a revised and robust nappy changing policy, plus a photograph of staff signatures of refresher training were submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The above actions have addressed the non-compliances found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 23 General Safety and Infection Control and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The registered provider ensured that all children attending the pre-school were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The registered provider ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people had access to the pre-school.

(b)

The registered provider had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the pre-school.

(4)

The registered provider was able to demonstrate that the visitors' book was kept for a period of one year from the dates to which it relates.

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 was an adult trained in FAR first aid and available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place within each pre-school room.

(b)

The first aid box was available to the children attending the service at all times.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(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)

There was a record of fire drills having taken place in the pre-school service. The last recorded fire drill was 13 October 2025.

(b)

There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke detectors on the premises dated 12 September 2025 and 8 August 2025 respectively.

(2)(c)

The above records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of what procedures should be followed in the event of an emergency, displayed in each pre-school room.