

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW144
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Name of Service:	The Little Farm Pre-school
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Address of Service:	Laragh East, Laragh, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A98 XP27
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jean Bader
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	26/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke
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	N/A
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Description of service

The Little Farm Pre-school is a privately owned pre-school that was first established in 2005. The service is located in the home of the registered provider and is registered to provide care and education for children between two years and six years of age. The hours of operation are from 09.00am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. The pre-school participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.

Staffing

The registered provider works directly with the children and employs two additional staff in the 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/ 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 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.

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 the registered provider has two adults employed in the service, these files and the registered providers file were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The registered provider was present in the service and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspector 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 three adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for three adults working in the service.

(d)

International police vetting was available for two adults had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Three adults held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of 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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore 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)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school.

(3)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained during the inspection. There were two adults working directly with fourteen children.

(8)(c)
Not applicable as the pre-school is not operated single-handedly.

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 IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1), (h)-(k)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the above list of information in relation to the service.

(3)

The registered provider ensured that the above list of documents were open to inspection by an authorised person.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

On the day of inspection, a curriculum vitae was not available for one adult employed in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a)

The CV was brought in by the staff member and before a new staff member joins our service, all paperwork will be checked and must include a CV.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(a)

Photographic evidence of the staff members CV was submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted has addressed the non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to regulation 16 (1)(a) and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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

On the day of inspection, there was age-appropriate indoor and outdoor furniture, including table and chairs, for the children to use while attending the service. There was a large variety in crafting materials, books, toys and specific areas of interest both within the service room and the large outdoor area for the children to avail of during their day.

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 parents provided all the food for the children attending the service. On the day of inspection, all lunch boxes contained suitable, nutritious food which was in keeping with the healthy eating policy of the service. Drinking water was available and accessible to the children throughout their day.

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 access gate to the premises was securely locked on arrival of the inspector to the service.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in 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 from the pre-school room was free from obstruction.
- The fire assembly point was clearly marked in the outdoor area.
- A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous place in the service room.

Infection Control:

- A cleaning schedule for the pre-school room was available and maintained.
- Both children and adults were observed to wash their hands after using the toilet and before having their snack.
- There was a sanitary area, located in the pre-school room with toilets, sinks with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- A foot pedal bin was available in the sanitary area for the safe disposal of used paper towels. Foot pedal bins were also available in the pre-school room.
- Table cleaning was observed within the service room.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that each child attending the service was checked in and checked out on each day of attendance.

(3)(a)(i)-(iv)

The registered provider ensured that no person other than the above list of people were allowed access to the pre-school service.

(b)

A record in writing was available of any person having had access to the pre-school service from the above list.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

There was a record of fire drills having taken place in the pre-school service on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill was the 20th of March 2025.

(b)

There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke detectors on the premises dated the 28th of August 2024 and the 5th of September 2024 respectively.

(2)(c)

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