

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW149		
Name of Service:	Little Ladybirds Pre-School		
Address of Service:	Slane Lusk, Dunganstown West, Kilbride, Wicklow, Co. Wicklow		
Eircode:	A67 W603		
Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Delahunt		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	09/02/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM N/A
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		
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

Description of service

Little Ladybirds Pre-school was first established in 2007. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age on a sessional basis. The registered provider operates a sessional Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) service for 38 weeks of the year Monday to Friday 09.00am to 12.00pm. The service operates from a purpose-built extension attached to the registered provider's home. There are two pre-school rooms available but at present only the front pre-school room is open. There is a large outdoor area located at the rear of the premises, which includes a sheltered area, so the children can play outside daily, even in inclement weather conditions.

Staffing

There are two full time staff members and this includes the registered provider. The registered provider also employs a relief person in case of emergencies.

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 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, second staff member 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

There are two full time adults employed in the pre-school service and one relief staff member, these files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The registered provider was in charge of the service and there was a named staff member who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider was on the premises at the time of arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Written references were available with respect to three staff members.

(c)

The required Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of three staff members.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.

(4)

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

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 service.

(3)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were two adults employed and present with twenty children on the day of Inspection.

(8)(c)
There were two adults on the premises at all times. The registered provider does not operate a single-handed service.

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.

(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above list of particulars, was 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.

(5)

The registered provider had evidence that all children's records were kept for a period of 2 years from the time a child started at the pre-school.

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 entrance door to the service was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- All cleaning products were stored out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in the pre-school room was clearly marked and free from obstruction.
- A staff member qualified in FAR training and was available at all times to children attending the service.
- The outdoor area to the rear of the premises was found to be suitable, safe and secure.
- All toys were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.

Infection Control:

- Table cleaning was observed before snack time.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snack time and after using the toilet.
- The pre-school had two sanitary areas. Each sanitary area contained a child sized toilet and low-level sink. There was warm running water, liquid soap, and paper towels available. A foot pedal bin was available in each area for the safe disposal of used paper towels.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the pre-school room.

Fire Safety:

- There was evidence of regular fire drills haven taken place in the service. The last fire drill took place on the 10th of January 2024.
- There were in date service records available for the fire equipment and smoke detection system.

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 each child attending the pre-school was checked in and out daily.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The registered provider ensured no other person that the above approved list, was allowed enter the premises.

(b)

A record in writing was kept on the premises any such person.

(4)

The registered provider demonstrated that a written record referred to in (3)(b) was retained for one year from the date to which it related.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The adult/child ratios ensured that all children attending the pre-school service were supervised at all times during their day.