

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015WW201

Name of Service: Little Poppets Creche & Montessori

Address of Service: Cooldross Lane, Woodstock, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow

Eircode: A63 HR74

Name of Registered Provider: Sacha Behan

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 26/02/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	27	PM	17

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Loughlinstown Health centre,
Loughlinstown Drive,
Loughlinstown,
Co. Dublin.

Inspection undertaken by: M. Condon & S. Faherty

Title: Early Years Inspector and Inspection Registration Manager

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 Click or tap here to enter text.

Description of service

This full day care service is located in a residential area in Kilcoole village. The service provides full day-care, part-time day care and a sessional service to pre-school children who are presently aged between one year and five years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday. between the hours of 07.30 and 18.30. A school age service is also provided. The premises is located in a detached two storey purpose-built centre. Three care rooms are available namely, The Bobblers room downstairs and the Playschool room and Montessori room upstairs.

Staffing

Nine adults are employed, one of whom is the chef. On the day of inspection eight adults provided direct care to the pre-school children. Additionally, the registered provider and her deputy were also present and available to give assistance in the rooms as needed.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. 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

noncompliance from reoccurring. 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 and inspection registration manager 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

- (1)
- (a) The service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the Inspection team and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)
- A total of ten adults were employed which includes the chef.
- (a)&(b) There were twenty written and validated references available for staff.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Not applicable as no staff members had lived in another state for a period longer than six consecutive months as an adult.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
Throughout the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the pre-school children. There were 27 children attending the service being supervised by adults on the day of inspection.
- (2)
The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection.
- (8)(a)
There were more than two adults in the premises throughout the inspection and the staff roster confirmed that there are at least two adults present at all times.

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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to children.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed. The procedure for evacuation was on display in each room.
- All cleaning agents were kept out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Each child's soother was stored in individual containers.
- Cleaning schedules were maintained in each care room and the environment was clean.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not given on the day of inspection. Written parental consent was available should temperature reducing medication be required to be administered to a child.
- Medication was stored in a safe place and was in date.

Safe Sleep:

- On the day of inspection, a sleep log was maintained every 10 minutes by staff detailing the physical checks carried out on sleeping children under 2 years of age.
- The temperature of the sleep room and the care rooms where children slept was in the acceptable range.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for one staff member. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

There were three separate outdoor areas for use by the three age groups of pre-school children attending. The following safety issues were noted which posed a risk to the safety of children in their respective areas:

Bobblers area:

2. One part of the wooden fencing in the area adjacent to the premises was loose exposing nails.

Playschool area:

3. There were briars behind a slide posing which were accessible to a child.
4. A wooden picnic tabletop was uneven and chipped due to wood rot.

Montessori area

5. The wooden supports for the large slide and swing set were rotten at the base and therefore posing a risk of injury to a child if they were to break while in use. It was also noted that a metal brace support on this piece of equipment was loose and could fall on a child.
6. A Tippee available for use had a screw exposed.
7. There were five sheets of timber fencing stored behind the playhouse and accessible to children.
8. The wood in the small platform in front of the playhouse and the wooden step into the playhouse were rotten with gaps on the surface posing a risk of injury.

Infection Control:

9. The inspector observed a staff member changing three children's nappies. It is acknowledged that gloves, and aprons were used correctly, and the child's hands were washed. However, the staff member did not wash her own hands following nappy changing. This posed a risk of cross infection.
10. The paint on the wall area behind the sink in the nappy changing area downstairs was flaking. This area required tiling so that it could be cleaned effectively.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A new Garda vetting has been applied for through Tusla. This is still in progress. In future Garda vetting will be kept up to date within the 3-year period.
2. The fence has been repaired. It has been checked for any nails exposed and repaired as of immediate effect. Fences will be maintained and checked for exposed or rusted nails at all times.

3. The briars have been cut back immediately and are no longer a risk to the children when playing. All briars will be maintained and cut back so that they do not pose a risk to the children when out playing in the garden.

4. This picnic table was removed and discarded from the playschool garden immediately. All wooden furniture will be maintained by myself on a regular basis.

5. The slide and swing set have been taken down and removed from the garden altogether. When replaced the new swing and slide set will be checked and maintained on a regular basis.

6. The screw has been removed from the tippee. Wooden equipment will be checked and maintained on a regular basis.

7. All fences which were in storage behind the playhouse have been removed. Going forward any fences which are damaged will not be stored in the garden area but will be disposed of immediately.

8. The step has been repaired, and a new piece of wood has been put in place. The platform has been removed altogether. The step will be maintained and repaired immediately if needed.

Infection Control:

9.

10. This area will be tiled or a splash back put in place over the Easter holiday period, by the 25th April, as soon as a tiler is available.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of application for Garda vetting

Photographic evidence

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances numbering 1-9. Non-compliance number 10 is outstanding, and this will be checked on next inspection.

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)
Three staff members were trained in first aid response (FAR), one of whom was immediately available to the children on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)
The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position next to the pre-school room.

(b)
At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending 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 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.

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) A record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 11th of February 2025
- (b) Records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms dated October 2024 and March 2024 respectively.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

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 children attending the service were supervised by staff members at all times while indoors and outdoors during the inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27th of March 2025. The insurance provides cover for up to 58 children attending for full day care.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(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.

Compliance Information

During the period of inspection there was adequate space for the pre-school children in the three care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

Each afternoon during school term the Montessori room is used by school age children following school collections at 1pm and 2pm.

Following discussion with the registered provider, it was evident that each Wednesday a total of nine pre-school children are accommodated in the Playschool room. This room measures 18 square metres and therefore has space for a maximum of eight pre-school children aged 2--3 years. Therefore between 2.30pm and 6pm each Wednesday overcrowding of this room occurs.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Changes in the attendance of children in the Montessori room will occur on April 1st and as a result the number of children in the preschool will reduce to eight. Our numbers shall be maintained going forward accordingly.

Summary Comment

The future action by the registered provider will address the non-compliance in relation to Regulation 30.