

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WW254
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Explorers Childcare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Charlesland Centre, Charlesland Grove, Charlesland, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A63 A266
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Gina McGarry
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	23/05/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	73	PM	73
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	H. Bourke and M. Redmond
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

This full day care service was first established in 2015. The premises is a purpose built, two storey building with four pre-school rooms, a sleep room, an office, staff room, laundry room and kitchen. There is a large outdoor area to the rear of the premises, which the children have access to on a daily basis. The service is located in the urban setting of Greystones Co. Wicklow. This service is privately owned and is registered to provide care and education for children aged between zero and six years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 07.00 hrs and 18.30 hrs (including a sessional Early Childhood and Education Scheme (ECCE) service from 09.30 hrs to 12.30 hrs for 38 weeks of the year).

### Staffing

There are currently twenty adults employed in the service. Nineteen adults were present on the day of inspection. The staff members employed included, the manager, assistant manager and the full-time chef. The registered provider does not work in the service and was not present on the day of inspection. The manager and assistant manager are supernumerary and help cover breaks and assist care staff when 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 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, assistant manager, 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.*

*(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.*

*(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.*

*(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”*

*(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:*

*(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*

### Compliance Information

Following a conversation with the manager of the service and reviewing the staff roster it was determined that there were twenty staff members currently employed in the service. These twenty files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

There was a person in charge of the service and there was a named staff member who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

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

(2)(a)(b)

Written references were available in respect of twenty staff members.

(c)

The required three-year Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of twenty adults.

(d)

Police vetting was available for sixteen adults who had lived outside the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.

(3)

The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to any staff member being appointed, assigned or allowed access to a child attending the service.

(4)

Nineteen members of staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or had a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6A)

There was one adult employed pursuant to the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

(7)(a)

The service had documentation to support learning and on-going professional development for all the adults working in the service. Through this documentation, adults working in the service were also updated on all policies and procedures of the service and signed that they had read and understood the policies.

## 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)

The manager ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children attending the service at all times during the hours of operation.

(2)

There were sixteen adults employed and present with 73 children on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There was a minimum of two adults present on the premises throughout the inspection and this was evidenced by staff roster.

## 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

The manager of the service ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place. Children were given the opportunity for free play during the morning, and children's participation was encouraged in all activities throughout the day. All children had an opportunity to play outdoors during their day, with Cocoon and The Nest rooms having direct access to the secured garden area to the rear of the premises.

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 if it was required.

The lunch time was relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience for children, all children sat on low level chairs at a table, and conversation was encouraged.

Children were addressed by their name and were given plenty of time to eat their food. All food was provided by the service. There was an ample supply of food for the children at lunch time and children were encouraged, with suitable support, to serve themselves their own lunch. Children were asked if they would like additional food and it was available to them within the care rooms.

All children, aged between one and three years of age, were afforded the opportunity to sleep after lunchtime but younger children were allowed to sleep as required during their day. The service had a cosy area with rugs, chairs and cushions for children to use should they require it during their day.

Childrens parents are spoken to on an individual basis at collection time. Parents are encouraged to make direct contact with the service, 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.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in the service.
- All toys were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- There was a large, suitable, safe and secure outdoor area to the rear of the service, this included a large, sheltered area suitable for all weather conditions.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in the pre-school rooms were free from obstruction and clearly marked.
- A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous place in each pre-school room.

##### Infection Control:

- All pre-school rooms contained a sanitary area and/ or a nappy changing area. There was running water, liquid soap and paper towels available. A foot pedal bin was available in each area for the disposal of used paper towels.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and outdoor play.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the pre-school rooms.

##### Administration of Medication:

There was a record in writing available to demonstrate that signed parental consent was required prior to administering medication to a child, that administration of medication was witnessed, and parents were informed following administration of medication.

##### Safe Sleep:

In the Cocoon room there was a separate sleep room available for the children aged between one and two years of age. There was an individual cot available for each child. The temperature in this room during sleep time was recorded at 18.7 °C and a sleep log was used and maintained by staff members to record the breathing, colour

and the position of the sleeping children at 10-minute intervals. Children over two years of age, who wished to sleep were accommodated in The Nest sleeping area. Sleep records were also recorded in The Nest room at 10-minute intervals, while children slept.

**Fire Safety:**

There was a record in writing of fire drills that had been carried out in the service. The last fire drill was recorded on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2024

**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)  
A staff member trained in FAR first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a)  
A well-equipped first aid box was easily accessible and in a conspicuous position in all four care rooms.

(b)  
The first aid box was always available to the children attending the service.