

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016KY002
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Leaders
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Old Convent School, Lixnaw, Co. Kerry
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V92N625
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Christina Lovett
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	15/01/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	16	PM	0
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	N. Reidy
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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>	N/A
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### Description of service

Little Leaders pre-school is a private early years service that is registered to provide care for children aged between 2.5 years and 5 years. The service is registered as operating 1 session between the hours of 09:15 am and 12:15 mid-day. The service operates from 1 ground floor playroom on the ground floor of the community centre. The children have access to an outdoor play area located that consists of the spacious national school yard.

### Staffing

There are 2 adults employed in the service, that includes the registered provider.

### 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 inspections 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*

*(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 registered provider is the designated person in charge and there is a named deputy.  
(b) At all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the registered provider and the named deputy is on the premise.
- (2)  
The registered provider confirmed that 2 adults were employed in the service.  
The recruitment records in respect of these 2 adults were the subject of the inspection.  
(a)  
Two written references and validations were on file from a past employer.  
(b)  
Two written references were on file from a source other than a past employer.  
(c)  
Garda vetting was on file for each of the 2 adults. The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.  
(d)  
Not applicable, the 2 adults did not reside outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 5 and above.

### 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 period of inspection, the registered provider did ensure that there was an adequate number of adults caring for the children attending the service.

(3) There were 2 adults caring for 16 children aged between 2.5 years to 5 years attending the service on a sessional basis. The adult child ratio was correct and maintained.

(8)(c) Not applicable as the service does not operate single-handedly.

## 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-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

#### Compliance Information

- The staff informed the inspector that healthy eating is promoted in the service and this was evidence in the mid-morning snacks that were provided by the parents of the children attending.
- The food observed included sandwiches, yogurts and a variety of fruit.
- The children had ample time to eat their food as the 2 staff members sat with them assisting them with opening food packaging and then to read a story.
- Under staff supervision the children took their lunch bags from their individual cubbies located in the entrance hallway and returned them after eating.
- Children were accommodated to sit where they wanted to and children who wanted to move were enabled to do so.
- The children were observed playing indoors with tabletop activities and went outdoors to play in the designated area prior to the mid-morning snack.
- The toilets located outside of the playroom were used by the children during the session as needed, under staff supervision.

## 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 leading into the building was secured to prevent unauthorised access by any person.
- The cables observed were out of the reach of the children.
- The temperature of the wall mounted heater in the hall was recorded at 49 degrees Celsius.
- The cleaning products observed were stored on a high-level window ledge in the playroom.

##### Infection Control:

- The tables were cleaned down prior to the mealtime.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. Located in the national school yard that is the designated area for children to play outdoors, there was a sheet of corrugated iron that was not adequately secured to the wall, it was accessible to the children posing a risk of injury to them.
2. The firefighting equipment and smoke alarm were not serviced on an annual basis, records demonstrated that the most recent service for both was 03/11/'23.
3. There were 2 toilets allocated for the children's use, the seats of the toilets were not secured posing a risk of children falling off and injuring themselves.

##### Infection Control:

4. There was no running supply of warm water at the hot wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation posing a risk of spreading infection due to ineffective handwashing.
5. The pedal of the lidded bin located in the sanitary accommodation was broken posing a risk of the spread of infection as children and adults touch the lid of the bin when disposing the paper had towels.
6. The children's perishable items were not stored in the fridge provided posing a risk of illness to children due to food spoilage.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. The sheet of corrugated iron was repaired. This will be added to the school risk assessment.
2. The firefighting equipment was serviced. There is a reminder attached to the yearly calendar to ensure that the maintenance is kept up to date.
3. The toilet seats were repaired.

##### Infection Control:

4. The water in the attic water tank was frozen, the tank was blocked with debris as a result of the freezing weather temperatures. The tank was repaired and fixed. The daily checklist now includes checking the water each morning.
5. A new pedal bin is in place.
6. Perishable items are placed in the fridge.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

1. A photograph of the repaired corrugated iron was submitted.
2. The maintenance certification for the firefighting carried out on 20.01.'25 was received. The statement received from the registered provider stating that the service for the fire alarm is scheduled for 11.03.'25.
3. The statement is accepted as evidence.

##### Infection Control:

4. The statement is accepted as evidence.
5. A photograph of the new pedal bin was submitted.
6. The statement is accepted as evidence.

### Summary Comment

The requirement has been met for Regulation 23.

### 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 registered provider did ensure that there was a person available at all times with appropriate first aid responder (FAR) training.
- (2) (a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box available to the children attending. The first aid bag and additional supplies were stored on a level shelf in the playroom out of the reach of the children.
- (b) The first aid equipment was available to the children 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 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) The service had maintained in writing a record of the following: -
- (a) A template to record each fire drill that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 25.11.'24.
  - (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance checks of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm. The records on file demonstrated the last check for the smoke alarms was 03.11.'23 and for the firefighting equipment as demonstrated on the stickers attached to the extinguishers was 03.11.'23.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the service.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (c) The air temperature of the playroom was recorded at 18.2 degrees Celsius, and the sanitary accommodation was recorded at 18 degrees Celsius.
- (e) The 2 sinks in the sanitary were draining the water from the cold taps adequately leaving no water residue in the basins after use.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (d) 1. A section of the ceiling in the playroom was discoloured with the paint peeling away.
- 2. The window ledge in the sanitary was unclean.
- (e)
- 3. The seat on the adult toilet was not secured.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d)
- 1. The ceiling has been repaired and painted.
- 2. The window ledge had been cleaned.
- (e)
- 3. The adult toilet seat was repaired.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

- (d)
- 1. & 2. The statements and photographs are accepted as evidence.
- (e)
- 3. The statement is accepted as evidence.

#### Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 29 has been met.