

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017DS502
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Name of Service:	Learn And Laugh Childcare
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Address of Service:	13 Foxborough Gardens, Balgaddy, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K78 RK09
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jennifer Lowney Corcoran
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	25/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
Inspection undertaken by:	S Quigley & F Carty
Title:	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).

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Description of service

Learn and Laugh Childcare is a privately owned service which is registered to provide full day, part time, and sessional care and education to preschool children aged 2 - 6 years. The service also offers an early childhood care and education (ECCE) scheme and provides school aged care. The service is registered to operate from 07:30 to 18:30 each weekday and is located in a residential area of Balgaddy, South County Dublin. The service operates from a purposely adapted two storey residential property and consists of three care rooms. A fully enclosed outdoor play area is available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs seven staff members, not including the registered provider who does not work day to day in the service. On the day of inspection, six staff members were present and working in the service including two persons in charge and an adult working with school aged children. The registered provider arrived to the service following the inspector's arrival and stayed for the remainder of the inspection.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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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 registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

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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

- (2)
- During discussions with the person in charge, it was identified that one adult had commenced working in the service since the last inspection on the 29 April 2025. Documentation required under regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of the adult. Garda vetting disclosures were reviewed for all adults employed.
- (a) (b) There were two references available for the adult which had been appropriately verified.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for each of the adults.
 - (d) Not applicable, the adult had not lived outside the state for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (3)
- The procedures specified in paragraph (2) had been carried out prior to the adult commencing employment.
- (4)
- Documentation reviewed evidenced that the adult held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 21 pre-school children attending the service being supervised by 3 adults during the inspection.

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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

(1)(b)

Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed to be in place. Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the day. Drinks of water were available within the rooms and were observed to be offered regularly. Mealtimes were observed to be sociable where staff and children sat together chatting. Younger children's nappies were changed as needed and older children were observed using the toilet independently with staff providing assistance where required. Staff spoke to the children in gentle, positive tones and children were comforted promptly if they became upset.

Areas with soft seating were provided within the rooms where the children could rest or take a break from activities. Materials were made accessible to the children on low level shelving, facilitating their choice of play. Staff stated they communicate daily with parents verbally at drop off and collection times.

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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

The inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff, and inspection of the premises that the following steps were taken to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door into the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons gaining access or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Pedal-operated, lidded bins were in place to appropriately manage waste. Staff practiced good handwashing and supported children to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet, and before lunch. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff members outlined that appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy. The nappy changing procedure observed in place was in line with infection control guidelines.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of temperature reducing medication, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff members detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspector and detailed that documentation is in use to record both the pre-consent and administration of medications.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Trailing electrical cables were in reach of the children and posed a risk of harm as follows;
 - A trailing electrical cable was hanging from a shelf to a low-level socket in the Toddler room.
 - A trailing cable was protruding from underneath a radiator cover along the ground to a low-level socket in the Montessori room.

Infection Control:

2. The mat in use for changing nappies during the inspection was torn along the bottom exposing internal foam which appeared soiled and could not be effectively cleaned.
3. Perishable items in children's lunchboxes including cooked meats, cheese, and yoghurts were stored in children's bags at room temperature prior to consumption at 10:30am for morning snack. This posed a risk of gastrointestinal illness to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The service has decided to take away the electronic item that was in the Toddler room have now replaced the socket with a safety plug. The service will make sure there will be no objects with trailing wires, all wires in future will be tacked to wall. The service has removed the extension lead from under the radiator cover in the Montessori room.

Infection Control:

2. The service has gotten rid of the old nappy changing mat and replaced it with one. Each week nappy changing mat will be inspected.
3. All children's lunches will now be stored in the refrigerator in the kitchen. The service will be purchasing a small fridge for the Montessori class so all lunches from both the Toddler class and Montessori class can be stored upstairs and preschool in fridge downstairs. Parents have been kindly asked to provide their children's snack in a zip lock bag to fit all lunches into fridge.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

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Summary Comment

The actions outlined above as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances. The regulatory requirement has been met.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) A review of documentation evidenced that a person trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.