

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018LH505
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Name of Service:	Pugwash Bay Ltd
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Address of Service:	Aston Village Green, Aston Village, Newtownstalaban, Drogheda, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A92 N60W
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Name of Registered Provider:	James Moore
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	11/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	26
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive Airside Business Park Swords, Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. McDonnell and S. McKenna
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Pugwash Bay is based in Aston Village, in a residential area of Co. Meath. The service is registered to provide sessional and full-day care to children aged 0-6 years old. The service provides the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme between 9.30am to 12.30pm. Pugwash Bay is in a purpose-built ground floor building with the Little Lions, Zebra, Tigers and Giraffe rooms available for the children. There is also a dedicated sleep room, a kitchen and sanitary facilities and an outdoor area on the premises. There is a registered school age service in operation.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. The registered provider employs 19 staff members to work in the service, and this includes an area manager, person in charge and deputy person in charge, who work in a supernumerary capacity. There is also a human resources manager and quality manager, not on site, a cleaner, a cook, a school age staff member. There are 11 staff members who work directly with the pre-school children.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 16 (k)

Records in Relation to a pre-school service, Regulation 19(3) Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of a child, Regulation 27 Supervision, Regulation 31 Notification of Incidents, and Regulation 32 Complaints.

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.

Additional Information

This inspection was triggered by information received by the Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the area manager, 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

(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.

(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;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

(1) (a) There was a designated person in charge of the service, and there was a named person to deputise in their absence.

(b) On the inspector's arrival the identified person in charge was available. Following discussion with the area manager, the person in charge, and a review of the staff roster it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation the designated person in charge or the named person in charge were on the premises and staff were knowledgeable about who this was.

(c) It was evident that there was a clear management structure in place and staff were familiar with it. The inspectors discussed the wider management structure, and the inspectors were informed of the support structure for the service.

(2) Following a review of rosters and a discussion with the area manager it was confirmed that there were two new staff members who were employed since the last inspection on 11 November 2025. The staff files of these new staff members reviewed.

(a)(b) There were four written and validated references available for the two new staff members.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the new staff members. A Garda vetting disclosure, dated within the last three years, was also available for the staff members who were working at the last inspection in November 2025.

(d) A review of the documentation available demonstrated that the police vetting required for two staff members was available.

(4) There was documentation available to demonstrate that one of the two staff members who worked directly with the pre-school children in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(7) (a) (b) (c) Induction records for the two new staff were available for review. Staff outlined they reviewed the services policies and procedures and completed specific training courses as part of their induction process.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Following a review of documentation available the inspectors could not confirm that one staff member, who worked directly with the pre-school children, held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) The registered provider has stated that the qualification has been submitted to establish if it meets the criteria for Level 5. The staff member has been reassigned to administration duties and school age care until this is received. The recruitment team will be responsible for establishing that new employees' qualifications are sufficient and the new checklist will be implemented.

Supporting documentation submitted

Roster

Summary Comment

The registered provider has advised that they are awaiting information regarding the adequacy of the staff member's qualification and has reassigned the staff member so that they are not working directly with pre-school children until the clarification has been received. The inspector accepts the assurances from the registered provider.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

(e)(j)(k)(u) The inspectors reviewed the service's behaviour management policy; accident & incident policy; policy on authorisation to collect; staff supervision policy. These policies contained the required information to support staff in safe and effective care practices.

Non-Compliance Information

(r) The inspectors reviewed the service’s risk assessment policy, and this did not contain the procedures to detail who carried out risk assessments and how long records were kept for. This information can support effective risk management to support staff in their care of children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(r) The registered provider stated that there is a risk assessment table in the safeguarding policy: This contains information regarding; Risk identified; Procedures in place to manage risk and Persons Responsible. A standardised risk assessment template has been developed and introduced to support consistent and effective risk management. The period of retention was included. Updated risk assessment sheets were shared with staff and made accessible within the service. As a preventive action the registered provider stated that all policies and procedures are currently under review by the company at Senior Management, and this area will be included as part of that process.

Supporting documentation submitted

Extract of policy and example of template completed

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence in the registered provider’s corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the noncompliance.

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) On the inspector's unannounced arrival, the adult child ratio was observed to be correct and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult-to-child ratios were observed:

- In the Little Lions Room there were 2 staff members, and 4 children aged between 11 months and 2 years old, all of whom attended on a sessional and full day care basis.
- In the Zebra Room there were 1 staff member, and 5 children aged between 2 years 1 month to 2 years 11 months old, all of whom attended on a sessional and full day care basis.
- In the Tigers Room, there were 2 staff members and 11 children aged between 2 years and 10 months old to 4 years and 1 month old all of whom attended on a sessional and 5 attended on a full day care basis.
- In the Giraffe Room, there were 3 staff members and 14 children aged between 3 years and 7 months old to 4 years and 11 months old attending on a sessional basis. There was 1 staff member and 8 children who attended on a full day care basis. There was also another staff member with school age children in this room in the afternoon.

The area manager arrived during the inspection. The area manager and person in charge were available to provide cover for breaks and support with care for the children.

(8) (a) Following a review of rosters, sign in records and discussions with staff members and the area manager the inspectors could confirm that two staff members were always on the premises when the children were attendance in the service.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(k) A small sample of new incident records were available since the previous inspection in November 2025. This demonstrated that details of the incident were recorded, and parents were informed as there was a parental signature and date on each form.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(3) The inspectors observed the care practices of staff members throughout the service in care rooms, the communal areas and in the garden, which included auxiliary staff members. All staff were observed speaking with children in a kind manner. Staff working directly with the children were observed responding to individual children’s requirements to provide support and comfort. It is acknowledged that through a review of records, observations and discussions with staff there have been situations that have impacted on children’s wellbeing in the service in relation to peer interactions. Currently there is a plan to manage the situation and staff discussed management support for this which was reflected in documents such as incident reviews. The inspectors observed staff members engaging with all children to provide support. Care plans were in place for children where they required specific supports and staff were aware and implementing these.

Documents available and a discussion with the area manager outlined a situation in June 2025, in which poor care practices were observed by management staff. Following a review of these documents appropriate procedures and referrals had been implemented. Actions taken to address the incident were maintained on this inspection with gentle and kind care practices observed in the care room associated with the incident.

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:

- A recent incident had occurred and in the notification for the incident the service had stated that the exit button to the service had been moved higher. This was observed on inspection.
- Throughout the inspection only staff members were observed to attend to visitor and parents at the door.
- The inspectors spoke with staff members and management staff regarding incidents related to safety and care practices. There were written records and signed statements available in relation to incidents that were discussed. For example, where an incident occurred in relation to unauthorised access and parents were informed by email with preventive actions detailed. The actions taken to minimise this risk were in practice on the day of inspection, with the main door closed after entrance and exit of visitors.
- In relation to an incident notified to the inspectorate, measures taken to reduce the risk of recurrence were in place. While staff members and children noted ongoing issues, which were observed by inspectors, the management staff of the service discussed alternative measures that had now been put in place to further manage the risks.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. There was no system in place to review incidents and accidents to ensure patterns may be identified to reduce risks for children. Whilst there were records available to demonstrate reviews and action was taken in individual circumstances; there was no records or overarching review to ensure generalised and persistent risks were identified and minimised. A discussion with staff members on inspection confirmed that this did not currently take place.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. As a preventive action the registered provider submitted that a retrospective review of all accident and incident records was carried out by management for the past few weeks. It is confirmed that they included the following Immediate and Preventive actions put in place to prevent reoccurrence. Where

trends were identified, risk assessments were updated and additional control measures implemented. All findings and actions were documented and will be communicated to staff at our staff meeting. As a preventive action a formal Incident and accident spreadsheet system has been implemented, and accident and incident information will be transferred to the spreadsheet. A section to record immediate actions and preventive action taken to reduce risk and the likelihood of reoccurrence, will be linked directly to risk assessments. This will enable an in-depth record keeping system where patterns, environmental, staffing and triggers observed. In addition, incidents and accidents will be reviewed monthly by the manager/deputy manager; analysed collectively to identify trends, common causes, and emerging risks.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Example spread sheet
Current Risk assessment

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.

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 inspectors observed consistent supervision of all children throughout the inspection. In the Giraffe room the children were observed taking part in various activities, including free choice. Throughout this time children were responded to when it was noted that they needed help or required comfort, as staff were actively engaged in supervision. When children needed to leave the room, staff were available to support this transition to other areas of the service. In response to individual needs management staff were available to support staff in the rooms when children required supervision outside of the care room.

Children were observed in the outdoor area despite quite inclement weather. The children were given the opportunity to play in the open outdoor area or the sheltered part. At these times children were supervised whilst on various equipment such as slides and climbing areas. Incidents between peers were observed and responded too by staff members.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:

(e) an incident in respect of which a pre-school child attending the service goes missing while attending the service.

Compliance Information

(e) The service submitted a notification, within the required timeframe, concerning a child missing from the service in November 2025.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(c) The room temperature of the Little Lions room was not always maintained between the recommended care room temperatures of 18 - 22°C. During 1.39pm to 2.10pm the room temperature was recorded at 17.4°C, the inspector advised the staff of the cooler temperature at this time. It is acknowledged that when the heat was boosted by staff at 2.10pm the care room temperature increased and was recorded at 21°C at 3.02pm.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) The temperature was rectified on inspection. The window and door maintenance company will inspect the seals on all windows etc. This will determine if the room is losing heat due to the wind as the baby room is at the front facing of the building. Manager added temperature checks to daily supervision document. As a preventive action Additional temperature monitoring procedures have been strengthened to ensure room temperatures are

consistently maintained between 18- 22°C. A clear process has been introduced, including: boosting heating promptly; notifying management if temperatures cannot be maintained.

Temperature checks will be recorded at regular intervals throughout the day, particularly during colder weather. Heating systems will be checked routinely to ensure they are functioning effectively.

Supporting documentation submitted

Example of temperature checks

Daily supervision document copy

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and

(b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.

Compliance Information

(2) (a)(b) The service had a record of a historical complaint. Records demonstrated the complaints policy had been followed and where minor errors had occurred in timelines these were acknowledged in the service's response to the complainant.