

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Tusla I.D: TU2018MO502

Name of Service Little Bears Preschool

Address of Service: Murrisk National School, Murrisk Westport, Co Mayo F28
KD50

Email Address: littlebearscurrisk@outlook.com

Name of Registered Provider: Helen Vaughan

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	✓	Part-Time	✓	Sessional	✓
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change: An additional room added to the service
An increase in numbers from 22 children to 25 children.

Proposed Number of Children: 25 children

Recommended Change Following Inspection: The approved use of the additional room.
Increase in numbers of children from 22 to 25 children.

Registered change: Change in number of children from 22 to 25 children

Date of Inspection: 2 9 0 8 2 0 2 5

Inspection undertaken by: B Lavin & F Kelly

Title: Early Years Inspectors

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Early Year’s Inspectorate, Tulsa, Child & Family Agency, 2nd
Floor, St. Mary’s HQ, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Rationale for Inspection:

Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 5 Children
Date of Registration	1st October 2025

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Little Bears Preschool is a privately owned and operated full day care service registered to operate from 8:00 - 16:30 hours and to cater for children aged from 2 to 6 years of age.
Premises	Little Bears Preschool is located in a prefabricated building on the grounds of a primary school in Murrisk, county Mayo. There is one playroom, a kitchen and sanitary facilities provided. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area to the side of the building.
Staffing	There are four staff including the registered provider employed in the service.
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes: Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to</p>

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

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	registering the change in circumstance. 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.
Acknowledgements	The Inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider 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.

Requirement met:	This requirement has been met (1) (a) There is a designated person in charge in the service. There is a named person to deputise in the service as needed.
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Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 11 -Staffing Levels

Requirement met:	The requirement has been met. (1) There are four adults employed to care directly for the children and maintain the sessional child ratios of 1 adult for every 11 children and the full day care adult: child ratios of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:6 for children aged between 2 and 6 years of age and 1: 8 for children aged from 3 to 6 years of age.
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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—

- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises or

Requirement met:

(1)(a)

- Adequate and suitable play facilities are in place in the current playroom Little Bears and the proposed new playroom Tiny Bears to cater for children from 2 to 6 years. The playrooms are laid out with a number of defined interest areas. Play resources in Little Bears playroom included a library corner, farm and small world play, magnetic board, doll and home corner, a shopping checkout, doctors set, doll houses, art stations, Montessori play materials and jigsaws.
- Tiny Bears playroom consisted of a range of toys including two work stations and tool boxes with tools, a farm with tractors, a construction area with various sized blocks, hair dressing equipment, library area, a baby section with dolls and car ramp with cars.
- All equipment and materials in the playrooms throughout the service are stored on low level shelving units to facilitate a child led learning environment. Tables and chairs of suitable size for children aged from 2 to 6

	<p>years of age are provided facilitating play with the tabletop activities including puzzles available.</p> <p>(1)(b)</p> <p>In each of the playrooms, the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couches, matting cushions in designated cosy areas. The service had sleep mats for any older child attending the service requiring sleep.</p> <p>(3)(a)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable secure outdoor play areas were provided for the children in the service. • An enclosed outdoor space was located to the side and rear of the building. The ground cover consisted of tarmacadam. Metal gates separated the play area from the local primary school. A small shed was used to store some of the outdoor toys. • Play equipment included a slide, swings, hopscotch, a playhouse, mud kitchen, ride on toys, a planting area for flowers and vegetables and a water play area with funnels and tubs. A sheltered area has an easel, seating and a table for activities such as artwork outdoors. There is a storage shed to store play equipment including ride on toys and hula hoops for physical activity.
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TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

- The service is providing breakfast, healthy snacks and a nutritious main meal for the children.
- The registered provider advised that water and milk is available in the service and the children are to bring drinks from home in individually identifiable containers.

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.

Requirement met:

- There was a buzzer access system into the main entrance front door.
- Safe storage out of reach of children was provided for cleaning products and equipment.
- Secure storage for medication is available in the service.
- The staff only areas, kitchen, storage areas and adult sanitary areas were secure and thereby inaccessible to a pre-school child.
- The toys and equipment in use in the playrooms are in good condition and free from hazard.
- The outdoor area was secured so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised person could not enter the area.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The heating system in the service was thermostatically controlled to ensure the temperature was maintained between 18°C to 22°C. The room temperature on the day of inspection was 20.2°C. • Thermostatically controlled warm water facilitate hand washing without the risk of scalding the children was available to facilitate hygienic hand washing. Water temperature in sink 1 in the sanitary accommodation was 36.4°C, in sink 2 in the sanitary accommodation was 36.8°C and the nappy changing sink 32.7°C. • Refrigerators are provided for the storage of perishable food items. • Aprons and gloves are provided for use. • The outdoor waste storage bins are inaccessible to children in the service.
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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.*

Requirement met:

- (1) The requirement has been met as staff members had in date paediatric First Aid Responder Course completed.
- (2)(a) The registered provider had ensured that the service is equipped with first aid boxes.
- (b) The first aid boxes were available to children when required.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) Arrangements were in place to record fire drills.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and fire alarms in the service was on file. A record of the maintenance of the fire alarms system and the firefighting equipment stated they were serviced in March 2025.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the hallway and in the playroom.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met as adequate insurance has been provided for the number of children proposed to attend the service.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Requirement met:

- (a) No obvious defects were observed in the building structure
- (b) The main entrance door at the front of the service was secured with a buzzer system to prevent unauthorised entry to the area and children from leaving unnoticed.
- (c) Lighting:
 There is both natural light from windows and artificial lighting provided in the premises which is adequate and suitable for the provision of a childcare service. The light fittings light fittings in the playrooms and in the sanitary areas are encased with protective covers.
 Heating:
 The service is heated by electric storage heaters. The playroom air temperature and sanitary area temperatures were found to be within the required range of 18-22°C for these areas.
 Ventilation:
 The playrooms are ventilated by openable windows. Sanitary units are ventilated by openable windows or mechanical ventilation systems.
- (d) The playrooms and sanitary areas were clean and maintained in a satisfactory condition. Cleaning schedules were in place in the service.
- (e) Sanitary facilities were provided in the service as follows:
 Adult sanitary accommodation

	<p>One sanitary unit with one toilet and one wash hand basin were provided for the staff in the adjacent school building.</p> <p>Child sanitary accommodation</p> <p>Sanitary units with three toilets and three wash hand basins were provided in the service. The sanitary accommodation also contained a nappy changing unit.</p> <p>Liquid soap, paper hand towels are provided for hygienic hand washing and drying with foot pedal operated bins provided for the disposal of waste. The hot water temperatures of the taps in all the sanitary units' wash hand basins in the building was recorded below 36.8°C on the day of the inspection.</p>
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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

(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.

Requirement met:	<p>(1) A summary of the overall floor measurement of the new proposed playroom.</p>		
	Room number	Room size	Age profile of children proposed to attend on Full Day Care or Sessional
	Tiny Bears	14.02m ²	5 children aged between 2 to 3yrs, attending on a part time or full time basis

		or 6 children aged between 3 to 6yrs attending on a part time or full-time basis or 7 children attending on a sessional basis.
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(2) The minimum space requirements for the different age profiles of the children attending are outlined below:

Full Day Care Service	
Age Range of children Attending	Clear Floor Space
1-2Years	2.8 square metres.
2 -3 Years	2.35 square metres
3-6 Years	2.3 square metres
Sessional Service	
2 to 6 years	1.818 m ²

The service has adequate space to accommodate the proposed number of children attending on a full day care basis.

The registered provider had applied to accommodate an additional 3 children aged between 2 and 6 years of age.