

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019DY005				
Name of Service:	Little Harvard Childcare Ltd				
Address of Service:	Block A4 Bridgefield, Northwood, Santry Demesne, Dublin 9.				
Eircode:	D09 H3V9				
Name of Registered Provider:	James Hargrave				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	10/02/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>71</td> <td>PM</td> <td>53</td> </tr> </table>	AM	71	PM	53
AM	71	PM	53		

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8, D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin and C. Kerrigan
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

Little Harvard Childcare is located in North Dublin and operates from the ground floor of a residential premises. Little Harvard Santry is 1 of 21 services operated by the registered provider. The service operates Monday to Friday from 7:00am to 6:30pm. The service is registered to offer care to children aged 0 to 6 years old on a full time, part time and sessional basis. At the time of the inspection, the service did not have children under 1 years old registered to attend. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. There are 6 care rooms in the service: the Wobbler Room, the Junior Toddler Room, the Toddler Room, ECCE Room, Preschool 1 and Preschool Senior Room. The ECCE room operates morning sessions only between 9.15am to 12.15pm. There is an onsite kitchen, staff room and a cot room adjoining to the wobbler room. There is also an outdoor play area located to the front of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service and employs 21 adults. Adults employed include a regional manager, a person in charge, 18 adults to work directly with the children, two of whom were employed under the access and inclusion model and one ancillary staff, a chef. On the day of inspection, the person in charge and 15 adults working directly with the children, two of whom were employed under the access and inclusion model were present. The regional manager arrived shortly after the inspection began and remained on the premises throughout the duration of the inspection. The registered provider was not present on the day of 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2)(3) and (4)-Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-School Child.

Regulation 19 (1)(a)-Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of Child.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures.

Regulation 28 Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under: Regulation 15, Regulation 19 and Regulation 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler Room, the Junior Toddler Room, ECCE room and Toddler Room.

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 regional 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.

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.

- (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspector team arrived unannounced to the service. A review of the staff roster showed that a designated person is on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.
- (2) A review of the roster and conversation with the management showed that the registered provider currently employs 21 adults. The full staff record of 21 adults were reviewed as part of the inspection.
- (a) 22 written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) 20 written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 21 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available in respect of 14 adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for longer than six months as an adult.
- (4) Documentation was available to show that the 20 adults who work directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Non-Compliance Information

- (3) The registered provider did not ensure the following checks were carried out prior to one adult working in the service.
- Documentary evidence available indicated that the adult had commenced employment within the service prior to receipt of Garda Vetting.
 - The same adult did not have the second reference validated before they commenced employment.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Management have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that all necessary documentation is in place prior to staff commencing work with Little Harvard. Local and senior management will carry out regular checks to ensure compliance with all aspects of Regulation 9 going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance identified under regulation 9.

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) There was an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service. There were 15 adults providing direct care to 71 preschool children in the morning. There were 13 adults caring for 53 children in the afternoon.

(2) Ratios were maintained as follows:

During the morning of inspection:

- In the Wobbler Room, there were 3 adults caring for 8 children aged 1 to 2 years old.
- In the Toddler 1 Room, there were 2 adults caring for 9 children aged 1 ½ to 2 years old.
- In the Toddler 2 Room, there were 3 adults caring for 13 children aged 2 to 3 years old.
- In the ECCE room, there were 2 adults caring for 9 children aged 2 ½ to 3 years old.
- In the Pre-school 1 Room, there were 2 adults providing caring for 15 children aged 2 years and 8 months to 5 years old.
- In the Pre-school 2 Room, there were 3 adults caring for 17 children aged 3 to 4 years old.

During the afternoon of inspection:

- In the Wobbler Room, there were 2 adults caring for 9 children aged 1 to 3 years old.
- In the Toddler 1 Room, there were 3 adults caring for 6 children aged 1 ½ to 2 years old.
- In the Toddler 2 Room, there were 3 adults caring for 13 children aged 2 to 3 years old.

- The ECCE room which operated from 9.15am to 12.15pm was closed for the afternoon.
 - In the Pre-school 1 Room, there were 2 adults providing caring for 10 children aged 2 years and 8 months to 5 years old.
 - In the Pre-school 2 Room, there were 3 adults caring for 15 children aged 3 to 4 years old.
- The regional manager and the person in charge were available to provide support to the care rooms when required during the inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) (a) A sample of eighteen children's registration records were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a)-(i) was maintained for each child.

(3) (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspection team were available for review.

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

(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

- Discussion with staff showed that children are offered breakfast between 7am to 9am, children were observed to be offered a fruit snack at 10.50am. Different dietary requirements were catered for, for example, at dinnertime chicken and sweet potato curry was served and an alternative vegetarian sweet potato curry available and extra portions were offered.
- Water was available and accessible in each care room for the children to drink.
- There were cosy areas with a soft mat, cushions, cuddly toys and books for rest and relaxation present in each care rooms. In addition, there was an adult sized sofa in the Wobbler room which was observed in use when a child needed comforting.
- Identity and belonging were promoted throughout the service. For example, there was a 'Family Wall' display, a 'Birthday Time' display, a 'Friendship Wall' display and the children's artwork was displayed throughout the care rooms in the service. In addition, children had their own coat hooks individually labelled.

Supporting relationships with Children:

- Staff discussed how the service shares the policies and procedures with families in advance of enrolment.
- The service used handover forms and updated parents/guardians on their child's day this included activities, mealtimes, toileting, and sleep updates. There was a parent notice board in the hallway with relevant information for families. Staff were observed to chat with parents at arrival times.

- Children’s language development was supported through songs and storytelling at circle time which were observed during the inspection.
- Each room had a visual daily routine on display and staff were observed to give children verbal reminders in advance from moving from one activity to the next activity. This provided the children with a sense of stability, security, and predictability.
- Staff were able to discuss how they support children with the transition from home to the service by offering a settling-in period. As part of the settling-in process the parents are welcome into the service with their child prior to the child starting in the service.
- During nappy changing procedures and hand washing before mealtimes children were observed to be sang to and spoken to in a reassuring and friendly manner.

Equipment and Materials:

- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children, providing a comfortable area to eat meals and take part in tabletop activities.
- The care rooms in the service were designed with the age and stage of development having been taken into consideration and equipment and materials were visible and accessible enabling the children to independently access their choice of activity. For example, in the Wobbler room there was adequate space for the children to explore their environment and there was push along and pull along toys which supported movement. The layout of the both the Junior Toddler room, the Toddler room and the ECCE room encouraged spontaneous, and interactive play. There were construction areas with supporting equipment, home areas with a play kitchen with supporting props and dress up clothes for imaginary play.
- Each room had a visual daily routine on display and staff were observed to give children verbal and visual reminders in advance from moving from one activity to the next activity. This provided the children with a sense of stability, security, and predictability.
- An outdoor play area was available for the children with a soft ground surface. Children were observed to use the outdoor play area during the inspection. This supports their social, cognitive, gross, and fine motor development.

Non-Compliance Information

1. On the day of the inspection, it was observed that two children’s basic needs were not met. Evidenced by the following.

- A child was observed to be left in wet bottoms that were not promptly changed by staff. Wet clothes can cause a child to feel discomfort.
- There was no individual care plan in place for a child who was observed to require extra support. Through discussion with staff and documentary evidence of several incidents which had occurred it was evident that staff were aware the child required an individual care plan in place. There was evidence that some discussions had taken place with the staff and family of the child around putting supports into place. However, on the day of the inspection there was no written care plan in place or preventative actions documented to support the child in the care room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Staff have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that children are changed when necessary and promptly. An individual care plan has been created in conjunction with the child's parents to identify and address the child's needs, risks and dispositions. Local, regional and senior management will carry out regular checks to ensure compliance with all aspects of regulation 19.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Individual Care Plan for child.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.

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:

- There was a secure entrance to support the access and exit of children and visitors. A keypad system was in place both on the internal and external doors. A visitor's log was in place and the inspection team were requested to sign in.
- The outdoor play area was secure reducing the risk of children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to this area.
- The kitchen was not accessible to the children and the door remained closed throughout the inspection.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of the reach to the children.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.

Infection Control:

- In the ECCE room perishable snacks such as yoghurt and cheese brought by the children from home for morning snack time were observed to be stored in a fridge reducing the risk of bacteria multiplying.
- The sanitary areas and nappy changing facilities were equipped with liquid soap, warm water and hand drying facilities. The children were observed to be familiar with the routine to wash their hands before eating, after outdoor play and after using the toilet and getting their nappies changed.
- Foot pedal operated bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas to allow hygienic disposal of contaminated materials.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition. There were cleaning schedules on the wall of the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- Individual bed linen was used for the sleeping children and staff were familiar with the washing schedule.
- Soothers were stored in individually labelled boxes.
- Windows in the care rooms were observed to be open which allowed for circulation of air and reduced the risk of cross infection.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had an individual health plans to identify the medication requirements and procedures in place for three children who had a specific medical condition. Through discussion with staff, it was evident that staff were familiar and aware of the procedures to follow as per each care plan.

Safe Sleep:

- Heavy clothing was removed from the children before sleep time.
- Lighting was subdued in the sleep rooms and soft music was played.
- Children under two years of aged were provided with a cot for sleeping. Children over two years of aged were provided with their own individual sleep mat and individual bed linen.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained for sleeping children over one years old in both the cot room and care room.
- Staff maintained a record of the children that slept, to include their colour, breathing and position every 10 minutes.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, it was observed that all fire emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This helped ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency.

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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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)
- (a) The service conducts monthly fire drills with the pre-school children on various days and at various times. The last fire drill dated was held on 16 January 2025.
 - (b) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate a maintenance check was carried out on the firefighting equipment on 26 September 2024 and the smoke alarms on 29 August 2024.
- (2) (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the hallway in the service and the care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed that the service was adequately insured to reflect the type of care provided with an expiry date of 27 March 2025.