

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2019MH004
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Stars of Wonder Ltd
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	2 Millbourne Drive, Ashbourne, Co. Meath
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A84 090
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sylvia Ho Yuen Phui
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20/03/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	40	PM	Not Applicable
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Ballycoolin, Dublin 15.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Y Kelly
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector

### 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>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

	<p><b>Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</b></p> <p><b>QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2019MH004</b></p>	1 of 10
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Stars of Wonder was established in 2019. Situated in a residential area the service provides a sessional service to children from 2 to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). The service operates two ECCE rooms, one ECCE room from 9.00am to 12.00pm and the second ECCE room from 09.15am to 12.15pm. The service also provides a school aged service. The service is situated in a purpose-built facility and consists of 2 care rooms, a reception area, office, kitchen, sensory room and sanitary facilities. An outdoor space is located to the side of the premises.

### Staffing

The service employs eleven staff members including the registered provider. The registered provider works in the service on a daily basis, coordinating the day-to-day operations of the service and working directly with the children when needed. On the day of the inspection there were six staff members working directly with the children including the registered provider and the deputy manager. Two staff members, one of whom was present on the day, are employed in the service to reduce the adult to child ratio and if necessary to work with a child with additional needs, a post which is funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model. There are three staff employed to work in the school aged childcare service. A cleaner is employed who works in the evenings. The registered provider was present in the service during the inspection.

### Methodology

Tusla 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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 21, 23 and 25. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included Preschool Room 1 and Preschool Room 2.

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, deputy 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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider is the designated person in charge. There was a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present in the building when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.

(c) The service had a clear management structure in place with clear roles and responsibilities outlined.

(2) The files for the registered provider and 10 staff were reviewed and the following was recorded:

(a) Nineteen written validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Three written validated references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all eleven adults in the service including the registered provider. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International Police vetting was available for six adults who had lived outside of the state for six months or more as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that the registered provider and six adults who work directly with the children 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 eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) The adult to child ratio was correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection. There were 6 adults working directly with 40 children on the morning of the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In Pre-school Room 1 there were 3 adults working with 19 children aged 3 years and 2 months to 5 years and 2 months.

- In Pre-school Room 2 there were 3 adults working with 21 children aged 2 years and 9 months to 4 years and 11 months.

### 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) Each child's learning and development and wellbeing was facilitated within the preschool in the following ways:

#### **Basic needs:**

- Children's snack and water bottles were brought from home. Snack consisted of crackers, sandwiches, rolls, wraps, bagels, waffles, tuna, salmon, ham, cheese, beetroot or cucumber and fruit. Children's water bottles were accessible to the children during the morning. The children's snack time was observed to be calm and relaxed. Children and staff were observed to sit together and chatted socially during this time and staff offered help to children when needed.
- There were cosy areas in both pre-school rooms for the children to relax in as required. The cosy areas were equipped with a mat, cushions, blankets, chairs and a selection of books for reading and relaxation.
- Children's independence was supported. Children got their water bottles independently at snack time. Two children were chosen to be the helper and gave out the snack to the other children. Children tidied up their lunch boxes independently after snack time.

#### **Supporting relationships:**

- Staff discussed that there is a key person approach in the service.
- Staff demonstrated warm and caring interactions with the children and children were given praise and encouragement, "You did a good job, you should be proud of yourself". Children were offered comfort and support when needed. There was a welcoming atmosphere in the service.
- Staff were observed interacting with children at their level and engaging in children's play.

- Identity and belonging were promoted in the service. For example, there was a 'Family Wall' display in each room with photographs of children's families, birthday chart display and the children's artwork was displayed in the preschool rooms. In addition, each child had their own coat hook identified by children's names and photographs of the children. In the preschool room 2 there was a 'Celebrating, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion' book which documented children's experiences of celebrating different cultural feast days throughout the year. In addition to this there was an 'Around the World' display in preschool room 1.
- Transitions were observed to be well managed; the children engaged well with tidying up, putting items away independently whilst singing the tidy up song. Children's names were called to wash hands whilst staff sang songs with the children at the table to support them with the transitions. Routines provided for predictability and comfort for young children.

### **Programme of Activities:**

- Discussions with staff and observation ascertained that there is an emergent curriculum in place with elements of Montessori.
- Children's learning and development is documented in children's learning journals which include photographs drawings and photographs of children's learning and development. These are accessible to the children and children were observed reading their journals at the table in preschool room 2 during the morning. In preschool room 1 there was an emergent interest and observations board which documented children's anecdotes. In preschool room 1, the children brought home 'Peter Pig' and the parents documented children's home experiences in a documentation book 'Let's go on an adventure'.
- Staff facilitated movement and action songs with the children which promoted gross motor development and fundamental movement skills.
- One of the themes of the month was 'All About Colours' and staff discussed mixing different colours of paint with the children to learn about colour.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- There was age appropriate furniture with child sized chairs and tables for children to sit whilst they played or for mealtimes.
- There was a variety of play based materials available that were suitable to the age and stage of children's development divided into labelled interest areas which were accessible to children.
- In both preschool rooms there was a home corner with kitchen and supporting materials, with and a role-play area in preschool room 1 to include dress up clothes and dolls and dressing table in preschool 2 to support dramatic and pretend play for children. In the art area and mark making areas there were art materials such as paint, pencils and crayons, stencils and scissors to support creative art and mark making for children. There were sensory play materials to include playdough materials, sand tray, water tray and a tuft tray for painting. There were a variety of natural materials including a coconut, pine cones, shells and sticks. There were transportation toys to include cars, trains, garage and road mat, and small world toys including farm and wild animals and dinosaurs and construction materials included a workbench with wooden tools and wooden blocks. Both preschool rooms had Montessori materials such as wooden cylinders, pink tower, brown stairs and tabletop materials such as jigsaws, threading, plastic building bricks and matching games.
- There was a cosy area in each room for children to relax and a variety of books to provide opportunities for storytelling.
- An outdoor play area was available for children. The equipment and materials included a wooden house, 2 kitchens, swings, a slide, balance beams, climbing structure, benches, table and chairs, ride in and ride on cars, a chalk board, 2 sandpits with buckets and spades, large wooden blocks, transportation toys including large cars and fire engine, music wall, practical life board and small world toys including dolls houses, garage and people. There were natural materials including sticks and real-life items including a real saucepan. There was a covered area for children to play in adverse weather.

## 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:

- On arrival to the service, the inspector observed that the door was monitored by staff. The inspector was asked to sign in on arrival.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The outdoor area was secured and partially surfaced with artificial grass and an impact absorbing surface.

##### Infection Control:

- Children's snacks brought in from home were refrigerated to prevent spoiling of perishable items.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and dispensed handtowels were available in the sanitary facilities.
- Children were observed to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before eating and after using the toilet.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Staff were aware of children's individual health care needs. There was a medical action plan available in preschool room 2 which was signed by the parents.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clearly labelled and unobstructed in the event of emergency evacuation.
- Fire evacuation procedures were displayed on the wall in the service.

### 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 ensured that an adequate number of staff were trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and a staff member trained in FAR was available on the premises throughout the opening hours of the service. There were two staff members trained in First Aid Response (FAR), who was present on the day of the inspection.
- (2)(a) An adequately stocked first aid box was observed in the hallway of the service.
- (b) The first aid box was stored out of the reach of the children but available to staff as needed.