

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020DS002
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Name of Service:	Liffey Early Services
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Address of Service:	St. John of God CLG Liffey Services, Unit 15 Block A, Gleann na hEorna, Cookstown Way, Springfield, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24 AD62
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Name of Registered Provider:	Daniel O'Byrne
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	08/01/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Level 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	R Phillips
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	N/A
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Description of service

Liffey Early Services is part of St. John of God Community Services and provides sessional care for children with intellectual disabilities. The service is registered to provide care for children from 2 to 6 years of age from 09:00 to 12:00 Monday to Friday and from 13:30 to 16:00, Monday to Thursday. The service is based on the ground floor in a larger building occupied by St. John of God Community Services in an urban area of Tallaght, south Dublin. There are two care rooms in the service, the Playgroup room and the Preschool room. The service operates a 1:2 adult: child ratio. The service also has a sensory room and a room for messy play available to the children. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs seven staff including a manager. There were six staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider does not work directly with the 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 regulations:

- 9 (1)(2)(3)(4) Management and recruitment,
- 11(1)(3) Staffing levels,

15(1)(a) -(i), (3)(c) Records of a preschool child,
19 (1) (b) Health Welfare and Development of the child,
25 First Aid and
26 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c) (4) Fire Safety measures.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Records of a preschool child.

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 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 person in charge and a named person to deputise.
 - (b) The person in charge and a person who could deputise were on the premises when the inspector arrived for the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or a deputy to be present at all times of opening.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure. Staff were aware of their roles and the lines of authority and accountability.

(2) The inspection focused on records for all seven adults employed to work in the service.

(a) & (b) Appropriate references were available for all adults with a record of verification checks carried out by the service.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The registered provider adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the state as an adult for more than six consecutive months.

(3) The records outlined in regulation 9(2) above were dated prior to the commencement date of the adults in the service.

(4) All adults working with children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent by the minister.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children for sessional services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were six adults working directly with five children 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 sample of 10 records for children were reviewed. The information required was documented as outlined below:
- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
 - (b) The date when each child first attended the service.
 - (c) A section was available for recording the date when the child ceases attending.
 - (d) The name, address and telephone number of parents and information where parents can be contacted.
 - (e) Names and contact details of other adults authorised to collect the child.

- (f) Medical information, allergies, dietary preferences, additional needs, and other information specific to the child.
 - (g) The name and telephone number of the child's medical practitioner.
 - (h) Immunisation details.
 - (i) Signed parental consent for medical treatment in the event of an emergency.
- (3)(c) The above records were made readily available for inspection.

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

This service had a key person system in place. Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded promptly to their cues. The staff communicated with the children using a keyword sign system named Lámh, and a picture exchange communication system (PECS). The adults use choice boards for some children, and the inspector observed the staff facilitating the children's choices of toys and activities during circle time and free play. The adults displayed warmth and sensitivity in all interactions observed with the children.

The atmosphere was calm and relaxed within the care rooms. There was a daily routine and the staff managed the transitions well, using their PECS to communicate what was coming up to the children. Drinking water was available to the children throughout the inspection.

The staff sat with the children at snack and mealtime. The children brought a packed lunch from home, which the staff supported the children to eat. The staff changed the children's nappies at regular intervals and as required in a responsive manner. The care rooms were laid out to facilitate accessibility to the toys and play materials. There was furniture for the individual children supplied through the Children's Disability Network Teams.

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 inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance doors to the service were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.

The radiators and warm water were thermostatically controlled to prevent scalds.

The kitchen and all storage facilities were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

There was warm water, liquid soap and hand towels available to facilitate handwashing and prevent the spread of infection. The children were supported to wash their hands after outdoor play, messy play nappy changing and before eating.

The staff cleaned the tables before and after eating.

Completed cleaning schedules were observed in the care rooms and sanitary areas. The environment and materials were observed to be clean and in good condition.

Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal operated bins in the sanitary area and care rooms.

The staff were observed wearing personal protective equipment appropriately and following the services nappy changing policy, washing their hands and the children's hands as required to prevent cross contamination and spread of infection.

Administration of Medication:

The service used medicine administration record sheets and Kardex's which had been signed by the children's individual General Practitioners, prescribing medicine to be administered by the staff nurse.

Medicines were stored out of reach of children in their own packaging as required.

The service maintains comprehensive care plans for children requiring medication, with all the pertinent information required.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service. A fire evacuation plan was clearly displayed in each care room, sanitary area and corridor. The service maintained personal emergency evacuation plans for each individual child attending the service.

Outings:

In discussion with the staff, they described planning outings for when they have a 1:1 adult to child ratio, including a FAR trained staff member or nurse. There was a staffing plan for outings, part of a comprehensive list of what to bring on an outing which included a fully charged mobile phone, first aid kit, emergency contact list, Kardex and medicines if necessary, communication systems and visual supports. The inspector observed records of signed parental consent for outings and completed risk assessments carried out prior to previous outings.

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)

Four adults with in-date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificates were present throughout the inspection. Discussion with the deputy person in charge and the roster highlighted that there was always someone with FAR training available to the children in the service. The service employed a registered paediatric nurse.

(2)

(a) (b) An advanced First Aid and medical kit was safely stored alongside portable oxygen in a conspicuous location in the office of the service.

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.
- (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) A record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed the last fire drill had taken place on 5 December 2025.
 - (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on 13 May 2025 and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system was last carried out on 03 December 2025.
- (2) (c) The records were made available for inspection.
- (4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations throughout the service.