

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2020DY001				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Stars Childcare				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	172a Ballygall Road East, Ballygall, Dublin 11				
<b>Eircode:</b>	D11 WPA6				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Michelle Byrne, Susan Hyland				
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	15/04/2025				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>19</td> <td>PM</td> <td>17</td> </tr> </table>	AM	19	PM	17
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	<p>Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K</p>
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C.Kerrigan
<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

Little Stars Childcare is a privately owned preschool service located in a residential area of Dublin 11. This service is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 30 children aged 2-6 years. The service offers both sessional and part-time service, with morning and afternoon sessions run daily. The morning session runs from 08:30 to 13:00 and the afternoon session runs from 12:00 to 15:00, Monday to Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The preschool consists of two care rooms, one of which was in use on the day of inspection, sanitary facilities and an office. The outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The two registered providers employ three staff and also work in the service. On the day of inspection, the two registered providers and three staff members were present providing direct care to 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, safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 Preschool Record.

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 providers, 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*

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise if required.
  - (b) A review of the roster showed that a named person in charge or the deputy person in charge is rostered to be on the premises at all times during the service opening hours.
- (2) The files of five adults working within the service to include the registered providers were reviewed on the day of inspection.

- (a) The registered providers ensured that there was five written and validated reference available from a previous employer for an adult working within the service.
  - (b) The registered providers ensured that there were five written and validated references were available from a source other than a previous employer for the adults working within the service.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all five adults working within the service. With the service adhering to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) The registered providers ensured that police vetting was obtained for one adult who had resided in a country other than Ireland for a period longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) The registered providers ensured that all references and Garda vetting procedures were completed prior to the five adults working within the service being allowed access or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) The two registered providers and the three adults who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed, held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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) The registered providers ensured an adequate number of adults were working with the children in the service at all times throughout the day. Five early years staff were available in the building to meet the care needs of nineteen children who were present on the day of inspection.

(2) The registered providers ensured that the adult to child ratios were maintained within the service on the day of inspection. This was further evidenced in the roster.

(8)(a) A review of roster showed that the registered providers ensure that there were at least two adults on the premises during the operational hours of 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:*

*(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

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

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (j) The registered providers ensured that a medication administration record was available within the service, a review of records and conversation with staff indicated that medication had not been administered in recent years.
- (k) A sample of ten accident and incident forms were reviewed and found to be fully completed with all the necessary details included.
- (3) The registered providers ensured that a record in writing with the above particulars were available for inspection on the premises by the inspector.

### 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) The registered providers ensured that the children's learning development and wellbeing is facilitated within the service in the following ways.

#### Basic Needs

- The children were provided with regular lunch and snacks throughout their time in the service. Lunch and snacks were prepared at home and brought into the service. On the day of inspection children were observed to have a selection of sandwiches, various fruits appropriately cut, crackers and cheeses. Children drank from their own water bottles which was accessible and freely available to children throughout the day. Mealtimes were observed to be social and pleasurable experience for the children.
- There was a rest area available in the care room if the children needed to engage in more restful activities.
- A number of children in the care room were observed to be toilet trained. Toileting was undertaken on a scheduled basis and as needed, children were observed to have unrestricted access to the toilet with staff promptly picking up on children cues for assistance, whilst providing positive praise with children's efforts. This was completed in a dignified and child centred manner.
- The service engaged the children in decision making and schedule of activities throughout the day. For example, children wished to eat their lunch in the outdoor area, which staff accommodated picnic style in the outdoor area.

#### Supporting Relationships.

- The adults in the service were observed to interact with the children in a responsive, warm, respectful manner. For example, a child was observed to become upset with transitioning between activities within the service, staff were observed to use soothing tones and gentle touch to calm and sooth them.
- The adults within the service spoke to each other in a respectful and professional manner.

- Staff reported that information such as children’s art and play activities are shared with parents via a mobile application, with drop off and pick up times also used as time for conversations. This keeps parents informed of their child’s day.

### Physical and Material Environment.

- The furniture provided in the room was low level and appropriate for children attending with toys, equipment and play materials easily accessible and visible to the children, displayed on low-level units which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- There was a range of equipment available including, a home corner with associated props to facilitate imaginative play experiences, arts and crafts materials to facilitate creative play, cars and tracks for transporting, books available to facilitate language and early literacy development.
- Images of the children and their families were displayed throughout the room which promoted a sense of identity and belonging.
- The children had access to the outdoor play environment throughout the day. This is scheduled but also available to children if and when they needed. This area had absorbent flooring, wobble boards, planting areas, large soft balls, plastic stepping stones, giving an array of options to develop gross motor skills.

## 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:

- The main entrance to the service was secure upon the inspector’s unannounced arrival at the service. Access was granted via a doorbell system in which a staff member answered, therefore preventing access to the children from unauthorised persons, this also prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Hazardous materials such as cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- The ambient room temperatures in the service were kept between the recommended 18-22°C.
- The outdoor area was fully secured and enclosed with high walls.
- The flooring in the outdoor area was shock absorbent, therefore preventing injury.

### Infection Control:

- Lunches boxes which contained perishable food items brought in from home were refrigerated upon the child's arrival to the service. This reduces the risk of harmful bacterial growth.

### Administration of Medication:

- Medication is not routinely given within the service however staff demonstrated knowledge on the procedure for medication administration if required. Temperature reducing medication were safely stored within the service and available for use if required.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety

1. A pest control substance was accessible to children within the sanitary area of the service. The registered provider was informed of this during the inspection. This posed a potential risk of poisoning to children.

#### Infection Control:

2. Toilet roll was not hygienically dispensed in the sanitary area. Posing a risk of cross contamination of bodily fluids.
3. Single use paper towels were not accessible to children in each sanitary area. This potentially prevents adequate hand hygiene practices.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. The registered provider has stated that bait will be removed from the premises during the preschool session, all that all staff have been informed of this process.

#### Infection Control:

2. The registered provider states that toilet roll holders have been purchased, the toilet area will be checked throughout the session.
3. Paper blue roll will be kept on a shelf outside the toilet and with staff supervising use.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

- Photographic evidence submitted

#### Infection Control:

- Photographic evidence submitted.

## Administration of Medication:

- Photographic evidence submitted.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances. Regulation 23 is now compliant.

## 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) The registered providers ensured that a record was kept in writing of fire drills within the service.
  - (b) The registered providers ensured that a record was available indicating the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment with records demonstrating it was last serviced on the 2 April 2024, and the number type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms throughout the service, these were last serviced on the 2 April 2024.
- (2)
- (c) The registered providers ensured that the fire drill and maintenance records were available for review by the Inspector, these were displayed in the Hallway.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The registered providers did not ensure that fire drills were undertaken regularly, through review of records and conversation with the registered providers the last fire drill was undertaken on the 13 December 2024.
- (4) The registered providers did not ensure that a notice of procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service. This potentially poses a risk to a timely and safe fire evacuation.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (a) A fire drill was completed on the 19 May 2025; a staff member has been assigned with recording monthly fire drills.
- (4) Documentation of fire procedure map on wall outlining exits. All fire extinguishers have been updated plus fire alarms updated, make sure they are checked regularly.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- (1)(a) Photographic evidence submitted.
- (4) Photographic evidence of map placed on wall submitted.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have been sufficient to address the non-compliances. Regulation 26 is now compliant.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The registered providers ensured that the premises was insured as a part time care service for the maximum number of children registered. The certificate reviewed had an expiry date of the 27 March 2026.