

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier: TU2021WW002

Name of Service: Little Explorers Childcare

Address of Service: Unit 20 Charlesland Centre,
Greystones,
Co. Wicklow.
A63 ET02

Email Address: thelodge@littleexplorers.ie

Name of Registered Service Provider: Gina McGarry

Type of Service Registered: **Sessional**

Date of Inspection: 0 9 0 3 2 0 2 2

No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection: AM 18 PM N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Tusla Child and Family Agency,
First Floor Trinity Building,
IDA Business Park,
Southern Cross Road,
Bray,
Co. Wicklow.

Inspection undertaken by: H. Bourke
Title: Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this inspection

Governance	Health Welfare and Development of Child
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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

Description of Service	Little Explorers Childcare is a sessional service that is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age. The service operates between the hours of 9.30am and 12.30pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for 38 weeks of the year. The service also provides an afterschool facility.
Premises	The pre-school service is located on the 2 nd floor of a commercial premises in Greystones Co. Wicklow. There is a reception area, a large open plan area that is divided into 2 separate areas to accommodate the pre-school and the afterschool. There is a separate kitchen, staff room, office, laundry area and sanitary accommodation for both children and staff. The outdoor area is located behind the commercial premises and the children have access to it on a daily basis.
Staffing	There are 3 staff employed in the service, this includes a manager, assistant manager and team leader. All staff members hold Early Childhood Care & Education qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications.
Methodology	<p>Tusla’s Early Years Inspectorate (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.</p> <p>The findings on inspection are based on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained through examination of documentation • Direct observation • Discussion with relevant staff <p>The inspection was an announced focused 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 two themes; Governance, and the Health, Welfare and Development of the Child. 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.</p>
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

GOVERNANCE

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
- (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.
- (6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who—
- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and
 - (b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date
- (6A is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “
- (6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information:

- (1)(a)
A designated person in charge of operating the service was available and a named adult was available to deputise if needed.
- (b)
The person in charge was on the premises at the time of arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)(a)
Two written and validated past employer references were available for 3 adults.

Part III - Management and Staff

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- (b) Not applicable as all references required were from past employers.
- (c) The required Garda vetting disclosure was available in respect of 3 adults.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as no adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months as an adult.
- (4) All 3 adults present held major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- (6)(a) Not applicable as no adult present had signed a retirement declaration.
- (6)(A) Not applicable as no adult was employed pursuant to the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.*
- (8) *Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—*
 - (c) *a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service. (3) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were 3 adults present with 18 pre-school children on the day of inspection. (8)(c) Not applicable as this service does not operate single-handedly.
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HEALTH WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

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

Compliance Information:

BASIC NEEDS

- Children were given opportunities to make choices as to which activities they wished to do and were supported in their choice. Examples of some activities included playing with soap foam, drawing, painting, play dough, playing with dolls, free and imaginative role play.
- Children were supported and encouraged to be independent with using the toilet but were supervised appropriately. Hand washing following use of the toilet was observed.
- All children were observed enjoying freedom of movement within their room.
- There was a suitable rest area available to the children should they require it during the morning.
- Fresh drinking water was available and accessible at all times, for the children attending the service.
- There was a healthy eating policy in place, and this was reflected in the lunches sent in by parents for their children attending the service.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN

- There was a happy and relaxed atmosphere at all times within the pre-school.
- Transition between activities was calm and unhurried.
- The staff were observed to be calm, sensitive and responsive to the needs of the children in their care.
- A strong sense of teamwork was evident in the service, by the way staff members interacted with the children and each other.
- Staff members communicated with parents about their child on a daily basis through direct conversation at collection time and a secure online app.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- Low level tables and chairs and low-level shelving with equipment and materials, were available and accessible to the children attending the service.
- The room was maintained at a comfortable temperature of 21.6 °C.
- Children's artwork was displayed on the walls in the room.
- The outdoor area was well equipped with a large, grassed surface area that contained trikes, balance bikes, a slide, footballs and swing ball for the children to play with. Children were free to bring any additional toys they

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Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

	wanted to play with, from the pre-school room to the outdoor area. The outdoor facility was suitable, safe and secure.
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