

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022DY005		
Name of Service:	Little Harvard Childcare Limited		
Address of Service:	Blackwood Avenue, Santry, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D09THT4		
Name of Registered Provider:	James Hargrave		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	08/05/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	47	PM 52
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K		
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Harte and T. Nelson		
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.

Description of service

Little Harvard Childcare Ltd. is a privately operated service located in a residential and retail complex in Santry, North Dublin. The service is one of 19 services operated by the registered provider. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 88 children on a full day care basis Monday to Friday from 7am-6:30pm. The service participates in the Early childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme 38 weeks per year in line with the programme rules. An enclosed outdoor area is available to the side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs seventeen staff to work in the service including the person in charge, deputy manager, twelve early years staff who work directly with the children, a chef and a cleaner. The service also has a senior management team who are not based in the service but who provide support to the service as required including a general manager, regional manager and a child protection and compliance officer. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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;

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment,
Regulation 16 Records relating to the preschool service,
Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of child,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of child,

However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 27. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16, Regulation 19 and Regulation 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler room, Toddler room 1 and Toddler 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the general 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.

(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)(b) The registered provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a staff member listed to deputise in their absence. A review of the roster demonstrated that person in charge or named deputy was present on the premises during the opening hours of the service. The deputy person in charge was present on the premises when the inspectors arrived at the service.

(2) A review of the roster and conversation with the person in charge confirmed that ten new staff were working at the premises since the last inspection. The files of ten staff were reviewed.

(a) Seventeen written and verified references were available from a past employer.

(b) Three written and verified references where available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for seventeen staff.

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 for nine staff who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.

(4) The eight staff members whose files were reviewed and who worked 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 eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

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) On the day of the inspection the registered provider ensured there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service. The manager was available in a supernumerary position and available to cover in rooms as needed.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection.

Room	Age range	Time	No. of children	Staff available	Staff required
Wobbler room	18-30 months	10:06	11	3	2
Toddler 1	2-3 years	10:20	13	3	3
Toddler 2	2-3 years	10:18	11	2	2
Preschool 1	4-5 years	Closed			
Preschool 2	4-5 years	10:11	12	3	2

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:

- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (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.

Compliance Information

(1)

- (i) A staff roster was available for review and reflective of staff on the premises.
- (k) A sample of 15 accident and incident records were reviewed all of which were completed in full.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(j) A sample of 7 medication administration forms were reviewed, three of these forms were not completed in full containing the full name of the staff member administering the medication. Accurate and complete records are required to be kept in relation to all administrations of medication.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(1)(j) Training has taken place in relation to the completion of medication administration forms.

Preventive Action

Local and senior management will monitor and inspect documentation on an ongoing basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Training record.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 16 has been addressed.

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

(1)(a)

Basic needs:

- Nappy changing procedures were carried out in a timely manner and as required. Staff were observed inviting the children to have their nappy changed and engaging with them through conversation and songs during the care practice.
- All about me posters were displayed in the cot room detailing the sleep requirements and preferences of the children.
- Sleep practices for children in the Toddler room were observed to be child lead. Children who did not want to sleep were given the choice of attending a different room for play.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed to use gentle tones during interactions with the children.
- Notice boards were displayed throughout the service sharing information on children's activities, funding schemes and service menu for families to review.
- Daily records were maintained regarding the children's day and available to share with parents demonstrating a partnership approach to supporting the children's care and development.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic needs:

1. A child observed to require additional support did not have a care plan or documentary evidence of their strengths, challenges, or goals. A clear and detailed care plan would help inform and support staff to reduce risk to the child's safety.

2. Between 10:59am – 11:28am behaviour management strategies used by staff in the Wobbler room proved to be ineffective resulting in repeated risky behaviours. The approaches implemented during this time did not resolve the behaviour or prevent the children from repeating the behaviour moments after. Children were observed to climb on furniture, hurt their peers, open the care room door and tip over chairs. At times these behaviours were not observed by staff. It is acknowledged that staff interacted with the children intermittently, staff were observed to call children away, use language such as “no, no” and “not nice”. Service policy advises that rather than being told no children are given positive alternatives to support behaviour management.

3. Staff did not respond adequately to the care needs of one child aged 2 years 3 months between 10:48- 11:36am. The top being worn by the child was observed to be soiled from spilt yogurt from the collar down to the waistband of the child’s trousers at 10:48. Staff were observed to engage with the child however they remained unchanged until 11:36am when preparing for sleep. Soiled clothes should be changed to ensure the child’s comfort.

4. A mealtime in the wobbler room was not observed to be a relaxed and social experience for children as their peers took their food. For example:
 - When the inspector questioned why one child had no portion at the table, she was advised by staff the child would have had a portion but one of the other children probably took it. It is acknowledged when brought to the staff’s attention the child was given another portion.
 - Two children wandered between two tables repeatedly taking other children’s fruit.
 - A child whose bowl was taken by a peer went unnoticed by staff till the child became frustrated and called for assistance. The child was then returned the same bowl without any additional food added.

This is not in line with service policy that advises staff will ensure mealtimes are enjoyable for the children and staff will not let one child eat another’s child’s food.

Physical and Material Environment:

5. Themed areas were observed without supporting resources available to encourage use and enhance play experiences for children. The following was observed:
 - In the wobbler room resources for the play kitchen were stored on a shelf at the opposite end of the room.
 - There were no props visible adjacent to the play kitchen in the Toddler 1 room.
 - There were no props observed available for use with the outdoor kitchen.

6. In the Toddler 2 room; books, jigsaws and dress up toys were not displayed in an inviting and easily visible and accessible manner for use by the children. For example:
 - The dress up clothes and books were stored in a box, where they were not easily visible.
 - The jigsaws were stored stacked on a shelf, incomplete.

This limits interests and engagement with the resources, reducing the variety of play opportunities for the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

1. A detailed care plan has been put in place to facilitate the needs of the child.
2. Training has been conducted with staff and the regional manager on the service positive behaviour management policy and implementation of it daily.
3. Training has taken place regarding the changing of soiled clothes in a timely manner.
4. Training has taken place regarding mealtimes and ensuring mealtimes are enjoyable for all children.
5. Props are now in place to encourage use and enhance play experiences for children.
6. Staff have been reminded of the importance to display resources in an inviting and accessible manner to use by all children.

Preventative Action

The regional and senior management will visit the premises on a regular basis to ensure compliance with all aspects of regulation 19.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Training record.
- Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 19 have been addressed.

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:

- Toys and equipment were in good condition and well maintained.
- Cleaning products were observed out of reach of children.
- Corner protectors were present on the walls in the outdoor area.
- Liquid soap and hand towels were hygienically dispensed in sanitary areas.

Infection Control:

- Children soothers were stored in individually labelled boxes.
- Children had individual bed linen.
- Tables were sprayed and cleaned following mealtime.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep mats in the Toddler room were observed to have correctly fitted sheets and were organised allowing for ease of movement through the room for staff to support the children settling for sleep and complete 10-minute checks effectively during sleep.

Fire Safety:

- Fire evacuation routes were clearly displayed in the service.
- Emergency exits were observed unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The kitchen was observed to be accessible to children posing a potential risk of injury.
2. A staff member was observed to comfort a child to sleep while balancing a cot sideways on two legs. This posed a potential risk of injury.
3. A window in Toddler 2 room had no restrictors and opened to its full extent leading onto a walkway. This posed a risk of children accessing the window or members of the public on the walkway gaining access to the premises.

Infection Control:

4. Handwashing practices in the Wobbler room were not in line with service policy or best practice guidance.
 - Children did not wash their hands before mealtime.
 - A staff member did not wash their hands after supporting a child with the personal care of cleaning their nose.
5. The sofa in the Toddler 1 room was torn with foam exposed posing an infection control risk and preventing effective cleaning.

Administration of Medication:

6. Medication care plans for two children with emergency medication were insufficient and did not include detailed information of the children's signs and symptoms. Detailed care plans give clear guidance to staff on when medication is required reducing the risk of delayed administration in the event of an emergency.
7. One emergency medication was not labelled or stored in line with service policy which states medication must be stored in their original packaging clearly labelled with the child's name and dosage.

Fire Safety:

8. Attendance records were not maintained in a timely manner in the Wobbler room. This posed the risk of incorrect information being provided to the fire services in the event of an emergency. At 10:31am eleven children were present in the room but only six children had been signed in.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

General Safety:

1. All staff have been informed of the importance of keeping the kitchen door closed at all times. A latch lock is fitted to the top of the door out of reach of children.
2. It was discussed with staff to not engage in this practice in the future.
3. A window restrictor has been put in place.

Infection Control:

4. Training has taken place on the importance of handwashing in accordance with service policy.
5. The sofa has been replaced.

Administration of Medication:

6. Training has taken place in relation to the administration of medication in a timely manner and the importance of creation and implementation of appropriate care plans.
7. Training has taken place regarding the correct storage of medication and implementation of service policy.

Fire Safety:

8. Training has taken place in relation to the completion of attending records in a timely and accurate manner.

Preventive Action

Training has taken place and Local and senior management will closely monitor compliance with all aspects of Regulation 23 at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographic evidence.

Infection Control:

- Training record.
- Photographic evidence.

Administration of Medication:

- Training record.

Fire Safety:

- Training record.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure adequate supervision of the children attending the service which posed a potential risk of injury to a child. The following was observed;

- At 11:15 am a child was observed to enter the kitchen during a transition into their care room.
- At 3:19 pm a child who left the garden area and entered the serviced unsupervised, went into the kitchen and was observed by the inspector to be returned to the garden by an adult. When discussed with the staff responsible for the care of the child the inspector was advised that staff were unaware the child had left the garden and that the child could access the door handles allowing them to move around the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Management and staff have been notified of the importance of the close supervision of all children at all times.

Preventive action

Management will ensure on-going training will take place in respect of this non-compliance.

Supporting documentation submitted

None.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the response submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 27 has been addressed.