

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2022FL005 |
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| Name of Service: | Little Stars Kids Club |
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| Address of Service: | Unit 4 Block A, The Plaza Town Centre, Tyrellstown, Co. Dublin |
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| Eircode: | D15 VA56 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Ewa Hetnal |
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| Service type: | Sessional |
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| Date(s) of Inspection: | 15/11/2024 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 12 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15 |
| Inspection undertaken by: | Á Dunne |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable. |
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Description of service

Little Stars Kids club offers a sessional service for children aged between 2 – 6 years old. The opening hours are from 9:00am to 12:00pm, Monday to Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE).

The service is located in a ground floor shop unit located in Dublin 15. There is one large care room, sanitary facilities, a staff room and a staff sanitary facility within the unit. The service has access to an outdoor area to the rear of the premises through a rear fire exit door.

Staffing

The registered provider employs two staff within the service to include the designated person in charge and the deputy designated person in charge. On the day of the inspection, the designated person in charge and deputy designated person in charge and the area manager who arrived at 10.02am facilitated the inspection. The registered provider attended the feedback meeting with the area manager at 11.37am in the adjoining service office.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations as follows:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4)

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(3)

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

Regulation 25 First Aid (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1)(a)(b) (4)

Regulation 28 Insurance

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child. The scope of the inspection was the one care room of the service.

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, area manager, person in charge, deputy person in charge and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

(2) The files of four adults were reviewed as part of the inspection, to include the registered provider, the area manager and two staff.

(a) Two written and validated references were available in relation to two adults, from a past employer and one written and validated reference was available in relation to two adults from a past employer.

(b) One written and validated reference was available in relation to two adults, from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for four adults. The service has also 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) Police vetting was available for two adults who had lived outside the State for longer than six months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the four adults 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 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.*
- (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) The registered provider ensured that there was at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service. On the day of inspection, for the session, two adults worked with 12 children aged between 2 years 8 months and 5 years from 9.00am to 12.00pm.
- (3) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection at all times.

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

- The room was bright, spacious, and well maintained.
- There was a wide range of play materials and equipment suitable to the age and stage of development of the children, promoting independence and developing their play opportunities. Children were observed to take materials and equipment of their choice which were accessible on low level shelving.
- Tables and chairs were of suitable size and available for eating lunch and for table-top activities.
- There was a birthday date display, a family wall display and a community display displayed on the wall along with a family book and community books, available to the children, promoting a sense of identity and belonging for the children.
- The children engaged in outdoor play while under the supervision of adults from 11.22am. The outdoor area consisted of a soft artificial grass surface and provided opportunities for the children to play through a range of activities and play equipment to include a slide, a playhouse, waffles, building blocks, hoops and a picnic table.

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 external door of the service was secure with a buzzer system monitored by the staff to prevent a child from exiting the service unsupervised and to prevent an unauthorised person from entering the building.
- Attendance records were available for review, completed and accurate.
- The play equipment and materials observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The temperature of the care room was recorded as 21.3°C at 10.31am, within the recommended ambient temperature of 18 - 22 °C.
- The kitchen of the service was not accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Children in care room were supported and encouraged to wash their hands before lunch time, after toilet visits and after blowing noses.
- The premises was in a clean and hygienic condition and documented up to date cleaning records were available and displayed in the premises.
- Tables were cleaned in preparation for snack, by staff.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap and paper towels were available in the sanitary facility used by the children.
- Children's food for lunchtime brought from home that contained perishable items were refrigerated on arrival to the service.
- Lidded Pedal operated bins were available for disposal of contaminated items.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Grapes present in a child's lunch were not quartered or halved, posing a risk of choking.

Fire Safety:

2. Fire Drills were not carried out by the service at the beginning of the new school year or monthly with no Fire Drill completed in September 2024, June 2024, March 2024, November 2023 or October 2023, posing a risk of safety. It is recommended that fire drills are completed every month, this promotes fire safety awareness.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. All educators have been reminded of the importance of making sure all grapes are cut to prevent any choking hazards. Parents have also been reminded of our policy regarding healthy eating and reminding the importance of cutting grapes. The educators will ensure all lunches are checked and all grapes are cut to prevent any choking hazards.

Fire Safety:

2. All educators have been reminded of the importance of carrying out monthly fire drills and ensure they are in line with our fire safety policy. The area manager will follow up monthly to ensure fire drills are being carried out.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic Evidence

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 23, the non-compliances outlined above have been adequately addressed.

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 service provided evidence that one adult was trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2) (a) and (b) A Suitably equipped first aid box was available and was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the care room.

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.

(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 last recorded fire drill of the service was carried out in the service was 24 October 2024.
- (b) A record was available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment demonstrating they were last serviced 24 July 2024 and of the number, type and maintenance of the smoke alarms demonstrating they were serviced on 16 February 2024.
- (4) Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the care room and kitchen of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Evidence of insurance cover was available to demonstrate there was cover for a maximum of 22 children in a sessional service with an expiry date of 27 March 2025.