

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2022KE004
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Shining Stars Academy Ltd
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Glebelands, Athy, Kildare, Co. Kildare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	R14 TK25
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Christine Bowden
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	23/02/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	53	PM	42
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate TUSLA Child & Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare W91 X38W
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F. Maher, T. Duignan
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

Shining Stars Academy Ltd. is one of three services operated by the registered provider in Athy Co. Kildare. Full day care, part time and sessional care and education is offered to children aged 0-6 years old. Opening hours are from 08:00am-18:00pm, Monday-Friday. The service operates from a purpose-built premises located in a private residential estate on the outskirts of Athy. Five pre-school rooms, a sleep room and kitchen are provided. Play areas are located to the rear and side of the building. The service is registered to provide school age care and a dedicated modular unit located to the rear of the premises provides the accommodation for this service.

### Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service and was not present for the inspection.

Twenty-two adults are employed in the service. On the day of the inspection there were eighteen adults present and one transition year school student; twelve adults were working directly with the children, one adult was rostered to provide relief, the person in charge and deputy person in charge were present and available to provide additional support to the care rooms as needed. The cook and maintenance person were also present and the area manager arrived to the service at 10:20am and remained for the duration of the inspection.

### 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,

- Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4) – Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1), (2), (8)(a) – Staffing Levels.
- Regulation 15(1)(f) – Record of a Pre-school Child
- Regulation 20 (1)(b) – Facilities for Rest and Play
- Regulation 22 – Food and Drink
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child
- Regulation 27 – Supervision.

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 persons in charge, area manager, 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

(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)

The service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) Both persons in charge were on the premises during the inspection.

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that six new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. One transition year student was present. The files for the recently employed staff members and the transition year student were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of the files assessed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults employed and/or present in the service. Garda vetting was not required for the transition year student.

However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was available for five adults who had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months whose records were reviewed.

(4)  
Six adults employed to work directly with children attending the service and held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher or a recognised equivalent qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications

## 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)

There were fifty-three children attending the service being supervised directly by twelve adults.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the Inspection. This was confirmed following review of the staff roster for the service.

## 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:*

*(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

#### Compliance Information

(i) A medical care plan was in place for one child with a medical condition that may require medication to be administered in an emergency situation.

#### Non-Compliance Information

While the medical care plan was in place for one child outlining the steps to be followed should the child become unwell, it was observed that the emergency medication on site was out of date since December 2025 and the following information was not documented

- the child's name was not recorded on the medication
- there was no prescription available for the emergency medication
- the parent/guardian had not signed the care plan

It is acknowledged the area manager did contact the child's parent to request replacement medication during the inspection.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

A new care plan was provided and in place ensuring to have outlined all the relevant details. The care plan is now displayed for educators and management to see with a clear review date.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Document x 1

#### Summary Comment

Following review of the submitted response with photographic and documentary evidence, the requirement for Regulation 15(1)(i) has been met.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b) Each pre-school room had a dedicated area with soft furnishings that children could rest comfortably, relax and/or read a book or sit quietly if preferred.

Children less than two years old were facilitated with needs led sleep in a standard cot and a cot room with five cots were available. Twenty-four low level beds were available for the children who slept at a designated time in the afternoon. Suitable bed linen was in place for each child.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service promoted healthy eating and all meals and snacks provided to the children on a daily basis were freshly prepared by the onsite cook. A three-week menu was in place and a sample of the hot meals served included, roast meat dinners, casseroles, curry and pasta dishes with meat potatoes and vegetables; the main hot meal served was chicken ala king with rice on the day of inspection. Snacks and evening tea included a variety of sandwiches/wraps with healthy fillings, fresh fruit, cheese, hummus, yoghurts and fresh vegetable pieces. Water was freely available in each room and milk was served with all meals and snacks.

Children’s dietary and cultural preferences were documented and adhered to.

The staff members advised they encouraged healthy eating practices with the children and incorporated discussions about food and food choices daily.

The kitchen was registered with the relevant authority and was inspected regularly.

### 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 gate and door to the service were secure with electro-magnetic locking systems and were controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school service.

Daily indoor room and outdoor risk assessments were completed and maintained to ensure a safe play and work environment for the children and staff.

Staff members in each room advised the inspector they would remove any beaded necklace if observed that a child may be wearing them and advised they immediately cut any large food items that may pose a potential choking risk.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents which were out of reach of the children.

##### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towel, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying and handwashing routines were well established and observed.

Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues, paper towel and waste. Plastic aprons, disposable gloves and nappy sacks were available for hygienic nappy change practices. Four nappy changes were observed and were carried out in a hygienic manner for infection control purposes.

Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

##### Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. During conversations with the staff members, they advised they were aware of the procedures to be followed to administer medicine safely to a child if required while attending the service and were aware of the medicine storage locations in the service should they be required.

##### Safe Sleep:

A cot room with five standard cots was provided for children less than 2 years old. The staff members in the Caterpillar room advised the inspector that sleeping children were physically checked every 10 minutes and the child's breathing pattern, colour and sleeping position recorded and documented. The staff were also aware of the environmental temperatures sleep rooms should be maintained at for the safety and comfort of sleeping children.

**Fire Safety:**

Staff described the evacuation routes taken and the assembly point when practicing a fire drill. Fire exits were clearly signed and unobstructed.

**Outing:**

Outings take place from the service as advised by the staff and an outings policy was in place to guide practice.

**Non-Compliance Information**

**General Safety:**

1. Garda vetting was available for all staff members. However, one vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

**Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

**Corrective & Preventive Action**

**General Safety:**

Garda Vetting for one staff member had been submitted for renewal prior to inspection and it has now arrived and submitted to Tusla.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**General Safety:**

Document x 1

**Summary Comment**

The requirement for Regulation 23 has been met.

**Part VI - Safety**

## Regulation 27 – Supervision

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

### Compliance Information

Children were observed being supervised at all times throughout the inspection by the staff caring for them; this included during transitions to snack/mealtimes, to the outdoor play area and preparing for sleep. Children were also observed being supervised during tabletop activities, using the toilet and when handwashing.