

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022WW005
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Name of Service:	Little Harvard Childcare Limited
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Address of Service:	Merrymeeting, Merrymeeting Centre, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A67 V9K5
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Name of Registered Provider:	James Hargrave
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	23/01/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	27	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona Condon.
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
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Description of service

This service is located in a purpose- built premises at the rear of a small mixed purpose business and residential area in Rathnew in County Wicklow. There are three rooms available to accommodate pre-school children. At present two rooms are in use. Currently sessional care is provided for 27 pre-school children who are between 2 years and six months and 6 years of age. The service operates from 09.30 to 12.30 daily. A school aged service is available on the premises in the afternoons and during school holidays. The outdoor play area for the service is at the front of the premises and car parking is provided at the front of the building.

Staffing

There are six adults employed 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.

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 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

(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

There were four new adults employed since last inspection. These four files were reviewed.

- (2)
- (a)(b) There were two written and validated references available for four adults.
- (c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for the four adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting for three adults who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months as an adult was available.

(4)

Six adults who were involved in the direct care of children had 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.

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)
- Throughout the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the pre-school children.
- (2)
- The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection. There were five adults providing direct care to twenty-seven pre-school children in two childcare rooms. The person-in-charge was also available to give assistance in either of the rooms of needed.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The inspector observed that staff were attentive to the personal care of the children. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

At snack time the staff members sat with the children helping them when needed whilst supporting their independence. Drinks of water were offered regularly and were always available. A rest area was available to the children if they wanted a break from activities or to rest.

Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed them by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. The children were observed playing in groups, in pairs or on their own. The toys and equipment available to the children was suitable for their age group, safe and accessible. The transition from one activity to another was handled well by staff who gave the children plenty of notice and invited the children to assist in preparing for the next activity. One child who became upset during the session was comforted immediately by staff in a gentle and re-assuring manner.

At collection time it was evident that the staff knew the families well. A verbal account of the child's morning was given, and references were made to the individual family.

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 doors were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- Evidence was available regarding daily risk assessments carried out by the service.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelving and were inaccessible to the pre-school children.

Infection Control:

- Children were encouraged to wash their hands regularly including before lunch and after using the toilet. Effective hand hygiene practices were observed and were in accordance with the services infection control policies and procedures. Pedal operated bins were available in the sanitary area and in the care room.
- The premises play equipment, and materials, were in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Cleaning schedules were maintained in the care room and sanitary area and the environment was clean.

Administration of Medication

- Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. Written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. Medication was stored safely. Staff were aware of the procedure to be undertaken should medication be required.

Fire Safety:

- Documentary evidence was available that fire drills were being carried out on a monthly basis as per best practice guidelines.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

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) Three staff members who was trained in first aid response (FAR), were available to the children on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible position.

(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service.