

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2023DR005		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Links Childcare		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Clay Farm Drive , Clay Farm, Leopardstown, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	D18 F63H		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Gillian Kelly		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	21/02/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	66	PM 59
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla – Child & Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Bray, Co Wicklow.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Sarah Quigley & Rosemary Brien		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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		

### Description of service

Links Childcare in Leopardstown is currently registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day care for pre-school children aged 0 to 6 years of age. Care and education are provided to children weekdays from 07:30hrs and 18:30hrs. The premises are located at ground level within a new mixed housing development in a residential area of south county Dublin. It is a purpose-built facility with 8 care rooms, 7 of which were in operation on the day of inspection. There is a large enclosed outdoor space to the rear of the premises with a shock absorbent surfacing.

### Staffing

The service currently employs 25 staff members, including a centre manager, a deputy manager, and a cook. On the day of inspection, 29 adults were present including the centre manager, the regional manager, two staff members from another Links Childcare branch, and the cook. The registered provider was present when the inspectors arrived 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 announced and focused on the area of governance and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms Wobbler 1, Wobbler 2, Wobbler 3, and Baby room.

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 registered provider, 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*

*(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 service had a designated person in charge and an appointed person to deputise as required. Documentation reviewed evidenced that the person in charge or the person named to deputise were on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.

(2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of all 29 adults employed to work in the service on the day of inspection. The following records were available for the 29 adults:

### (a) (b)

The registered provider demonstrated that they had verified the references obtained from two sources for each of the adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from The National Vetting Bureau for the 29 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting for the adults who required it.

(4) There was evidence that 28 of the adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent. One adult did not require a qualification as they did not work directly with the children.

## 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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.

(2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were 66 children present in the service being supervised by 28 adults during the inspection.

### 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, and*

*(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

The inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place during the inspection. The children moved freely – exploring their environments, playing and engaging with staff and each other. The service had a healthy eating policy in place. Regular meals and snacks were provided to the children throughout the inspection which were prepared onsite by a cook, including a hot lunch. Staff and children sat together during mealtimes and staff assisted children with feeding where needed. Bibs were worn during meals to protect the children's clothes from becoming soiled or wet. Drinks of water were always available within the care rooms and were offered to the children regularly and with meals.

Babies were observed to be placed to sleep in line with their individual care needs and rest areas were available in each room to enable the children to take time away from the group as desired. Children were supported to be independent in their environment including cleaning up following mealtimes and play, and washing hands before meals. Adults used respectful language during interactions with the children and were observed to be responsive to children's individual care needs, including responding promptly to babies' cues for care. Infants brought bottles of milk from home and were given these according to their individual routines. Children were assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times. Older children used the toilet independently with assistance provided from staff where needed, and children wearing nappies were changed regularly and when required. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was available to the rear of the premises with a shock absorbent surfacing. The area was well resourced with a variety of play equipment and materials. The children were provided with the opportunity to play outside and were appropriately dressed to the weather in coats and hats. The care rooms were adequately resourced with a variety of equipment and materials which were arranged on low level shelving units, facilitating the children's choices in play.