

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023KE002		
Name of Service:	Little Harvard Childcare Ltd		
Address of Service:	The Way, Ledwill Park, Kilcock, Naas, Co. Kildare		
Eircode:	W23 X2IV		
Name of Registered Provider:	James Hargrave		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	19/09/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	48	PM 37
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre, Ballymore Eustace Road Naas, Co. Kildare W91 X38W		
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan		
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	n/a
---------------------------------	-----

Description of service

Little Harvard, Ledwill Park, Kilcock opened in 2023 as a privately run childcare service for children aged 1 to 6 years. It is part of a multiple chain of services operated by the current registered provider. The early years' service is registered to provide full day care, part time and sessional service.

The service operates from 7:00am – 18:30pm on a Monday to Friday basis.

The early years' service is located in a purpose-built two-story building within a housing development on the outskirts of Kilcock, Co. Kildare. The accommodation consists of nine care rooms with adjoining sanitary facilities, one cot room, sanitary facilities for adults, a lift from ground to first floor a kitchen, staff rest area and an office. Two secured play areas are located in front of the premises. Set down and parking facilities are available outside the premises.

Staffing

Sixteen adults are employed in the service. The registered provider does not work directly with children.

There were fourteen adults present in the service on the day of the inspection. Twelve adults were working directly with the preschool children. The person in charge and the area manager provided support to the care rooms in addition to managerial responsibilities and oversight of the service. A cook was employed to prepare food daily. The area manager was present during the inspection. All the adults working directly with the preschool children held a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 Wobbler room, Wobbler 1 room, Toddler 1 room and Pre-School 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person 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*
- (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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The named person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c) There was evidence that there was a clear management structure in the service.

The records of fourteen staff members were reviewed.

(2)

(a) Two written and verified past employer references were available in respect of ten adults and one written and verified past employer reference were available in respect of four adults employed in the service whose records were reviewed.

(b) One written and verified reference from a reputable source other than a past employer was available in respect of four adults whose records was reviewed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all staff members.

(d) Police vetting was available for ten adults who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) Thirteen adults working directly with the children held qualifications in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications 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.*
- (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 forty-eight 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 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

Compliance Information

Regulation 19 (1)(a) was assessed in the following rooms: Wobbler 1, Wobbler, Toddler 1 and Pre-School 2 rooms.

Basic needs of children:

The service promoted a healthy eating policy. Food and snacks were provided at regular intervals during the day. Young children had the opportunity to feed themselves and their drinks were within their reach throughout the day should they feel thirsty.

Nappy changing was completed regularly and promptly when required. It was handled in a sensitive and positive manner. Children who were toilet trained were encouraged to be independent, but assistance was provided if needed.

The individual sleep needs of the children were met. Most children requiring sleep during the day, slept at a designated time and were provided with as much time as they needed to sleep.

The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours. Children were spoken to in a kind and respectful manner. Their first names were used, appropriate eye contact and gentle vocal tones were observed being used during all interactions.

Supporting relationships around children:

Staff members were observed being respectful, gentle and kind towards the children in their care and each child was listened to and given time to chat and express their thoughts and feelings.

Staff members were observed sitting with the children at mealtimes and engaging them in conversation which ensured that the experience was relaxed and sociable.

In the Wobbler 1 room, care routines were matched to each child's individual needs; this included nappy changing, feeding and sleep. The staff members were observed nursing and comforting children who were settling in to the service and promptly attended to children when they became upset by lifting, nursing and soothing them until they were happy to play again.

Information was shared with parents and guardians at the drop off and collection times. A daily written record was maintained for the children attending the wobbler and toddler rooms. It outlined food eaten, time nappies were changed, toileting, sleep times, activities and other comments.

An information sheet was displayed on the door of the older children's care rooms for parents to read and stated what meals, toileting, sleep (if needed), and activities completed during the day.

Face to face meetings can be arranged for parents/guardians as necessary and email and telephone contact are used as an alternative method of contact.

Physical and material environment:

The physical and material environments in the care rooms were comfortable, inviting and laid out to accommodate the needs of all children. Defined areas of interest were observed in the care rooms. These included a library area, a home corner, area with bricks, connecting toys, puzzles and jigsaws, a construction area, small world toys and materials, sensorial materials including a tray with crinkle papers, sealed bags with rice, cotton wool, lentils and playdough on the day of the inspection.

In the wobbler 1 and wobbler room, age-appropriate equipment included soft climbing cushions, stacking toys, shape sorters, sensory mats, rattles and musical instruments, hard backed books with one picture per page, sensory books and material books.

Materials and resources were available on low level shelving which were accessible to the children. Low level chairs and tables were available to the children for meals and tabletop activities.

The two secured outdoor area were located at the front of the premises. The ground surface was covered with artificial grass carpet. Despite the inclement weather on the day of the inspection, the children from wobbler room were provided with outdoor play under the covered area. It was equipped with a wooden climbing frame with a slide and climbing rope wall, a wooden balance beam structure, child sized picnic benches, smaller plastic activity frames for younger children, water play activity units and ride on play equipment.

Programme of activities:

On the day of the inspection, the children were facilitated to make their own choice in selecting play equipment and activities that they wished to engage with. The staff members supported the children with their activities and did not interfere in the play. The routine was child led and responsive to the children's interests.