

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2023KK002
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Stars Preschool Piltown
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Iverk Showgrounds, Piltown, Co. Kilkenny
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<b>Eircode:</b>	E32 PD81
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Demelza Cronin
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	09/02/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	5	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Mc Garry
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

This service is operated from a premises situated on the grounds of the Iverk show grounds outside Piltown in Kilkenny. The service is registered to provide a sessional service to 18 children aged from 2 to 6 years of age from 9.30am to 12.30pm. The premises was previously operated as a childcare facility. The premises consists of two preschool rooms. Classroom 1 and Playroom 2. There are toilets for the children, a staff toilet, and an entrance hallway. The children have access to the playgrounds which surround the service.

### Staffing

There are two staff employed in the service. Both staff working directly with the children hold an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4)

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child (1) (a)(b),  
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,  
Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),

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, 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 registered provider was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Following a discussion with the registered provider and on review of documentation, it was established that there were two staff employed in the service. Both files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)(b)

There were four written and validated references available on file from past employers for the staff members.

(c)

There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for both staff members.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as none of the staff had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

There was evidence on file that both staff working directly with the preschool children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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)  
There were at all times an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the preschool service.
- (3)  
At 11.00 am  
There were 5 children in the care of 2 staff.

### 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

- (1)(a)  
The registered provider ensured that each child's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of appropriate activities during the inspection including eating together, playing together and tabletop activities which were well managed by the staff who were caring for them.

Staff had maintained learning journals with the children's work placed in them. These were accessible to the children so they could review their work in the service. Children were given choice in the service on which activities they wanted to engage in. For example, one child who did not like the feeling of paint on their hands was provided with paint sticks to make a card for their family member. Children had also made valentine cards in the service for their parents.

Children were observed to be encouraged to be independent appropriate to their age and stage of development, for example, by tidying up and finding their own chairs to sit in. The chairs in the service had a photo of each child displayed on the seat. Staff who spoke to the inspector said they moved the chairs around to encourage children to mix with each other. During activities staff used opportunities to extend children's learning and development using appropriate language which children identified with as activities were based around children's interests.

At snack time staff laid out a table cloth and provided colourful plates for the children to eat from. Staff used the opportunity at snack time to chat to the children. Staff were observed to encourage the children to take turns telling their stories while also encouraging the children to take the time to listen to what the other children were saying.

The materials and equipment available were well organised and easily accessible to children. Children enjoyed freedom of movement within the care rooms. Of particular note was the class room 2, this room was laid out to encourage free play. The children present were observed enjoying the home corner, a selection of dolls and buggies and a cosy rest area which had a couch and a selection of reading books for the children to look at. The service communicated with the parents of the children by using a mobile phone application.

## 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

The registered provider had taken the following steps to ensure the safety of the children attending the service.

#### General safety:

Access to the service was gained through the front door of the service. The door to the classroom was secure on arrival. All cleaning agents were stored on shelves that were inaccessible to children.

#### Infection control:

The service appeared clean on the day of inspection. Hand washing was observed in the service. Children were observed being supported by staff to wash their hands with the support of the staff. Liquid soap, disposable hand towels and pedal bins were available.

## 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)  
There was a person trained in a first aid responder course available to the children attending the preschool service.

(2)(a)(b)  
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool service.