

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service

Tusla I.D:	TU2023LH002
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Name of Service:	Smart Start Playschool
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Address of Service:	Ballymakenny Business Park, Ballymakenny Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
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Email Address:	43smartstart@gmail.com
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Name of Proposed Registered Provider:	Denise Lynch
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Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed service type:	Proposed to operate a new full day, part time and sessional service.
Proposed Number of Children:	Propose to accommodate a maximum 65 children
Outcome of the F06 Inspection:	Full day care, part time and sessional service. Children aged 2 – 6 years. Maximum 65 children. 7.30am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday
Registered service:	Registered Full Day Care Service for 65 Children

Date of Inspection:	1	9	1	2	2	0	2	3
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Inspection Undertaken by:	S. Cully & AM. Coyle
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:	Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airsi Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.
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Rationale for Inspection
Proposed New Service

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day Care Service for 65 Children
Date of Registration:	2 nd January 2023

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Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	<p>The proposed service will be owned and operated by the registered provider. The registered provider's initial application stated that the service proposed to accommodate children aged 1 – 6 years. On inspection, the registered provider stated they will only accommodate children aged 2 – 6 years. It is now proposed that Smart Start Playschool would provide full day-care, part-time care and sessional preschool to children between the ages of 2 – 6 years. The service proposes to provide a play-based curriculum inspired by the Curiosity Approach. Smart Start Playschool proposes to operate from 7.30 am to 6.00 pm daily for 50/51 weeks a year, closing over the Christmas break. The service proposes to participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for 38 weeks of the year. The ECCE preschool sessions will be available to eligible children from 8.30 am – 11.30 am and 12.00 pm - 3.00 pm.</p>
Premises	<p>It is proposed that the full day care service will be conducted from a refurbished 2 storey building of which the registered provider has sole use of, located in a newly developing area of Drogheda Co. Louth. There are four care rooms on the premises currently named classroom 1, 2, 3 and 4. There are sanitary accommodations for adults and children on the ground floor, and sanitary accommodations for children on the first floor. On the ground floor, there is also a sleep room, kitchen and storage room. On the first floor there is also an office/staff room. There are additional rooms on the premises that are not currently in use. A fully enclosed outdoor play area is provided to the side of the premises. The premises also has parking bays to the front and to the rear of the building.</p>
Staffing	<p>The registered provider has assigned a designated person in charge responsible for the daily operation of the service and proposes that both will work directly with the children on a daily basis. It is proposed that, in time, a total of 14 staff will be employed in the service. Following approval of registration, the registered provider states to have</p>

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	five additional staff recruited to work directly with children, a cook, one administration worker and one cleaner.
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under four themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the Child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to the registering application. 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.</p>
Acknowledgement	The Inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the proposed registered provider and person in charge who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

Requirement met:

(1)(a) The requirement has been met.

It is proposed that there would be a designated person in charge on a daily basis and that a named person would be appointed to deputise as required.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—

(b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The proposed registered provider is aware of the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in Part 1 of Schedule 6 and would ensure that an adequate number of adults would at all times work directly with the children in the service.

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Including the registered provider, there are 7 staff available to work directly with the children when the service opens initially.

The registered provider has stated that up to 14 staff members would be employed in the proposed service when operating at maximum capacity and that the minimum adult to child ratios will be maintained at all times.

(8)(a) The proposed registered provider would ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times when the service is in operation.

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—*

- (a) *having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*
- (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.*

(2) *A registered provider—*

- (a) *of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) The 4 care rooms are well resourced with a suitable range of materials and equipment to facilitate children to engage in age appropriate and meaningful play activities. Interest areas are clearly defined in each room and include home corners, reading area, construction areas, craft areas resourced with real-life furniture and equipment and with natural and open-ended materials. Materials are stored on low

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level shelving so that they are easily accessible to children. The outdoor area had a wide variety of materials to facilitate play activities including a climbing frame, equipment for balancing, construction materials, trays with lids for sensory play, outdoor kitchens and playhouses.

(1)(b) The service has a sleep room available where children who need sleep can do so on a blue stackable bed. The service provides individual bed linen that is laundered and stored on the premises. Each care room had a rest area with either a couch or chairs along with floor mats, cushions and blankets where children can rest or take a break between activities.

(2)(a) There is a spacious and fully enclosed outdoor area to the side of the building. This outdoor space is divided into 4 individual enclosed and spacious spaces. Two spaces are ready to be used by the preschool children. One area is fully covered with impact absorbing surface with equipment and materials available for climbing and balancing such as a metal climbing frame, a large tree branch, wooden stumps and plastic steps. The second area is paved with concrete and partially covered with an impact absorbing surface. In this area there are workbenches, outdoor kitchens, a playhouse, covered sand/water trays and child-sized seating areas. The registered provider has plans to develop the other outdoor areas in time.

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Part V – Care of Children in Pre-School Services

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

The proposed registered provider proposes to provide all snacks and meals for children attending the service. Hot meals and snacks will be prepared onsite in the fitted kitchen by a trained member of staff. A 2 week menu will be available and drinking water would be made available to the children throughout the day.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

There are no hazards observed by the inspectors that would impact the health, safety or welfare of the children attending the service. It appears that appropriate measures have been undertaken in the service to ensure the safety of the children.

- The external doors, windows and side gate were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- The windows in the care rooms were fitted with restrictive opening devices.
- Suitable handrails are provided on the staircases. The staircases are also adequately lit, and the floor covering is in good condition.

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- All furniture and equipment were clean and in good condition and suitable for use by the proposed age groups.
- The heating system for the service was thermostatically controlled to prevent radiators from exceeding the maximum surface temperature of 50°C.
- Thermostatically controlled running water was available at the wash hand basins in the service.

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*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The proposed registered provider was aware of the requirement to ensure that a person trained in first aid for children would be at all times immediately available to the children attending the early years service. There was evidence available in the service to show that the registered provider, the person in charge and 1 additional staff member holds in-date first aid response (FAR) training certificates.

(2)(a)&(b). First aid boxes were suitably equipped and stored in readily accessible and conspicuous positions in the care rooms, available at all times for the children if necessary. A first aid box is available on the ground floor and the first floor.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of—
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) The proposed registered provider has a template which would be used to record fire drills that would take place monthly at the service.

(b) A record is maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the service. The firefighting equipment was certified as having been serviced in November 2023 and the fire detection and alarm system on 07/09/2023.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire and evacuation maps were available for review and will be displayed in each care room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Requirement met:

A statement of insurance was submitted to the Registration Team valid from 29.11.23 until 27.03.24 for a maximum of 66 children on a full day care basis.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been partially met.

(a) The premises has been refurbished for use as a childcare facility and appears to be in good condition throughout.

(b) The premises appears safe and is found to be appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the early years service.

(c)

Lighting

The premises is adequately lit by means of natural lighting supplemented by artificial lighting.

Heating:

The premises is heated by means of gas fired central heating.

The ambient temperatures of the care rooms and the sanitary accommodation are found to be within the optimum care room temperature range of 18-22°C on the day of inspection.

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	<p>The proposed registered provider is aware of the safe sleep ambient temperature range of 18-22°C for sleeping children over the age of 12 months.</p> <p><u>Ventilation:</u></p> <p>Ventilation in the care rooms is provided by means of openable windows, wall vents and trickle vents.</p> <p>The sanitary accommodations for children on the ground floor are ventilated by means of openable windows. Sanitary accommodations for adults on the ground floor and children on the first floor lead on to a ventilated lobby.</p> <p>(e)</p> <p>Adequate sanitary accommodation is provided for the number of children proposed to attend. There is a wash hand basin in each care room.</p> <p>Four toilets, one of which is wheelchair accessible, and four wash hand basins are provided in the children’s sanitary accommodation on the ground floor along with one nappy changing unit. On the first floor, three toilets and three wash hand basins are available for children in the sanitary accommodation.</p> <p>Two toilets, one of which is wheelchair accessible, and two wash hand basins are provided for staff on the ground floor.</p>
Requirement not met:	(e) A toilet in the staff sanitary accommodation was leaking on the day of inspection resulting in an overflow on the floor and which spread to the next cubicle.
Response from Provider:	The registered provider has provided assurance that the leak was attended to by a plumber and the issue is now resolved.
Summary Comment:	The regulatory requirement has been met.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

Requirement met:

- (1) There is adequate clear floor space available for the safety, play and movement for a maximum number of 65 preschool children in the proposed service at any one time.
- (2) The minimum space regulatory requirement can be met for 65 pre-school children attending the service within the individual room requirements below. The registered provider and service manager are aware of the minimum clear floor space requirements as specified in Schedule 7.
- The clear floor space in Classroom 1 measured 32.29 square metres. This meets the space requirements for 13 children aged 2-3 years proposed to attend this care room on a full day or part time basis.
 - The clear floor space in Classroom 2 measured 29.181 square metres. This meets the space requirements for the proposed 11 children aged 2.5-3.5 years proposed to attend this care room on a sessional basis.
 - The clear floor space in Classroom 3 measured 51.20 square metres. This meets the space requirements for the proposed 22 children aged 3 – 5 years proposed to attend this care room on a full day or part time basis.
 - The clear floor space in Classroom 4 measured 30.33 square metres. This meets the space requirements for the proposed 13 children aged 3-5 years proposed to attend this care room on a sessional basis.