

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2023MH001
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Reach For The Stars - The Arches
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Arches, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath
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<b>Eircode:</b>	Not Applicable
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Katarzyna Wlodarska
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/02/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	13	PM	No.
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S Early O'Brien & S Cully.
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector & Inspection Registration Manager.

### 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

Reach For The Stars – The Arches is one of two privately owned services operated by Waterville’s Little Stars Limited. The service provides sessional and part-time care to children aged 2 to 6 years and operates from 09:00 to 13:00. The service also provides a school age service from 07:30 to 08:50 and from 13:30 to 18:30. The service is purpose built and consists of 1 large care room, reception area, office, kitchen, storeroom and sanitary facilities. An outdoor play space is located to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

On the day of inspection there were three staff members working directly with the children, including the designated person in charge. In addition, there are 4 adults who are familiar with the service available to provide relief when required. The registered provider does not work directly with the children daily and was not present on the day of inspection.

### Methodology

Tusla 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/ records/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4) Management and Recruitment

11 (1)(2)(8)(a) Staffing Levels

15 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)(i) Record of a Pre-School Child

19 (1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of Child

23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

25 First Aid

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, Record of a Pre-School Child

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 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) The service manager is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.

(b) The service manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced at 09:40am on the morning of the inspection and was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)  
Following a discussion with the registered provider and a review of five staff files it was confirmed that one new member of staff commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 16 February 2022.

Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b) Of the six written and validated references required, five were available from a past employer and one was available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all eight staff members demonstrating that the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4)  
All adults who had commenced employment since the last inspection date held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

## Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

While it is acknowledged that a police vetting disclosure was available for one staff member working in the service, who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months, this disclosure was not available in English or Irish. It is a requirement that documents are available in English or Irish and are translated by a certified translator.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The service has retrieved the translation of the international police clearance.

All international vetting will be translated prior to employment commences going forward.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted by the service and reviewed by the early years inspector and deemed to meet regulatory requirement. The actions outlined will be reviewed on the next inspection of the service.

## Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

### 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 children at all times during the inspection.
- (2)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the inspection. There were 13 children attending the service being supervised by 3 adults on the morning of inspection.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

### Compliance Information

(1) Twelve children's records were sampled and reviewed. The records contained the required information as set out in Regulation 15 (1)(a) to (i).

### 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

#### **Basic Needs**

Heathy eating is promoted in the service and children bring their own lunch from home for morning snack time in the ECCE session. Additional snacks such as crackers, fruit and cheese are available in the service should a child require them. Water was available to the children from their own bottles which they had access to on a low shelf. On the day of inspection, children were observed to take their lunchbox from the fridge at snack time and were encouraged to open and close lunch boxes and bottles and be responsible for their own belongings. Snack time was a social experience during which time the staff members sat at the table with the children engaging in social conversations with them. Using gentle tones this promoted a relaxed atmosphere.

Children are encouraged to use the toilet and engage in handwashing independently with assistance provided where needed. They are also encouraged to engage in teamwork at clean up time.

The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive to the needs of all children.

Within the daily routine of the service, on the day of inspection children moved about the care room freely, engaging in free play activities which interested them such as music and dance, art and crafts, construction and stories.

A cosy area, consisting of a child's couch, mats and cushions were available for children to take a break from activities if needed. Sleep mats and blankets were available if a child needed to lie down to sleep.

### **Supporting Relationships**

The children appeared happy and content and were engaged and relaxed within the care room and in the outdoor play area. They were given ample time to complete activities before moving to the next one. The staff members ensured that the children were supported in all aspects of their physical, emotional and social wellbeing and demonstrated warmth, kindness, affection and respect in all interactions with the children. The staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and teamwork.

Transitions were handled very smoothly on the day of inspection and the children appear to be used to their routine and know what to expect. Music cues are used to indicate to the children that it is time to move to the next part of the day, such as clean up time, snack time and outdoor play.

As the children are consistently cared for by the same adults, this has enabled them to form secure relationships, attachments and develop their confidence and autonomy within the service.

### **Physical and Material Environment**

The indoor environment was laid out in such a way that children had easy access to resources and interest areas within the room. These were well considered and suitably resourced with materials available such as a home corner, a play kitchen, a library area with a couch, an arts and crafts and mark making station, construction area, rice tray, activity boards, puzzles and natural materials.

A family tree containing photos of each child's family was displayed on a large window display in the room at the child's level. Children's artistic creations were displayed on boards within the room.

On the day of inspection children were engaged in a cutting, gluing and threading activity relating to their current theme on "St Valentine's Day" presented to them on a low table which was adequately resourced.

Staff members informed the inspectors that the children enjoy time in the outdoor play area daily. On the day of inspection, this area was adequately supervised, safe and secure with the children dressed in warm jackets, hats and gloves. The equipment and materials available provided appropriate learning opportunities for the children based on their age and stage of development. Children were observed to have autonomy in leading their play choices without the direction of the staff member. In this area children have access to an activity wall with guttering for pouring, mud kitchen, large trays with soil for messy play, shovels and plant pots, a climbing and balancing activity built by the children using boards that appeared safe.

### **Programme of Activities**

During the inspection it was evident that children's individual choice was respected in the daily routine in which they are encouraged to participate. There are picture cues and visual displays on the wall at their level to support them to make decisions on their play throughout the day. Children were observed to make choices on their own play materials within the environment, engaged in movement activities and relaxing activities both individually and as a group.

Positive language was observed to be used across the staff team and with the children. Language development was supported in discussions observed both at snack time and in the outdoor areas where the adults encouraged the children to use words to describe their thoughts and feelings.

## 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 entrance door leading into the service was appropriately secured with a buzzer system to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.

Anti febrile medication was stored safely in the kitchen and out of the reach of children.

All storage facilities for hazardous cleaning materials were inaccessible to children.

Daily risk assessments are carried out for both the indoor care room and the outdoor play area.

#### **Infection Control:**

Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate handwashing for staff and children.

Good hand washing practices were observed after toileting and outdoor play and before eating.

Lunch boxes that included perishable food items were stored in the fridges in the playrooms in line with safe food guidance.

#### **Administration of Medication:**

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of anti-febrile medication and prescribed medication and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication if required during discussions with the inspectors.

### Safe Sleep:

In discussion with the staff members, they advised that children do not consistently sleep. However, they were familiar with safe sleep guidance and the procedures to follow if a child in the service does require sleep.

### Fire Safety:

On the day of inspection, emergency exits were free from any obstruction.

### Outing:

While outings do not currently take place, in discussion with staff members they were familiar with the procedures to be followed in planning and undertaking an outing with the children.

## 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) A person trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available and safely stored on the premises.