

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2024DY003
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Small Steps
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Mount Argus Creche Lower Kimmage Road Harolds Cross Dublin 6W
<b>Eircode:</b>	D6W X620

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Albana Beleshi
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20/01/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	16	PM	14
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla-Child and Family Agency Loughlinstown Health Centre Loughlinstown Drive A96P3Y6
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Olivia Quill
<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

Small steps is registered to provide part-time and sessional care and education to pre-school children aged 2-6 years of age. The early years service is privately owned and operates Monday to Friday from 9am to 1pm. Two care rooms are available named the yellow and red room. Only one care room the yellow room was open on the day of inspection. An outdoor play area is available for the children on the premises.

The service is located in a purpose-built single storey premises on the grounds of Mount Argus church in Harold's Cross Dublin 6W.

### Staffing

In total four adults are employed to work in the service including the registered provider.

### 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, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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

9 (1)(a)(b), (2)(a) -(d), (4) Management and Recruitment,  
11(1) and (2) Staffing Levels,  
19(1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of 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 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.*

(3) *The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.*

(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 designated person in charge was present at all times during the inspection.

(2) The files of four adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a) Eight written validated references were available from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the four adults. The

(d) Police vetting was required and available for three adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(3) The procedures specified in schedule (2) were carried out prior to any of the adults being appointed and allowed access to children attending the pre-school service.

(4) Records were available evidencing that four adults who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or 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) 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 for part-time day-care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were sixteen children attending the service being supervised by three adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

## 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 service had a healthy eating policy and fruit, and lunches were provided by parents. Perishable items were stored in the fridge. Children were offered a morning snack around 10.30 am and staff reported lunch occurs at 12pm. Snack time was observed to be a sociable occasion, staff sat with the children engaged in conversation. Independence was encouraged throughout the morning where children participated in tasks such as cleaning up following activities and putting on coats for outdoor play. Children accessed the toilet independently and staff provided assistance to younger children when required.

Warm interactions and good communication was observed by the adults who listened and spoke individually with the children during the inspection. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's positive behaviour management policy.

The open plan care room was arranged to provide a range of play materials and areas of interest for the children. This allowed the children freedom to play and explore. Areas of interest included small world toys, construction

toys, jigsaws, home corner, chalk board, books and a cosy area for children to rest. The care room provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials. Children's artwork was displayed.

A fully enclosed outdoor area was located to the rear of the premises and had shock absorbent surfacing. The outdoor area was well resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment. All children accessed the outdoor area during the inspection and were observed to be happily engaged in a variety of activities together.