

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D.: TU2024KE007

Name of Service Darling Buds

Address of Service: The Heights, Walker's Gate, South Green Road, Kildare Town, R51DA29

Email Address: niamh.walsh@yahoo.co.uk

Name of Registered Provider: Niamh Walshe

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed change: Change in number of children from 57 to 90 children

Proposed Number of Children: 90

Recommended Change Following Inspection: Increase the number of children attending from 57 to 90.

Registered change: Change in number of children from 57 to 90 children

Date of Inspection:	2	1	0	1	2	0	2	6
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Inspection undertaken by: F. Maher

Title: Early years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Early Years Inspectorate, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre
Child and Family Agency, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas,
Co. Kildare, W91X38W

Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

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

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 90 Children
Date of Registration	9 th February 2026

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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	Darling Buds is one of several services operated by the registered provider in Laois and Kildare. It opens from 07:00-19:00hours Monday to Friday and provides full day care, part time and sessional services to children 0-6 years of age. Darling Buds is also a registered school age service.
Premises	<p>The service operates from a purpose-built two-storey premises in a private housing development on the outskirts of Kildare town. There are six pre-school rooms, four of which are currently operational. Three rooms are located on the ground floor and three on the first floor. A cot room, a smaller sleep room, a kitchen and office, and a large play area to the rear of the premises are also provided.</p> <p>Due to the addition of an external fire escape stairwell, the service proposes to increase of the number of children attending from 57 to 90.</p>
Staffing	There are thirteen staff currently employed in the service. This includes the person in charge and twelve adults working directly with the children. The registered provider and area manager were present on the day of inspection.
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 the following 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 registering the change in circumstance. The Inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity; completeness; and compliance with</p>

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	administrative and legal processes. The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.

Requirement met:	The requirement is met. The service has a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
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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.

Requirement met:	The requirement is met. (1) The registered provider will appoint a sufficient number of staff members to ensure the required adult:child ratios are maintained.
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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.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises or

Requirement met:	(1)(a)
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The two pre-school rooms on the first floor, proposed to accommodate the additional pre-school children, have suitable play materials and equipment for children aged from to 2-6 years to attend on full-time basis. These environments were constructively planned with dedicated play areas and adequate play and learning equipment to promote numerary and literacy skills. There was plenty of art and craft materials and suitable props for the interest areas. A sufficient and appropriate number of child-sized tables and chairs to cater for the proposed number of children were available in the rooms. Low-level shelving units were in place displaying the materials and equipment which will ensure ease of access for the children.

(b)

The rest areas were comfortable and consisted of child-sized sofas, floor mats and cushions which were suitable for any child wishing to take a break from activities and rest.

A cot room, on the ground floor, with ten standard cots was provided for the number of children less than two years of age attending the service requiring sleep in a cot.

Low-level beds were available for any child wishing to sleep when attending the full day care service with appropriate bed linen in place. The service had a safe sleep policy in place to guide practice.

(3)(a)

The outside play area was safe, suitable and secure. The perimeter is enclosed by a high-level wall and high-level wooden gates, which are both secured with slide bolt locking mechanisms.

The play surface consists of artificial grass, and the space was equipped with a variety of wooden play equipment, an outdoor kitchen, large wall mounted chalk board, a variety of ride on equipment, tyres and balance beams. A large, covered area was in place for play during inclement weather. There were no ponds, pits or other hazards observed in the outdoor area.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

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 is met.

An outside catering company is contracted to supply the main hot meal which is reheated in the onsite kitchen daily. Parents provide the morning snack for their child; remaining snacks, breakfast and evening tea is provided by the service. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the day.

A two-week menu plan is available to demonstrate that varied nutritious food will be provided.

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 main entrance/exit door was electronically secured and is controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service. Internal doors on the ground floor and first floor were also electronically secured with fob access for staff only. The push bar emergency fire exit door on the first floor has been alarmed to alert staff in the event it is opened unnoticed by a child. All fire exits were unobstructed and easily recognisable.

The fire assembly point was displayed outdoors.

The outdoor area was suitably secured with a high-level perimeter wall and wooden gates at either side of the building. Each high-level gate was secured with slide bolt locking mechanisms.

There was provision for the appropriate disposal of waste including the provision of foot pedal operated bins in the pre-school rooms and sanitary and nappy change areas.

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towel, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted dispensers were available for hygienic hand washing and drying.

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The premises was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition and cleaning schedules are in place for all room environments.

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 is met.

(1)

Current certification in relation to first aid response (FAR) was available for several staff members currently working in the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes are stored in conspicuous positions in the service and are available and accessible to the staff members caring for the children at all times.

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 is met.

(1)(a)

Documentation was available with up-to-date recordings for monthly fire drills completed.

(b)

The firefighting equipment and smoke/fire detection alarm system was serviced 6 August 2025 and 29 September 2025 respectively.

(4)

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A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was clearly displayed within the service.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement is met.

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2026. The insurance provided cover for 90 children.

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 is met.

(a)

The premises were constructed in 2024 and maintained in a good state of repair.

(b)

The main entrance door to the pre-school was electronically secure and controlled by staff to prevent any pre-school child from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. The outdoor area is suitably secured with a high-level boundary wall and a high-level wooden gate at each side of the building secured with slide bolt locking mechanisms.

(c)

The premises benefits from natural light via large windows in all pre-school rooms. There is supplemental artificial lighting also provided from LED ceiling strip lights in the rooms. The service is heated by an air to water heat pump system with thermostatically controlled wall mounted radiators in each pre-school room.

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	<p>Windows in each room can be opened, and mechanical ventilation is provided in the sanitary areas.</p> <p>The ambient room temperature of the cot room was measured and recorded at 18°Celsius.</p> <p>(d)</p> <p>Cleaning schedules are in place in the service and the premises, and its environs were clean.</p> <p>(e)</p> <p>Adequate and suitable sanitary facilities are provided.</p> <p>There are six toilets and six wash hand basins designated for children’s use, four of which were located on the first floor.</p> <p>There were three designated nappy changing units each with an associated wash hand basin on the ground floor; two were located adjacent to the Baby room and the third has been relocated from the disabled access toilet to a room adjacent to the Toddler room.</p> <p>A wall mounted pull down nappy change unit was located in the sanitary block on the first floor if needed.</p> <p>Two toilets with wash hand basins, one being the disabled access toilet, are provided for adult/staff use.</p>
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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), (2).

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The registered provider has ensured there is adequate clear floor space provided for the work, play and movement of 90 children proposing to attend the service on a full day care basis see Table 1 below.

Table 1

Room	Room 1 First Floor (ECCE1)/Snr Toddler	Room 2 First Floor (ECCE2)	Room 3 First Floor (ECCE3)
Clear floor space	21.6 m²	50.4 m²	51 m²
Room	Room 1 Ground Floor (Baby)	Room 1 Ground Floor (Wobbler)	Room 1 Ground Floor (Toddler)
Clear Floor Space	27.7 m²	25.4 m²	32.5 m²