

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2024WW002

Name of Service: Little Harvard Childcare Ltd

Address of Service: Charlesland, Greystones, Co. Wicklow

Eircode: A63 A6N6

Name of Registered Provider: James Hargrave

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 24/06/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	76	PM	64
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Tusla Child and Family Agency
First Floor Trinity Building
IDA Business Park
Southern Cross Road
Bray
Co. Wicklow

Inspection undertaken by: H. Bourke and M. Condon

Title: Early Years Inspectors

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).

Conditions if applicable N/A

Description of service

This privately owned service was opened in 2024 and is registered to provide care and education for children aged between one year and six years of age. The service is registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day care to 139 children and operates from 07:00 – 18.30 Monday to Friday, (including a sessional Early Childhood and Education Scheme (ECCE) service for 38 weeks of the year).

The service is located in a residential area in Greystones Co Wicklow. The purpose-built premises consists of a two-storey standalone building with eight playrooms, one sleep room, sanitary accommodation for both children and adults, a kitchen, staff room, storage rooms, an office and an entrance hallway.

The outdoor play area for the service is sited at the back of the premises and car parking is provided at the front of the building.

Staffing

There are currently nineteen adults employed in the service. Eighteen adults were present on the day of inspection; this included a relief staff member from a second service. The staff members employed include the manager, assistant manager and the full-time chef.

The registered providers do not work in the service.

The manager and assistant manager are supernumerary and help cover breaks and assist care staff when needed. On the day of inspection two additional managers arrived in the service to assist with the running of the service and the inspection.

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/ safety/ 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.

- Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3) & (4), - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1), (2), (8)(a) – Staffing Levels.
- Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-school Child
- Regulation 23 General Safety, Infection Control, Safe Sleep and Medication Administration
- Regulation 24 Checking in and out and Record of Attendance
- Regulation 25 First Aid
- Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures
- Regulation 27 Supervision

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 23 safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, therefore, the findings relate to the Wobbler 1, Toddler 1, Toddler 2 and Toddler 3.

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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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

Following a discussion with the manager and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that nineteen adults are employed in the service, this includes the manager, assistant manager and the chef. On the day of inspection, four additional adults were present, this included an outside contractor, these files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The service had a manager and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The manager was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of twenty-three adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for twenty-three adults.

(d)

International police vetting was available for six adults working in the service who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Twenty-one staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed 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)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were fourteen adults employed to work directly with 76 children on the day of inspection.
- (8)(a)
The manager ensured that there were two adults on the premises at all times. This was confirmed by reviewing the staff roster.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The manager ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The manager ensured that these records were available for inspection by an authorised person

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:

- All cleaning products were stored, out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit routes in the pre-school rooms were clearly marked and free from obstruction.
- The entrance door to the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised people from gaining access to the pre-school.
- The large outdoor play area, to the rear of the premises, was fenced in and gated to prevent a child gaining unsupervised access to the roadway or any other source of danger.
- The outdoor area was suitable, safe and secure.
- Children had no access to the kitchen area in the service.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing.
- Foot pedal bins were available in the sanitary areas and care rooms for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other items that required disposing of.
- Individual bed linen was provided for the children. Staff stated that bed linen was laundered weekly and individually stored for each child.

- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.
- Hand washing following play and before morning snack time was observed.
- Nappy changing was observed on the day of inspection, the practices were fully in line with the nappy changing practices of the service.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were documented every ten minutes.
- Discussion with staff demonstrated that staff were familiar with safe sleep guidelines.
- The sleep room temperatures were maintained at the correct temperature for sleep.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1)

The manager ensured that each child attending the service was checked in and checked out on each day of attendance.

(3)(a)(i)-(iv)

The manager ensured that no person other than the above list of people were allowed access to the pre-school service.

(b)

A record in writing was kept of any person having had access to the pre-school service from the above list.

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)
The manager ensured that there were an adequate number of adults trained in FAR (First Aid Response) available to the children at all times during their day.

(2)(a)
A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place on each floor of the service.

(b)
A first aid box was available to the children attending the service 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
(c) an authorised person.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

There was a record of fire drills having taken place in the pre-school service on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill was the 23rd of June 2025.

(b)

There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke detectors on the premises dated the 20th of February 2025 and 22nd of April 2025 respectively.

(2)(c)

The above records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in each pre-school room and in other areas around the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The manager was able to demonstrate that the children attending the service were adequately supervised throughout their day.