

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| 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: | 03/10/2024 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 68 | PM 56 |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin. | | |
| Inspection undertaken by: | M Condon & E Mulhern | | |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable |
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Description of service

Little Harvard Childcare is a service which opened in April 2024 in a residential area in Greystones Co Wicklow. The registered provider presently operates 18 services in the east of the country. The 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. inspection. 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. The service is registered to provide full day care for pre-school children aged one to six years of age and the hours of operation are between 07.00- 18.30. The service can accommodate a maximum number of 139 children at any one time across eight care rooms, seven of which were open on the day of inspection.

Staffing

Presently there are thirteen childcare staff employed across seven care rooms. On the day of inspection, the person-in-charge, supervisor and area manager were present and available to provide support in the rooms as needed. A chef is also employed.

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, health, welfare and development of child, safety and 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), (7) - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 10 Policies, Procedures
- Regulation 11(1),(2),(8)(a) – Staffing Levels.
- Regulation 19(1)(b) and (3) – Health, welfare and development of child.
- Regulation 25 (1), (2)(a)(b) – First aid.
- Regulation 26 (1)(a)(b), (4) – Fire safety measures.
- Regulation 27 – Supervision
- Regulation 33 – Furnishing information to the Agency

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(b), 19(3), therefore the findings relate to the Wobbler, Toddler 2, Pre-school 1 and Pre-school 2 rooms.

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.

Additional Information

This inspection was triggered as a result of information received which was notified to Tusla by the service.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the area manager, 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.*

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the Inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2)
There were ten new staff members employed since last inspection. These ten files were reviewed on the day of the inspection.

(a)&(b) There were twenty written and validated references for ten staff members.

(c) Documentary evidence of processed Garda Vetting Disclosures was available for ten staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. The person in charge stated that

(d) Police vetting was available for seven staff members who had lived in another state for a period longer than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)
Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the ten staff members who worked directly with children had 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.

(7)(a)
Evidence was available to demonstrate that all staff were provided with the service policies and procedures prior to employment. During induction each new staff member and their induction trainer signed to state that the policies and procedures had been included in their induction training. Training in Children's First was evident in each staff members training file. Records were available detailing individual monthly supervision meetings between management and each staff member. Evidence of regular team meetings were available also.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)
Documentary evidence was available to confirm that one staff member was on the premises prior to their completed Garda vetting being received by the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

It should be noted that the staff member whose vetting was not in place, was only on the premises on two occasions prior to the vetting being received. On these occasions, she was receiving induction training, and she was not working directly with the children. She was always in the company of another staff member.

Preventive Action

Senior Management have reminded local management that unvetted staff should not be permitted on the premises. Senior management will ensure compliance with all aspects of regulation 23.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 23. Compliance with Regulation 9(3) will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The written policies, procedures and statement specified in Schedule 5 were in place in the service. The following were reviewed:

- Safeguarding Statement
- Recruitment Policy
- Staff induction and training policy
- Staff supervision policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Complaints policy
- Risk management policy

These were found to be compliant with the requirements set out in schedule 5. Through a review of documentation, interviews with staff and observation by inspectors, the practices in the services appeared to align with the policy statements as set out by the service.

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 was an adequate number of adults working directly with the pre-school children. There were 68 children attending the service being supervised by thirteen adults on the day of inspection.
- (2) The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection.
- (8)(a) There were more than two adults in the premises throughout the inspection and the staff roster confirmed that there are at least two adults present 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-*
- (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.*
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.*

Compliance Information

Regulation 19(1)(b), and 19(3) was assessed in the Pre-school 1, Pre-school 2, Wobbler, and Toddler rooms.

(1)(b)

The children were observed to be content and relaxed within the care rooms.

The staff members spoke to the children kindly, using their first name, appropriate eye contact and gentle vocal tones during the interactions that were observed. Any child who became upset was quickly soothed by staff and given time to take a break before returning to play. Children were observed to move freely within their rooms and to choose which toy they wished to play with. Adults encouraged children to take part in group activities also.

The service had a healthy eating policy, and the main meal and snacks were observed to be healthy. The staff members sat with the children at mealtimes giving assistance as needed.

Children were supervised and assisted with hand washing depending on their age and stage of development. Children's nappies were changed as required and during this time staff were observed to engage warmly with children in their care. The children's toileting needs were attended to at regular intervals throughout the day and more frequently if needed.

A rest area with soft furnishings was available to the children in the care rooms in case a child wished to rest or take a break from activities. One sleep room with cots was provided for the children aged under 2 years. All children in Wobbler and Toddler rooms slept at a designated time. Staff sat with the children and helped the children to soothe themselves to sleep. Sleep mats with individual bed linen were provided to older children who needed to sleep.

The staff described how they communicate information to parents daily about their child's day through the use of a computerised application and information was also shared with parents at drop off and collection times.

The outdoor area was directly accessible from each care room on the ground floor. The children using the upstairs rooms had access to the outdoor area using a stair way. In addition, two of the rooms upstairs had access to a small outdoor area on the first floor.

All the children were provided with an opportunity for outdoor play.

(3)

The staff members in the Wobbler, Toddler and pre-school rooms were observed being kind and respectful towards the children in their care. First names, appropriate eye contact and gentle vocal tones were used during all interactions with the children.

The young children in Wobbler 1 room went to the staff members for reassurance and comforting and the staff members quickly responded by lifting and cuddling them.

The staff in the Wobbler, Toddler 2 room, Pre-school 1 and 2 were aware of the behaviour management policy for the service. The staff members demonstrated a knowledge of appropriate age-appropriate strategies to use when managing children's behaviour. They also knew the behaviour management practices that were unsuitable and prohibited when caring for 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) Four members of staff had a qualification in First Aid Response. On the day of inspection the four adults trained in First Aid Response were present and immediately available to the pre-school children.

(2)

(a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school room.

(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school 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

At all times during the inspection the pre-school children were supervised.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The complaints policy of the service includes the information pertaining to (a), (b) and (c) above.
- (2) Evidence was available to confirm that the Registered Provider:
- (a) Kept a record in writing of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service.
 - (b) The complaint was managed in accordance with the complaints policy of the service.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a):
- (a) included details of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with
 - (b) The record of the complaint was open to inspection on the premises by the Inspector

Part IX - Inspection and Enforcement

Regulation 33 – Furnishing of information to agency

A registered provider shall furnish the Agency with such information as the Agency may reasonably require for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations and the information shall be in such form, if any, as may be specified by the Agency.

Compliance Information

The registered provider furnished all information as reasonably required by the Agency for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations.