

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:	11/11/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	69	PM 55
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co Dublin.		
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Condon and O. Quill		
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	Not applicable.		

Description of service

This service is located in a residential area in Greystones Co Wicklow. 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. 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 a maximum of 139 pre-school children aged one to six years and the hours of operation are between 07.00- 18.30.

Staffing

Presently there are seventeen childcare staff employed across eight care rooms. On the day of inspection, the person-in-charge and deputy person-in-charge were present and available to provide support in the rooms as needed. A chef is also employed. After commencement of the inspection the two area managers arrived at the service and remained until the inspection was completed.

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.

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.

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) – Health, welfare and development of the Child
- Regulation 23-General Safety
- Regulation 27 – Supervision
- Regulation 28- Insurance
- Regulation 33 – Furnishing information to the Agency

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(b) Health, welfare and development of the Child; therefore, the findings relate to the Toddler 2, Toddler 3, 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 managers, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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 five new staff members employed since last inspection. A student was also present. These six files were reviewed on the day of the inspection.
- (a)&(b) There were twelve and validated references for five staff members and one student.
- (c) Documentary evidence of processed Garda Vetting Disclosures was available for 5 staff members and one student. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was available for four new staff members who had lived in another state for a period longer than six consecutive months as an adult.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4)
- Documentary evidence was available to confirm that four new 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. A record of staff meetings was available and there was evidence that staff members were informed of changes made following risk assessments carried out by management.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Documentary evidence was not available to confirm that a certificate available regarding one adult, who worked directly with children, was equivalent to 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.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

As outlined to the inspector on the day, the staff member concerned has a signed document from the college where she obtained her degree to state that she has completed her degree course. We have submitted her qualification to the DCEDIY to confirm her level of qualification here in Ireland that she holds. The college concerned is listed on the DCEDIY website as a competent authority to issue such a qualification.

Local Management have been instructed to ensure that all staff hold a recognized qualification before commencing work with Little Harvard.

Regional and Senior Management will ensure compliance with all aspects of regulation 9 going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

12/12/24: Documentary evidence of application submission to DCEDIY for qualification recognition was submitted with CAPA response.

19/12/34: Following the completed CAPA process, the registered provider submitted evidence to the Inspectorate that they had received confirmation from DCEDIY that the staff members documentation and qualification was equivalent to at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted have been reviewed and accepted. It is acknowledged that following inspection an application was made for clarification from DCEDIY as to whether the documentation available on the day of inspection was equivalent to a major award. The DCEDIY later confirmed that the documentation submitted demonstrated that the staff member did hold a major award currently included in DCEDIY's list of recognised qualifications and this is now on file.

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 9(4).

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:

- Staff induction and training policy
- Staff supervision policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Risk management policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Policy on Transitions

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 69 children attending the service being supervised by seventeen 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 IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A record was kept in writing in all care rooms of the attendance of each pre-school child.
- (i) Staff rosters were kept on a daily basis. This matched the staff present on the day of inspection.
- (k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child were kept in their pre-school room and a copy was kept in the office.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (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. Children were observed to move freely within their rooms and in the outdoor area. Adults encouraged children to take part in group activities, however they were also facilitated to play alone if preferred.

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 at regular intervals and as required, and during this time staff were observed to engage warmly with children. The older children used the toilet independently throughout the day and more frequently if needed. The staff were observed to be at hand and offered assistance as needed.

A rest area with soft furnishings was available to the children in the care rooms so that a child could take a rest or a break from activities. One sleep room with cots was provided for the children aged under 2 years. 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.

Written care plans were available for children where required and staff were knowledgeable regarding the specific plan for the child in their care room. It was noted during the inspection that an individual care plan was followed by staff regarding one child with a specific medical need.

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. Children from all rooms were observed using the outdoor areas during the inspection.

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 main entrance door to the service was secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons gaining access to the pre-school. The doorway to each care room is secured with a stair gate to prevent a child exiting the room unsupervised. The release push-button to exit from each hallway are out of children's reach. A visitor's book was available in the hallway on arrival.
- All toys and equipment in the care rooms inspected and in the outdoor area were in good condition and safe for use for the relevant age group.
- Safe storage was provided for cleaning agents and equipment, which were out of reach of children.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in each room the service.
- A checking system was in use to ensure that the children in the outdoor area, and while moving to and from the outdoor area are accounted for.

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

Children were supervised by staff members at all times in Toddler 2, Toddler 3, Pre-school 1 and Pre-school 2 rooms for the duration of the inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of the Insurance certificate was available. This provided insurance for 148 children attending for full day care with an expiry date of 27/03/2025.

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.