

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024WW006
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Name of Service:	Little Harvard Childcare Ltd
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Address of Service:	The Broomhall Business and Enterprise Centre, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow.
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Eircode:	A67W7X2
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Name of Registered Provider:	J Hargrave and R McGovern
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	09/12/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	21
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona Condon and Olivia 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

Little Harvard Childcare Broomhall is one of a chain of privately operated service which is registered to provide full day care, part-time care and sessional care for pre-school children from 1-6 years of age. The hours of operation are between 07.00- 18.30 daily. The premises is purpose built and located beside a primary school. The service is in a two-storey standalone building and comprises of 11 care rooms, one sleep room, sanitary accommodation for both children and adults, a kitchen, staff room, storage areas, an office and an entrance hallway. 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.

On the day of inspection three rooms were open with pre-school children attending: namely, Wobbler Room and Toddler Room on the ground floor and the Pre-school Room on the first floor.

Staffing

There are ten staff members employed, one of whom is a full-time chef. The person in charge and their deputy were present and available to provide support in the rooms if needed.

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

As this was the first inspection following the opening of the service this was an announced inspection and focused on the area of governance and health, welfare and development of the child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9(1)(a), (b), (2)(a)-(d), and (4) Management and recruitment

Regulation 11(1) and (2) Staffing levels

Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health welfare and development of child

However, on inspection an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23 Safety. This finding is outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 regional manager, 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

(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

- (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)
- A total of twelve adults were present on inspection. They included nine staff members, the person-in-charge, deputy person in charge, and a staff member who was employed as a chef. These twelve files were reviewed on the day of the inspection.
- (a)&(b) There were twenty-four written and validated references for twelve staff members.

(c) Documentary evidence of processed Garda Vetting Disclosures was available for twelve staff members. 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 six 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 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) It could not be verified that one staff member 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.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The staff member in question possesses a relevant qualification obtained in her country and has submitted an application to the DCEDIY for recognition to determine the corresponding qualification level, which was approved by email on 16/01/2025.

Local management will ensure that all staff possess the required qualifications prior to commencing employment. Senior management will conduct periodic spot checks to ensure compliance with all aspects of Regulation 9

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of letter from the DCEDIY confirming recognition of the staff member's qualification.

Summary Comment

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

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 25 children attending the service being supervised by nine 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-

(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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs of Infants and Children

- Healthy nutritious lunch and snacks in line with the healthy eating policy of the service were enjoyed by the children on the day of inspection. The children enjoyed vegetable pasta bake for their main meal which was prepared and cooked on site. Staff sat with the children during mealtimes assisting the younger children and engaging the older children in conversation and encouraging them to participate.
- Drinking water was available for the children throughout the day. Younger children's nappies were changed as required and good engagement in conversation with the children was noted during this time. Older children used the toilet independently and assistance given if required.
- Sleep was facilitated for the younger children in a dedicated cot rooms and on low beds in the toddler room. Children were soothed to sleep and monitored every 10 minutes while sleeping by staff.
- Each room had access to the outdoor area where age-appropriate toys and equipment was available.

Supporting Relationships around Children

- The adults present were observed showing warmth and sensitivity towards all of the children in their care.
- It was noted that any child who became upset was quickly soothed by the staff present.
- There was evidence that the service worked in partnership with parents. It was stated that a verbal handover on the child's day occurred at collection time for each child. Written reports for each child attending the Wobbler and Toddler rooms were given to each parent upon collection. The service also communicated using alternative means such as the service email and phoning.

Physical and Material Environment

- The play resources available to the children were accessible, organised and stored on low level shelving which allowed the children to select and replace items and materials of interest.

- There was an adequate amount of age-appropriate furniture and equipment available in the rooms. Equipment included Montessori equipment, construction, push-pull toys, toy animals, puzzles and a library.
- There was evidence of the children's artwork on display in the rooms.
- A secure outdoor area with an artificial grass surface was located at the rear of the premises. Part of the area was covered so that it could be used in inclement weather. Play equipment available include bikes, climbing frame, slides and sand play.
- The playrooms were spacious and warm and laid out to meet the needs of the children. An ambient temperature of 18.5°C – 20°C was maintained in the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

The ambient temperature of the sanitary areas, off the Wobbler room and the Toddler rooms was too cold to provide a comfortable warm environment for the children. The temperature was 17°C and there was no means to increase this temperature as the sanitary areas did not have an individual heating system.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

New heaters have been installed to provide a comfortable warm environment for the children from wobbler room and toddler room.

Local management will ensure that the temperature in the sanitary area is maintained in accordance with regulatory requirements through regular spot checks. Senior management will ensure ongoing compliance with all aspects of Regulation 19 at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of heaters in place in both sanitary areas.

Summary Comment

The Registered Provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 19.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

In the Pre-school room cleaning agents, including an air freshener and disinfectant sprays, were stored in a low press which was accessible to children. It is acknowledged that these were removed when attention was drawn to them by the inspector.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

All cleaning agents are now stored in a cupboard away from all children's reach. Staff have been reminded about the importance of storing all cleaning agents away from children and how to store them properly. Local and Senior Management will ensure compliance with all aspects of Regulation 23.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The Registered Provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 23.