

Pre-Registration Inspection Report for Proposed New Services



Application Details

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| Name of Proposed Registered Provider: | Shirley Flannery |
| Name of Proposed Service: | First Steps Academy |
| Address of Proposed Service: | The Poplars, St Edmunds Avenue, Lucan, Co Dublin |
| Proposed service type(s): | Full Day Care |
| Proposed maximum number of children to attend at any one time: | 134 |
| Proposed age range of children to attend the service: | 0 – 6 years |
| Proposed hours of operation: | 7.45am to 6.00pm |

Registration Decision

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|--|---------------------------------|
| Registration Decision: | Service Registered |
| Date of Registration Decision: | 11 th September 2025 |
| TUSLA number: | TU2025DS002 |
| Type of service registered: | Full Day Care |
| Maximum number of children registered to attend at any one time: | 132 |
| Age range of children registered to attend the service: | 0-6 years |
| Hours of operation: | 7.45am to 6.00pm |

Inspection Details

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|---|--------------------------------|
| Date(s) of pre-registration inspection: | 3 rd September 2025 |
| Name of Early Years Inspector(s): | F Carty and M Farrell |

Pre-registration Inspection Process

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate complete a Pre-Registration Inspection of all proposed pre-school services, as part of the registration process. This is undertaken before the service can be registered. The purpose is to assess whether the service is a safe and suitable setting for children and to ensure that the number of children the service wants to care for can be safely accommodated. The inspection is arranged with the registered provider in advance. The inspector will assess the service against the pre-school regulations.

There are two possible outcomes following the pre-registration inspection:

- **Requirements Met:** The service may be registered without any further actions needed by the registered provider.

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- **Requirements Not Met:** The inspector has identified regulatory requirements which have not been met. The registered provider has an opportunity to submit to the inspector what actions they have taken / are taking to address them in advance of the finalisation of the report and the registration decision.

Once the Pre-Registration Inspection process is complete, the report will be finalised and a registration decision will be made and communicated to the registered provider.

Description of Service

First Steps Academy is a purpose built creche facility located on the ground floor of an apartment building in Lucan, Co Dublin. The service is one of four privately owned services operated by the registered provider. The premises is purposely built and consists of seven care rooms, a cot room, sanitary accommodation, kitchen and a staff room. There is an outdoor play area to the front of the building. There is associated car parking to the side of the building.

Table of Core Service Details

| Care Rooms | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Baby Boos Room | Snuggle Bears Room | Cub Bears Room | Panda Bears Room | Teddy Bears Room | Buddy Bears Room | Polar Bears Room |
| Clear Floor Space Measured | 34.25sqm | 33.73sqm | 46.18sqm | 43.78sqm | 38.77sqm | 41.81sqm | 42.88sqm |

| | Sleep Rm 1 | Sleep Rm 2 | Sleep Rm 3 |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Cots | 15 | | |
| Floor beds | | 12 | 12 |

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| | Baby Boo/Snuggle Bears | Cubs/Bears Rooms | Teddy Bear Room (inc. 1 staff toilet) | Buddy Bears Room | Corridor (Disabled/Adult) |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Toilets | | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| Sinks | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| Nappy changing units | 3 | | | | |

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 requirements of this regulation have been met.

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.
- (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,
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Requirement met

The requirements of this regulation have been met.

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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.
- (2) A registered provider—
- (a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional pre-school service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016; shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.
- (4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.
- (5) Where pre-school children attending a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre have access to an outdoor space other than such a space specified in paragraph (4), the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable.

Requirement met

The requirements of this regulation have been met.

Regulation 21- Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Requirement met

The requirements of this regulation have been met.

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 requirements of this regulation have been met.

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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 requirements of this regulation have been met.

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.*
- (2) *Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.*

Requirement met

The requirements of this regulation have been met.

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 requirements of this regulation have been met.

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.
- (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 requirements of this regulation have been met.

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Regulation 28- Insurance

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

Requirement met

The requirements of this regulation have been met.

Registration is contingent upon the Registered Provider maintaining up-to-date insurance coverage that accurately reflects the number of children attending the service.

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 not met

The requirements of this regulation have not been met for the following reason(s):

(e) There is insufficient sanitary accommodation to meet the requirements of the proposed number of children. There are 4 nappy changing units and eight toilets and sinks allowing a maximum of 132 children in attendance on any one day.

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.*
- (3) A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*
- (4) Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides— (a) a sessional pre-school service, and (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).*
- (5) A registered provider of a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a minimum of 2 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*

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(6) *Subject to paragraph (7), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are no more than 22 children in a room in the service at any time.*

Requirement met

The requirements of this regulation have been met.

Methodology

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 four themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the Child, Safety and Premises.

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 the registering application. 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.