

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS213
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Name of Service:	Learning For Life
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Address of Service:	DTTLB Campus, Esker Hill, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K78 K120
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sinead McCarville
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	42	PM	40
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
Inspection undertaken by:	S Quigley & K Doyle
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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Description of service

Learning for Life is a full day care service located in an urban, residential area of Lucan, South County Dublin. Care and education are provided to children on a full day, part time, and sessional basis aged between 6 months and 6 years. The premises is a two-story facility consisting of two care rooms on the ground floor and two care rooms on the upper floor, one of which is currently only used in the afternoons. A designated sleep room is provided within the Champions room, and a large outdoor play area is available to the front of the premises which has been divided into three separate play spaces. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 7:00am and 18:30pm.

Staffing

The service currently employs 16 adults including the registered provider. On the day of inspection, 12 adults were present including the registered provider, the designated person in charge, and the centre manager.

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/ notifications and complaints*. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 -

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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 by the receipt of information which was furnished to the Early Years Inspectorate on the 16 June 2026.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN 3802	20/08/2026	There was no international police vetting with a certified translation available for one staff member present on inspection from an EU member state who had been Garda vetted after the implementation of the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS).
Status	Action was taken by the person in charge following service of the notice. The service submitted a written response which detailed corrective and preventive actions undertaken which were accepted by the inspectorate.	

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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;

(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and

(c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(2)

Following a discussion with the appointed person in charge it was confirmed that six adults had commenced working in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on the 3 April 2025. Documentation required under Regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of these adults as detailed below.

(a) (b) There were two references available for each of the adults which had been appropriately verified.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all adults.

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(d) International police vetting was required for the six adults who had all lived outside the state for a period exceeding six months as an adult. The required documentation with a certified translation was available for five of the adults.

(4) Each of the six adults held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

(7) (a)(b)(c)

The registered provider demonstrated that they had taken reasonable measures to ensure that all employees were appropriately supervised and provided with sufficient information and training to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending the service and to comply with the regulations as follows;

- During discussions with the inspectors and observations during the inspection, staff members demonstrated an awareness of the policies and associated procedures in place in the service.
- Documentation reviewed evidence that regular team meetings and one-on-one support and supervision meetings occur in the service for staff members and detailed records were maintained of these meetings. The person in charge had a schedule in place for both team and one-to-one meetings which were available in the service. Staff members stated that regular training is provided by the provider both individually and during team meetings, including on any updates to policies and procedures within the service.
- Six staff members had commenced employment in the service since the last date of inspection. The staff members confirmed they had received formal induction training when they commenced employment. Detailed records of this induction training were available, which included training on the policies, procedures and associated practices in place in the service. This was in line with the staff training policy in place in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(d)

See Statutory Notice section in relation to Improvement Notice 3802 served.

(3)

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures detailed above under Regulation 9(2)(d) had not been carried out prior to one of the adult's commencing employment in the service, as detailed above in the Statutory Notice section.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The relevant staff member has accessed international criminal vetting from the required country. The service are now aware that staff members need full criminal vetting. The management team will ensure that the relevant legislative vetting is available for all staff that have lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of six months or more prior to them commencing employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

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 inspection of Regulation 10 was limited to a review of the following policies and procedures:

- Policy on Fire Safety
- Policy on Supervision of Staff
- Policy on Staff Training
- Policy on Managing Behaviours
- Complaints Policy

A review of documentation evidenced that the above-named policies were in place and contained all of the required details.

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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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 42 pre-school children attending the service being supervised by 8 adults during the inspection. The centre manager was available to support the care rooms where required.

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.*

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Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Staff reported that regular meals and snacks are offered to the children throughout the day, including a hot lunch which is sourced from an external catering company and re-constituted on site. Staff were observed sitting with the children during mealtimes and engaged in conversation, creating a sociable atmosphere. Younger children wore bibs during mealtimes to protect their clothing. Drinking water was available to the children in each of the care rooms on the day of inspection.

Staff members were observed interacting with the children in a warm and affectionate manner and demonstrated an awareness of the individual needs of the children in their care. Adults used respectful language during interactions with the children who appeared happy and content throughout the inspection. Children were observed exploring their environment, engaged in activities and playing with each other and the staff. Staff encouraged children to be independent, including tidying up following play and preparing for and cleaning up after mealtimes.

The children were all provided with the opportunity to play outdoors and were dressed appropriately to the weather. The outdoor play areas in the Champions and Seekers room were observed to be used as an extension of the indoor environments, with children being offered the choice to be inside or out with the doors left open. Older children were observed using the toilet independently and younger children wearing nappies were changed regularly and as required.

(3)

No practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful were observed by the inspectors being carried out in respect of a pre-school child on the day of inspection. The behaviour management policy in place stipulated that such practices are prohibited in the service, this was verified during discussions with staff members on the day of inspection.

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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

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis. This was in line with records available in the service and the fire safety policy in place.

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.*

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Compliance Information

- (1) A complaints policy was in place in the service and adequately outlined the following;
- (a) Details of the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service.
 - (b) Details of the manner by which a complaint will be dealt with by the service.
 - (c) Details of the procedures in place outlining how the person who makes such a complaint in relation to the service will be informed of the manner by which the complaint is being dealt with.
- (2)
- (a) A review of documentation evidenced that records are kept in writing of any complaint made in respect of the preschool service.
 - (b) During discussions with the person in charge, a review of documentation and other corresponding records, it was evidenced that complaints made in respect of the service were dealt with in accordance with the service's complaints policy.
- (3)
- (a)(b) A review of documentation and records available in the service evidenced that the nature of complaints and the manner in which they are dealt with is kept in the service and were available for inspection on the premises.