

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D: TU2020DR002

Name of Service The Little School

Address of Service: The Calf House, Airfield Estate, Overend Way, Dundrum, Co. Dublin.

Email Address: hellolittleschool@gmail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Anne Marie Keown

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	✓	Part-Time	✓	Sessional	✓
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change:	Change in the number of children accommodated with the addition of a new premises encompassing a fourth care room.
Proposed Number of Children:	74
Recommended Change Following Inspection:	Increase in number of children accommodated from 52 to 74.
Registered change:	Increase in number of children accommodated from 52 to 74.

Date of Inspection: 1 6 0 2 2 0 2 6

Inspection undertaken by: S Quigley & H Sutherland

Title: Early years Inspector

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Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:	1 st Floor Trinity Building,
	IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road,
	Bray, Co Wicklow.

Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day Care Service with 74 Children
Date of Registration	24 th March 2026

Authority to Inspect
The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	The Little School is a private full day, part time and sessional service located on the grounds of the Airfield Estate in Dundrum, South County Dublin. The registered provider operates the service from 8:00 to 18:00 each weekday and currently accommodates a maximum of 52 preschool children aged 2 years 8 months to 6 years across 3 care rooms. The service also offers a school aged childcare facility within the early years service.
Premises	The early years service currently operates from two separate purposely adapted single storey premises within the Airfield Estate. The Calf House consists of two care rooms, a kitchen/office space, a storage room, an entrance lobby and sanitary accommodation for staff and children. The Old Dairy consists of one care room, and office, a reception area, and a kitchen. The new care room, The Grey Barn, will accommodate the proposed additional children and consists of a large care room, an additional separate outdoor play space, and sanitary accommodation.

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Staffing	The registered provider acts as the person in charge in the service and a named person to deputise is available. The service currently employs thirteen staff members, including the registered provider. The registered provider proposes to employ additional staff members to accommodate the increase in the number of children. Adults employed to work in the service have attained a minimum of a level 5 award in early childhood care and education on the national framework of qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.
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 the following 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 registering the change in circumstance. 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.
Acknowledgements	The Inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider and staff member who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement of Regulation 9 (1) (a) has been met. The registered provider is the designated person in charge of the service and a named person to deputise has been appointed as required.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider has identified that a minimum of two staff members will be on the premises at all times.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

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—

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(b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises 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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) Adequate and suitable facilities were provided for children to play indoors and outdoors. The care room was bright and spacious and well laid out with various equipment and play materials on open, low level shelving units.

(1)(b) Adequate and suitable rest facilities were available for preschool children to rest during the day if required. A rest area is provided in the care room and low level beds were available which can be laid out in the care room to accommodate rest or sleep for the children remaining in the service following the sessional period if required.

(2)(a) The service has use of an existing designated outdoor play area in the courtyard between the two existing buildings. A new outdoor area is also available for the new care room. The areas are both fully enclosed and equipped with a range of play materials.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

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 requirement has been met.

Two separate kitchens are available in the service with facilities for storing perishable foods and for the preparation of a four-week rotating menu for hot meals and snacks was in place, a healthy eating policy was available. The registered provider stated a hot meal is served daily as the main meal alongside two snacks provided by the service for the children attending on a part time and full day care basis. Children attending on a sessional basis take a morning snack in from home, additional refrigeration facilities were available

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to accommodate the storage of any perishable food items taken in by the children.
Potable water was available for the children to drink.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

External doors were adequately secure to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. The entrance door to the new building was equipped with a manual key lock. A bell was provided to alert staff members to parents arriving for drop off and collection and the registered provider stated the entrance door would remain locked outside of these times.

Facilities were available for the safe and secure storage of cleaning agents and equipment.

There was provision for the appropriate storage and disposal of waste including foot pedal operated bins in the care rooms and sanitary areas.

The outdoor play area was appropriately secured.

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice and cleaning schedules were available and in use to ensure care rooms and sanitary accommodation are regularly cleaned. Warm water, soap, and paper towels were available to facilitate handwashing.

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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.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Certification was available to evidence that a person trained in first aid was available to the children at all times in the service.

(2) A suitably equipped first aid box was available in the care room and stored in a conspicuous location.

Part VI – Safety

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 fire fighting 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 requirement has been met.

(1)

(a) The registered provider indicated that fire drills take place monthly in the service and appropriate documentation was in place to record them.

(b) There was a record available to indicate the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service.

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(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in various conspicuous locations within the premises.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service is adequately insured for the increase in children with the addition of two new care rooms.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

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 met:

The requirement has been met.

- (a) The proposed new care room has been purposely adapted for use as a preschool service and appeared to be of sound and stable structure.
- (b) There was one entrance door to the new section of the service which was appropriately safe and secure with a manual lock system. The outdoor area was secured to prevent a child exiting the area unsupervised and prevent unauthorised access.

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(c) The care room benefited from an abundance of natural light via windows around the care room. Ventilation was in place through openable windows in the new room and bathrooms. There was an electrical heating system in place and thematically controlled radiators were located and temperature controlled in the care room. A separate heater electrical heater was in place in the bathroom area.

(d) Cleaning schedules were in place in the service. The premises and surrounding environments were clean and maintained as required.

(e) The service was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities. There were two toilets and two wash hand basins designated for use by children and one toilet and wash hand basin for staff working in the new room in the service. The registered provider confirmed that nappy changing facilities are available in the service if required. Thermostatically controlled hot and cold water was available in the hand wash sinks.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

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.*
- (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).*

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Requirement met:	The requirement has been met. (1) An area of 64.95 square metres was available in The Grey Barn of clear floor space for the proposed additional 22 preschool children. (2) The care room had adequate clear floor space for a service that provides full day, part-time and sessional care for children aged 2years and 8months to six years. (4) There was adequate floor space to accommodate children whom attend a concurrent sessional service.
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