

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015CC225 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Little Fingers Playschool |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | 30 Elm Drive, Shamrock Lawn, Douglas, Co. Cork |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|

|                 |          |
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| <b>Eircode:</b> | T12 DY63 |
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|                                     |               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Teresa Malone |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Sessional |
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| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 17/04/2024 |
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|                                   |    |   |    |     |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|----|-----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 8 | PM | n/a |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|----|-----|

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|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate<br>Administration Building<br>St Mary's Health Campus<br>Gurranabraher<br>Cork<br>T23X440 |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | V. McCarthy                                                                                                        |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | Early Years Inspector                                                                                              |

### 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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| <b>Conditions if applicable</b> | N/A |
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# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### Description of service

Little Fingers Playschool is a privately operated service that caters for children aged between 2 and 6 years. It provides sessional care and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The service operates from an area situated on the ground floor of the registered provider's private residence. There is 1 care room, an area serving as a passageway to the outdoor area and 2 children's toilets. There is an outdoor play area situated to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

There are 2 adults attached to the service including the registered provider. On the day of the inspection the 2 adults were on the premises working directly with the children.

### 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/ premises and facilities. 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-compliance from re occurring.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.*

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

*(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 had a named person in charge and a named deputy that could deputise as required.
- (b) The deputy was onsite for the duration of the inspection and the registered provider was present for part of it.
- (2)
- (a) There were 2 references and required validations available on file from past employers in respect of the adults attached to the service.
- (b) There were 2 references and required validations from sources other than past employers.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file for review in respect of each of the adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years in respect of each adult.
- (d) Police vetting was not applicable as no adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months.
- (4)
- A copy of a childcare qualification as listed on the National Qualifications Framework was available on file in respect of each of the adults.

### 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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children.

(3) On the morning of the inspection there were 2 adults working directly with 8 children up to 11am and there was 1 adult caring for them between 11am and 12midday. The ratio of staff to children met the requirement of 1:11.

### 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) PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The care room was brightly painted and was attractively set up with play materials that promoted a cosy and pleasing environment for the children.
- The care room was provided with a large window which facilitated the room being bright and it had high openings that facilitated ventilation as required.
- The room was furnished with child sized tables, chairs, low shelving, a child sized bench with soft padding as the rest area and a variety of play equipment that met the needs of the children.
- All play materials were clearly laid out in interest areas such as the writing area, the home corner, the sit in wooden car and the dress up area. The tabletop activities were available on low shelving that were easily visible and accessible to the children.
- The outdoor play environment which consisted of 2 levels was situated to the rear of the premises and was secured by high fencing and walls. It was set up to support the children's free play, imagination, and movement and was provided with both an artificial grass and shock absorbing surfaces. The lower level was equipped with a wooden climbing frame, comprising of a slide and stepping ladder.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

The upper level was accessible via steps, secured by gates at both ends and was provided with play materials such as a wooden kitchen and a selection of ride-on toys and push trucks.

- Adequate toilet facilities were available on the premises to meet the needs of the children. There were 2 equipped toilet cubicles available that were situated directly off the care room.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The services insurance certificate was available on the premises and demonstrated that the service was adequately insured. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of early years children covered which was 22, the start date, which was 28 March 2024, the end date, which was 27 March 2025, the category of service covered which was playschool care and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding an additional session, public liability and fire and theft cover.