

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015CC246 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Little Wonders Daycare |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | 10 Manor Dene, Thornbury Heights, Rochestown, Cork, Co. Cork |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|

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| <b>Eircode:</b> | T12 FN22 |
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|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Marie O'Leary |
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|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Sessional |
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| <b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b> | 06/05/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 10 | PM | No. |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

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|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Administration Office,<br>St. Mary's Health Campus,<br>Gurranabraher,<br>Cork.<br>T23X440. |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | D Cotter & M Burke                                                                         |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | 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

Little Wonders Daycare is located in a residential area in Rochestown, Cork. The service is carried out in a 1 storey detached building that was adapted as a childcare facility. There is 1 large open plan care room with interest areas set up in different sections of the room. There is a designated outdoor play area provided to the rear of the premises. The service is registered to operate as a sessional service to children aged between 2 and 6 years between the hours of 9am and 12pm.

### Staffing

There are 3 adults attached to the service including the registered provider and all work 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 announced 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. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform

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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 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.*

*(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.*

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*(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;*

### Compliance Information

1.

(a) The registered provider has ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The deputy person in charge was on site when the inspectors arrived. The person in charge arrived within five minutes of the inspector's arrival and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

2.

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that two new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. The two new staff members work directly with the children. A total of two recruitment files were reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for one staff member whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

(a) (b) Four of the required references were available from a past employer and had been validated.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all for staff. 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 required and available for one member of staff who had resided outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

3.

Recruitment records demonstrated that vetting procedures were carried out prior to the two adults commencing employment in the service.

4.

All staff members held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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7.

(a) Following a review of staff records it was evident that the service had completed induction training with the two new staff members in relation to the policies and procedures of the service. This was evidenced by training records available on the day of inspection.

### 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

On the day of inspection, the following policies were examined:

- Healthy eating policy.

The above policy was observed to contain the relevant details to meet regulatory compliance

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

1.

The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of staff working directly with the children.

3.

On the morning of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations. There were three adults available in the care room to work directly with the 10 children in attendance aged between 3 and 5 years.

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### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

#### Compliance Information

1.

The registered provider has ensured that a record was kept in relation to:

- (a) Details of each staff members name, qualification and experience. This was available for review within the care room.
- (h) Details of the attendance of each child daily was detailed in an attendance book. Details included the child's full name, time of arrival and departure.

### 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,*

#### Compliance Information

1. (a)

##### Basic Needs:

- Staff responded to children in low tones and communicated with them respectfully throughout the inspection.
- Children were observed to eat healthy and nutritious food during the mid-morning snack. Examples of these snacks included: cheese, fruits, yogurts and rice cakes. This was in line with the services healthy eating policy.

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- Children had access to their water bottles throughout the day. Water bottles were stored at child height in the care room.
- On the day of inspection, children were observed to have the freedom to take food from the fridge outside of mealtimes.
- A rest area was provided in a quiet part of the care room should any child need to rest.
- Children's toileting needs were attended to promptly and staff assisted children when necessary.
- The rooms were well laid out to encourage the children to move freely between the interest areas.
- It was evident through observation on the day of inspection that children's voices were listened to, and children were able to communicate their needs to attentive adults.
- The staff working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions when they experienced challenge in sharing play equipment.
- Children were observed to play outdoors on the day of inspection.

### Supporting relationships:

- During the mid-morning snack, staff were observed to sit and eat with children. During this time there was a relaxed atmosphere.
- Children were observed being allowed to direct their own learning. Children were afforded the opportunity to choose activities and resources.
- The staff members demonstrated respect for children. For example, staff members were observed to redirect behaviour using soft and gentle tones.
- Staff reported having daily communication with parents at drop off and collection time.
- The service uses a group messaging service to communicate and share information directly with parents.
- Staff reported operating in partnership with the community. The staff reported communicating directly with local schools in preparation for the transition of children from the preschool to the national school.
- On the day of inspection, this sense of belonging and community were further observed when the postman called to let the staff and children know that a hedgehog was in the green area outside. The children and staff then went outside to visit the animal.
- The service also reported utilising the local community park which further enhanced the children's sense of belonging and community.

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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

##### General Safety:

- Low level windows and doors were fitted with visibility strips.
- Blind cords were secured on all windows.
- Flexes and cables were observed to be out of reach of children.
- Cleaning agents were inaccessible to children.
- The outdoor area was securely fenced to prevent unauthorised access.
- Heavy equipment and furniture had been anchored to prevent them falling onto a child.
- Children's play equipment, and furniture, were observed to be in a clean state and of good repair.
- The children's bags and coats were stored safely off the floor level to prevent trips.
- Entry to the service was restricted to prevent the unauthorised entry to the premises or the unsupervised exit of a child from the premises.

##### Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were in use throughout the service.
- Staff were observed to sanitize tables prior to mealtimes.
- Each sanitary area was fitted with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Perishable food was safely refrigerated.
- Windows were open in the care room to aid natural ventilation.
- It was noted that children washed their hands when returning from outdoor play and from the bathrooms.
- Windows in the sanitary accommodations had been opened to aid natural ventilation.
- Sand trays in the outdoor area were observed to be covered when not in use.

##### Administration of Medication:

- On the day of inspection staff reported that no child needed regular medication.
- Emergency medication, along with a detailed care plan was accessible to adults within the care room.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were found to be free from obstruction.

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- Wall tethered firefighting equipment was readily available.

### Outing:

- On the day of inspection, staff reported that they often take an outing to the nearby park.
- Three staff were required to be present when the outings occur.
- Parents are made aware in advance of these outings.
- The insurance policy for the service is valid for outings.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The floor covering at the entrance to the children's bathroom was observed to be ripped on the day of inspection. This presented a potential tripping risk to the children.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

In her written response the registered provider stated that the floor had been repaired.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

A photograph of the repaired floor was submitted by the registered provider.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

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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.*

#### Compliance Information

1.

The registered provider has ensured that there was person trained in first aid at all times available to the children. Through the inspection of the staff roster, it was noted that this adult with First Aid Responder (FAR) training was scheduled to be onsite while the service was operational.

2.

(a) (b) There was a fully equipped first aid box in the care room which was stored safely out of reach of children but easily accessible to staff.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service was appropriately insured to provide sessional care for 12 children, and the policy was valid until 27 March 2027.