

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Tusla I.D:	TU2015CN041
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Name of Service	Little Stars Play School and After School
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Address of Service:	31 Bellamont View, Cootehill, Cavan, H16 Y310
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Email Address:	info@littlestarscootehill.ie
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rachel McCabe
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Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	✓	Part-Time	✓	Sessional	✓
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change:	Change in Service Type from Part Time, Sessional to Full Day, Part Time, Sessional.
Proposed Number of Children:	No change requested.
Recommended Change Following Inspection:	Service type can be changed to Part Time, Sessional and Full Day Care. Note: The service is registered to cater for 54 children, however this number cannot be accommodated based on the sanitary facilities available and space available. Where all children are attending on a sessional basis, a maximum of 44 children can be accommodated due to space and toilet restrictions. If all are attending on a Part Time or Full Day Care basis, a maximum of 38 children can attend due to space restrictions Hours of operation: 8am to 6pm.
Registered change:	Change in Service Type from part-time & sessional to full day, part-time & sessional Change in number of children from 54 to 44 (Max 38 full day/part-time) children

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Date of Inspection:	0	7	0	5	2	0	2	6
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Inspection undertaken by:	S Mc Kenna
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84
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Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

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

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 44(Max 38 Full Day/Part-Time) Children
Date of Registration	22 May 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	Little Stars Play-school and After School is a non-profit community-based childcare facility. The service is located in Cootehill town and operates from a converted domestic dwelling. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and currently operates from 9 am to 12:30 pm for 54 children. A school-aged service is also provided.
Premises	On the ground floor, two rooms cover the majority of the ground floor of the premises; this room operates in a free-flow capacity and is named Preschool Room. There is a kitchen located on the ground floor, along with sanitary accommodation for children.

	Child and Family Agency Act 2013 Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016	Version 05 Implemented- Aug 2022 EYI-IR12.23 F07 FFP (CIC)	2 of 10
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	There are two care rooms located on the first floor, named Full Day Care Room 1 and Full Day Care Room 2. An office, children's and staff sanitary areas, and a storeroom are also located on the first floor. A large outdoor area is located at the side and rear of the premises.
Staffing	There are seven staff employed in the service, including one manager, one deputy person in charge, three childcare staff, one school-aged staff member and one admin person who is also employed in a relief capacity to work with preschool children. The registered provider is not involved in the day-to-day running of the service.
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 Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children 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 has been met.

The service has a designated person in charge who is the service manager, and a named person to deputise in their absence.

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

(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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

It is proposed that a total of 6 adults will work directly with the preschool children.

The registered provider and service manager are aware of the requirements of this regulation in relation to adult: child ratios.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

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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.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—*
- (a) *a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises or*

Requirement met:

The requirements of this regulation have been met.

(1) (a) Adequate and suitable facilities have been provided for the children to play indoors during the day. A range of play materials, play equipment and toys, along with well-resourced designated interest areas, are available in each of the three care rooms.

(b) Adequate and suitable facilities are provided for the children to rest and sleep.

Four stackable floor beds and suitable bed linen are provided by the service.

There are cosy areas in each of the care rooms to include a variety of soft mats, sofas and bean bags.

(2) (a) The outdoor play area is located to the rear of the premises. The outdoor areas are spacious, pleasant and safe, and laid out into four separate areas divided by wooden fencing for various types of play. A mixture of concrete and artificial grass provides a surface for year-round use. One area had wooden balance beams and a wooden bridge, the second area was covered and had a playhouse, mud kitchen, sand tray and a music wall, and the third, which is a larger area, had wall-mounted chalkboards, mirrors and a digging pit. Ride-on toys and play equipment are taken out of the garden shed for play in this area. A smaller area to the left of the service had a concrete surface with rocks and a planting area.

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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.

It is proposed that the service will cook and prepare breakfast, hot meals and afternoon snacks for children in attendance on a daily basis. The children will have access to potable drinking water or milk. The children's preschool morning snack will be taken in from home, with a fridge available in two of the care rooms for the storage of these perishable food items.

A two-week menu was available for review, which demonstrated a variety of snack and hot meal options that were adequate, suitable and nutritious for children.

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.

The front entrance door into the service is secured by a thumb turn lock, where parents/carers ring the doorbell, and the staff open the door. This prevents children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access.

The emergency exit doors were unobstructed throughout the inspection.

Windows on the first floor have been fitted with restricting devices. Blind cords were present where safely secured.

The main staircase and handrail were maintained in good condition.

There is provision for the appropriate disposal and storage of waste, including the provision of suitable nappy bins and foot pedal-operated bins throughout the service.

Individual single-use paper towels were provided for handwashing purposes.

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Cleaning schedules were available for the service. Cleaning materials were stored out of reach of children.

Risk assessment records are in place.

The designated fire assembly point, confirmed by the service manager, is located at the fence to the front of the premises.

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) The registered provider has ensured that there are two adults with up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training employed, and written confirmation was available to demonstrate that an additional staff member will have completed their FAR training by 03 June 2026.

(2) (a) (b) An adequately stocked first aid box was provided and is available to the children at all times.

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.*

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(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 demonstrated that a template to record fire drills is available, and fire drills were conducted monthly. (b) There is a record available relating to the number and type of firefighting equipment. The most recent servicing of the firefighting equipment was carried out on 16 January 2026, and the fire detection and alarm system was serviced on 28 April 2026. (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed on walls and units throughout the service.
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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. Insurance is currently in place for 54 children attending on a sessional and part-time basis. An insurance quote was provided, which covers a maximum of 44 preschool children in attendance on a full-day care basis. The Registered Provider must ensure that adequate insurance is in place prior to the commencement of the change. The change approval is contingent on the registered providers compliance with Regulation 28.
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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*

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(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(a) The service manager confirmed they did not know about any structural defects.

(b) The service is adequately secured to prevent children exiting unsupervised and unauthorised persons gaining entry.

(c) The service was adequately lit and heated. The lighting is provided by a mixture of natural light from large windows and fluorescent ceiling lights fitted with protective covers. The service is heated by oil central heating and serviced on 28 January 2026. The care rooms were maintained at a temperature of 19°C - 20°C. The care rooms are ventilated by openable windows.

Four sanitary areas were ventilated by openable windows, and one via mechanical ventilation.

(d) Cleaning schedules were available and in place, and the premises are maintained in a clean condition. Pest control processes are in place, with the most recent control visit dated 13 February 2026.

(e) The children's sanitary facilities in the service are equipped with a total of 4 toilets and 4 wash hand basins, and 1 nappy changing unit.

Thermostatically controlled hot and cold running water is available in all of the hand-washing sinks.

There was 1 toilet and a wash hand sink available for the adults, located on the first floor

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.

(4) Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides—

(a) a sessional pre-school service, and

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(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).

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

Adequate, clear floor space has been provided for the work, play and movement of children within the three care rooms. While the service is registered to cater for 54 children, based on the sanitary facilities available, a maximum of 44 children can be cared for on a sessional basis or 38 on a part-time or full-day care basis.

(4) The following floor space is available

- The proposed Preschool room (two rooms in a free flow format on the ground floor) is a total of 53.92m². The space available can cater for up to 29 children aged 2 to 6 years on a sessional basis, or 22 children on a part-time or full-day care basis.
- The proposed Full Day Care Room 1 (first floor) is 23.4m². The space available can cater for up to 12 children aged 2 to 6 years on a sessional basis, or 9 children aged 2 to 3 years, or 10 children aged 3 to 6 years on a part-time or full-day care basis.
- The proposed Full Day Care Room 2 (first floor) is a total of 15.398m². The space available can cater for 8 children aged 2 to 6 years on a sessional basis, or 6 children aged 2 to 6 years on a part-time or full-day care basis.