

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS027
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Name of Service:	SmallWorld Early Education
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Address of Service:	Muintir na Tíre, Distillery Lane, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K78 R2Y7
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sinéad McCarville
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Service type:	Sessional
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Dates of Inspection:	08/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	30	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, County Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill
Title:	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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Description of service

This private childcare facility is registered to provide a sessional service including an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service is located in Lucan Village, South-West Dublin, within the Muintir na Tíre building. The premises comprise a two-storey building that has been purposefully adapted to meet the needs of young children.

There are two childcare rooms situated on the ground floor, which are used by the preschool children. The manager's office and the Montessori room are located on the first floor. The service operates from 09:15 to 12:15 Monday to Friday.

An outdoor play area is available to the front of the premises, providing opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play and physical activity.

Staffing

In total six staff including the registered provider are employed to work in the service. On the day of inspection five staff and a student were present and working directly with the children. The registered provider arrived after the inspection commenced.

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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. 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 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.

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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,*
- (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.

(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), (b) The service had a designated person in charge at all times and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) Following a discussion with the person in charge and review of the service file, it was confirmed that two new adults commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 05 November 2024.

Documentation required under Regulation 9 (2), (3), (4) was reviewed in respect of the adults as detailed below.

In addition, a file for student present was requested for review.

(a), (b) Six written verified references were available. Five of the references provided were from a past employer and one reference was from a source other than a past employer.

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- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for three adults. The service did adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International police vetting was available for two adults who had lived outside Ireland for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) had been carried out prior to the adults commencing employment in the service.
- (4) Documentation was available to show two adults employed to work directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were thirty children attending the service being supervised by five adults on the day of inspection.

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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.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

Appropriate and suitable practices were in place within the preschool service, as evidenced by observations made during the inspection. Warm, positive interactions were observed between staff and children throughout the day. Staff consistently addressed children by name and communicated with them in a warm, respectful, and supportive manner. Children appeared comfortable and familiar with staff and were observed confidently approaching them to ask questions and seek assistance.

During the morning session, children participated in both free play and structured Montessori activities. The learning environments in both care rooms were well organised, with open shelving and resources positioned at children's level to promote independence and accessibility. Children moved freely throughout the rooms, selecting activities based on their interests and preferences.

A variety of engaging learning experiences were observed, including arts and crafts activities involving cutting and sticking, construction play with blocks, play dough activities, and imaginative play. Staff actively encouraged children's participation and development by offering praise and positive reinforcement as they completed tasks and achieved goals. Children used the toilet independently while being closely supervised by staff.

Transitions between activities were managed effectively. Staff used a bell and timer to provide children with advance notice, allowing sufficient time to tidy away resources and prepare for the next activity. This approach supported children's understanding of routines and contributed to a calm environment.

Prior to lunchtime, a helper system was implemented whereby two children were nominated to distribute lunch boxes to their peers. This practice promoted independence, responsibility, and participation in the daily routine.

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Mealtimes were observed to be relaxed, sociable, and unhurried. Children and staff sat together, creating a positive atmosphere that encouraged conversation and social interaction. Healthy lunches were provided by parents, and drinking water was served at lunchtime. In addition, children in the Montessori rooms brought in their own water bottles and a water station containing cups and a jug of water was readily accessible to all children throughout the day, supporting their independence and hydration needs.

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:

- The entrance doors to the service were adequately secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering and to ensure children could not exit unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of children's reach.
- The storage facilities were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available to support effective hand hygiene practices. Staff were observed to supervise children washing their hands prior to eating.
- Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for children with infectious illnesses which were implemented in the service as per the policy.
- Staff were observed to clean tables prior to lunch being served.
- The service provided a fridge in both care rooms to store perishable items in children's lunch boxes.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were free from obstruction on the day of inspection.
- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire.

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Non-Compliance Information

Administration of Medication:

1. A review of documentation identified that the care plan for a child prescribed emergency medication had not been signed by either the parent or the manager. The absence of the required signatures meant there was no evidence that the care plan had been reviewed and agreed by the relevant parties, posing a potential risk to the child's safety and wellbeing in the event of a medical emergency.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Administration of Medication:

1. The parents of both children and the service manager have signed and reviewed the medical plan. Going forward no child will be allowed to start without a letter from a medical professional outlining the condition. A medical plan will be drawn up and signed off by the service manager and the parents.

Supporting documentation submitted

Administration of Medication:

Copy of care plans signed by the parents and the manager.

Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions stated. The Regulatory requirement has been met.

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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) There was evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)

(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible position in the service.

(b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

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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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on 25 May 2026.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises were up to date. Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms were serviced on 06 November 2025.
- (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in the care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured, evidenced by a current certificate of insurance relevant to the type of service being operated.