

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE167
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Name of Service:	Little Harvard Childcare Ltd
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Address of Service:	The Avenue, Westfield, Green Lane, Leixlip, Co. Kildare.
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Eircode:	W23 VYP1
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Name of Registered Provider:	James Hargrave
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	30/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	18
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 X38W.
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern and R. Phillips
Title:	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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

This service is one of 22 private early years services operated by the registered provider. It operates from a two-story, purpose built premises in a housing development in Leixlip, County Kildare and accommodates children between 2-6 years. The service opens 07:00 - 18:30 Monday to Friday with a sessional service provided during term time. A school-aged service is also provided. There are five rooms for children, one of which was accommodating pre-school children on the day of inspection due to the sessional service being finished for summer. These children were over three years of age attending on a full-day care basis. Outdoor areas are located at the rear and side of the building.

Staffing

There are 23 staff employed to work in the service including the service manager, school-age staff, two bus drivers, and two cooks. Eleven staff are employed to work directly with the pre-school children. Five of these adults were present on the day of the inspection with a minimum of three working with the children at all times. The company also employs a General Manager, Operational Manager, Quality/Standards Manager, Child Protection Liaison Person and Regional Managers. One of the Regional Managers arrived during the inspection and was present for the feedback meeting.

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the managers, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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.

(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;*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise.
- (b) The person in charge was on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or deputy to be present at all times of opening.
- (c) There was a clear management structure with staff roles documented. Staff demonstrated an awareness of their roles and responsibilities and the lines of authority.
- (2)
- (a) & (b) The inspection focused on references for three adults employed since the previous inspection dated 28 October 2025. Appropriate references were available for each adult with a record of verification checks carried out by the service.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) The inspection focused on records for three adults who were employed since the previous inspection. International police vetting was required and available for two of the adults.
- (3) The procedures outlined in regulation 9(2) had been carried out prior to the staff commencing in the service.
- (4) Two adults were employed to work directly with pre-school children since the previous inspection. Both adults held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent by the minister.
- (7) (a) Through review of documents and discussions with staff it was evident that staff had received inductions and ongoing supervision. The inspection focused on staff knowledge and understanding of the services behaviour management policy. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the policy when discussed with the inspector and positive behaviour management strategies were observed in practice as documented under regulation 19(3).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 reference number is satisfied.

(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,

Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working with the children. There were a minimum of three adults working directly with 18 children at any given time.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement for the age of children and type of service provided was always maintained.

(8) (a) There were at least two adults on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for at least two adults to be present at all times of opening.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) The children moved freely within their room, engaging in free play and activities. They spent time outdoors and brought drinks outside due to the warm weather. Meals and snacks were provided at regular intervals. The adults sat with the children when eating, promoting independence and social skills.

Staff supported the children to manage their personal care. They assisted the children to clean their hands and faces at appropriate times. The children used the toilet as needed with the staff supporting them with handwashing afterwards. None of the children required sleep. There was an area within the room where the children could rest or take a break from activities. Low beds were available for use should a child require a sleep.

(3) The adults engaged kindly with the children throughout the inspection. They addressed the children by name and guided them gently when needed. Minor conflict between the children was managed appropriately with the adults calmly listening to the children's issues and preventing escalation using techniques including distraction. The staff reported they had read the service's policy on behaviour management and demonstrated a good understanding of how to manage behaviour issues using positive strategies. The staff were able to state prohibited practices as outlined in the policy.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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:

Entrances and exits were secured to prevent unauthorised access or children leaving unsupervised. Emergency exits were kept clear. Equipment was appropriately maintained and suitable to the ages and stages of the children. Hazardous items including cables and cleaning products were secured out of children's reach. Staff were able to state the measures they should take to evacuate the building safely in the event of a fire.

Infection Control:

The premises, equipment and materials appeared clean and cleaning schedules were in place. Sanitary facilities were equipped to support handwashing. The children washed their hands at appropriate times including after outdoor play, after using the toilet, and before eating. Pedal operated bins were in place to manage waste appropriately.

Administration of Medication:

None of the children in attendance required medication. Staff demonstrated an awareness of how to give medicine safely if required including obtaining written parent consent, having a second adult witness the administration and keeping a record.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 service had five staff with the required first aid qualification. The staff roster provided for a minimum of one of these adults to be available to the children at all times of opening.

(2)

(a) The service had a suitably equipped first aid box which was stored in a conspicuous position in the main hallway.

(b) The first aid box was always available to the children.

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 been carried out in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded on 20 May 2026.

(b) Records were available in relation to the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarm. The most recent dates of maintenance were 12 September 2025 and 6 May 2026 respectively.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous position.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The inspector observed the children being appropriately supervised throughout the inspection. This included when playing outdoors, playing indoors, eating and using the sanitary facilities.