

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LD002
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Name of Service:	Springlawn Childcare Community Group Ltd
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Address of Service:	59 and 60 Springlawn Estate, Springlawn, Longford, Co. Longford
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Eircode:	N39 AY98
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Name of Registered Provider:	Frank Horne
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	17/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	NA
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
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

Springlawn Childcare Community Group Ltd is located within close proximity of Longford town and is registered as a sessional service operating from 09:30 to 12:30 hrs Monday to Friday. Children attending are aged 2 to 6 years. The service is registered for a maximum number of 42 pre-school children, at any one time. There are two care rooms operating from two separate buildings namely no 59 and no 60 Springlawn. An office space is provided on the first floor in no 60. There are outdoor play areas to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

Springlawn Childcare Community Group Ltd employs seven childcare staff. The registered provider is supernumerary and does not work in the service. One adult is employed as a cleaner.

On the day of inspection, there were seven adults present. Of the seven adults present, one adult was supernumerary as the adult was employed under the Community Employment Scheme.

The adults working in the service have completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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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 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

(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.

(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

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that one adult had been employed since the previous inspection.

(2)

(a)(b) Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of one adult.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults working in the service.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. An in date garda vetting disclosure was available for eight staff members which required renewal since the last inspection on 3 June 2025.

(d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had resided outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months whose records were reviewed.

(4) Not applicable.

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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) There were sixteen children attending the service being supervised directly by five staff members during the inspection.

(3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day as specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6.

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)

The adults working with the children spoke and interacted with them in a kind and respectful manner. Their first names were used; appropriate eye contact and gentle vocal tones were observed being used during all interactions. The adults were familiar with each child and their personality.

Healthy eating was encouraged and the service had a healthy eating policy. The service as part of the 'Bia Blasta preschool food nutrition programme' provided the snack daily for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education programme. The children were offered toast, cheese, ham, cucumber, banana, strawberry and grapes. Additional portions were available to the children who chose to have a second helping. The staff members sat with the children at snack time and encouraged social interaction and conversations. Children's drinks were placed in easy reach for each child to access if they felt thirsty.

The children were encouraged to be independent as they managed their personal belongings and got dressed for outdoor play assisted by adults as needed.

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Children's toileting was managed in a sensitive and positive manner. Independence was encouraged and assistance was given when needed.

The care rooms were well resourced to promote choice and enable the children to enjoy child led experiences. The children were able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor environments.

Transitions were well managed by the staff members in the service. There was a predictability to the children's morning, and the routine was relaxed, unhurried and paced to suit the needs of the children. The children responded positively to this. The children are provided with outdoor play every morning.

Information was shared with parents and guardians at the drop off and collection times. Face to face meetings can be arranged for parents/guardians as necessary and email and telephone contact are used as an alternative method of contact.

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 two entrance doors to the two service buildings were secured and managed by the staff members to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the Early Years' service.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. The staff members advised the inspector that they immediately cut/chop any food that may pose a choking risk to a child at snack time. Necklaces and chains are removed if a child is observed to be wearing them.

There was documentary evidence available that daily indoor risk assessments were completed daily and reviewed to promptly identify and manage any potential risks in the care rooms. The service had a system in place to manage maintenance issues.

Infection Control:

The staff members supervised the children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Staff members were observed washing their hands during the morning.

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Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. Foot pedal operated bins were available for the disposal of used tissues and waste. Nappy changing facilities were available in the service.

Cleaning schedules were maintained for the two care room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medicine was not given at the time of the inspection. The staff members were familiar with the required practices when administering medication in the service. There were no children attending who required medication to be administered while attending the service.

Safe Sleep:

A comfortable rest area was available in the two care rooms for any child who wished to have a rest or take a break from activities for a while.

Fire Safety:

The staff members were familiar with the fire evacuation procedures from the service. Fire exits were not obstructed.

Outing:

The manager stated that the service does not conduct outings.

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 were persons who were trained in first aid response (FAR) present and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)

(a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the two care rooms.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the staff members caring for the children attending 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.

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2027. The insurance provided adequate cover for the numbers of children attending.