

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW162
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Name of Service:	Little Harvard Childcare Ltd
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Address of Service:	Riversdale, Upper Dargle Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A98 TX65
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Name of Registered Provider:	James Hargrave
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	19/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	84	PM	78
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray, Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke and S. Early O'Brien
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable.
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Description of service

This privately owned full day care service was first established in 2009. The service is part of a multiple service provider. The premises is located in a purpose built, two storey building with seven pre-school rooms, afterschool rooms, an office, staff room, laundry room and kitchen. There is a large outdoor area to the rear of the premises, which the children have access to daily.

The service is located in the urban setting of Bray Co Wicklow and is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age.

The service is open from Monday to Friday between 07.00 hrs and 18.30 hrs (including a sessional Early Childhood and Education Scheme (ECCE) service from 09.00 hrs to 12.00 hrs for 38 weeks of the year). A school age service is also provided.

Staffing

There are 25 members of staff employed in the service. Twenty-one adults were present on the day of inspection this included two chefs, the service manager, the regional manager and operations manager, who were included on the staff roster.

Nineteen adults were rostered to work directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider was not on the premises and does not work with the children.

The service manager provided additional support when required.

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

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- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced 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 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 manager, 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*
- (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.*

(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 discussion with the service manager, and inspecting the staff roster, it was confirmed that 25 adults are employed by the service, this includes 2 chefs and 1 relief chef. In addition, 4 senior managers files were included as part of the inspection process. A total of 29 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection

(1)(a)

The manager was the person in charge and there was a named staff member who was able to deputise as required.

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(b)

The manager was on the premises at the time of arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of 29 adults.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 29 adults. 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 available for 14 adults who had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.

(4)

Twenty-four adults held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or had a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

The manager ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service at all times.

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(2)

The correct adult/child ratio was throughout the inspection. There were 19 adults employed and present with 84 children on the day of inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

A total of nine child registration forms were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(1)(a)-(i)

The manager ensured that a record in writing of the above list of particulars, was kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The manager ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

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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-

(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:

- Children were supported and encouraged to be independent with using the toilet but were supervised appropriately. Hand washing following using the toilet was observed and visible prompts to encourage same were in place.
- Small incidents between children were managed in a professional and caring way, making sure that the conflict was resolved in an appropriate way and that children were happy to go back to their activities.
- Children were given opportunities to make choices as to which activities they wished to do and were supported in their choices. Examples of some activities included drawing, playing with dolls, using Montessori equipment and imaginative role play.
- All children were observed enjoying freedom of movement within their rooms and when they were in the garden area.
- The service supplies all food for the children who attend on a full-time basis. Children who avail of a sessional only service, parents are requested to send a snack with their child. Adults sat with the children during their lunch and conversation was encouraged. Children were given plenty of time to eat their food. Fresh drinking water was available to the children throughout their day.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- There were low level tables and chairs and low-level shelving with equipment that was visible, available and accessible to the children in all the care rooms.
- Children's artwork was displayed on the walls in the pre-school rooms along with photographs of parents, siblings and other family members.

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- The pre-school has a large outdoor area located to the rear of the premises. The outdoor area was safe, suitable and secure. The children had access to a wide variety of toys to play with but also had the freedom to enjoy kicking a football and running around the soft impact area provided by the service.
- The pre-school rooms were maintained at comfortable temperature of 20°C - 22°C throughout the inspection.

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 main door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspectors to the service.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit routes in pre-school rooms were free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- Each care room had access to a sanitary area. There was warm running water at 43°C, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- Foot pedal operated bins were available in the sanitary areas and the care rooms for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other waste matter.
- Hand washing by the adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and returning from the outdoor area.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the pre-school service.

Administration of Medication:

While no medication was administered during the inspection. The service was able to demonstrate their ability to correctly store, administer and record the administration of medicine correctly.

Safe Sleep:

On the day of inspection at 12:20 hrs younger children were observed sleeping in Toddler 1 and Toddler 2 rooms. Each child had a low-level bed, with individual bedding and while all children were not asleep in Toddler 2 room, they were content to rest on their beds until they fell asleep. Sleeping children's observations were recorded at

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10-minute intervals and there was a sufficient number of adults supervising them while they slept. The room temperature at 12:25 hrs was recorded at 22°C.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

On the day of inspection in the Toddler 1 at 13:10 hrs, a child was found holding a small, hard plastic dinosaur toy. Eleven such small toys were found in a play box in Toddler 1, which were accessible to all the children in the room. The toy was small with sharp edges and posed a serious choking and injury risk to a child in the age range present in the service room.

This was brought to the attention of the manager who immediately took charge of removing any similar toys in the room. All toys must be age appropriate, suitable and safe for the children who are playing with them.

Infection Control:

On the day of inspection, failure to clean tables before serving lunch was observed in two pre-school rooms, Pre-school room 2 and Pre-school room 5. The cleaning of tables before the serving of food, in addition to other hygiene practices, are essential for the prevention of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Smaller plastic toy animals were removed on the day of the inspection from the Toddler rooms. Age suitability as per toy packaging will be monitored going forward. Local and Regional Management will ensure that all toys are age-appropriate before being placed in rooms. Ongoing monitoring will form part of routine room checks to ensure standards are consistently maintained.

Infection Control:

The issue was highlighted with staff on the day, refresher training completed for all staff, as per the attached training card. Local and Regional Management will implement ongoing monitoring of mealtime practices to ensure tables are cleaned appropriately before serving food. Regular spot checks will be carried out in all rooms in adherence to hygiene procedures to ensure compliance.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

None supplied

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Infection Control:

A staff signed document of retraining in Healthy Eating incorporating Food hygiene was submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The above actions in relation to General Safety and the documented evidence submitted in relation to Infection Control should address the non-compliances found on the day of inspection in Regulation 23 and will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The manager ensured that all children attending the pre-school were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The manager ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people had access to the pre-school.

(b)

The manager had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the pre-school service.

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(4)

The manager was able to demonstrate that the visitors' book was kept for a period of one year from the dates to which it related.

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 three adults trained in FAR (First Aid Response) and available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)(a)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were located in accessible places around the pre-school.

(b)

The first aid boxes were available to the children attending the service during their day.

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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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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)

There was a record of fire drills having taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill was 16 February 2026.

(b)

There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke detectors on the premises dated April 2025 and September 2025 respectively.

(2)(c)

The above records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of what procedures should be followed in the event of an emergency, displayed in all service rooms.