

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2016LK002 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Delta's Little Academy |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Unit 1, Delta Retail Park, Ballysimon Road, Limerick, Co. Limerick |
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|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | V94 PC86 |
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|                                     |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Jeremiah O'Sullivan |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|

|                              |            |
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| <b>Date 1 of Inspection:</b> | 15/02/2024 |
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|                                   |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 14 | PM | 14 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

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|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office,<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Estuary House,<br>Henry Street<br>Limerick. |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | M Riordan                                                                                                   |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | Early Years Inspectors                                                                                      |

| Authority to Inspect                                                                                                                                                                                   |  |
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| 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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| <b>Conditions if applicable</b> | Not applicable |
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### Description of service

Delta's Little Academy is a privately owned pre-school service located in commercial unit in a retail park on the outskirts of Limerick city. A full day care service is offered from 8.15am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday for children aged 1 year to 6 years. A morning ECCE sessional programme is offered to pre-school children between the ages of 2 years and 8 months and 5 years of age. A service for school aged children is offered each afternoon.

On the ground floor there is one large ECCE playroom, a manager's office, a designated sleep room and sanitary accommodation for children and adults.

On the first floor there is a toddler room accommodating children over 1 years and a second ECCE room for a morning sessional group. This room is used for school aged children each evening. Nappy changing facilities and sanitary accommodation are also located on the first floor. A newly refurbished kitchen area and a staff room are also found on the first floor.

The service has a designated outdoor play area, accessible from the downstairs preschool room. A sheltered area is provided in the playground to provide cover if required.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the owner of the service. A designated manager is appointed to oversee the operations of the facility. There are 7 additional staff employed to work at the service. The manager and staff have achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 level 6 and Level 8.

### 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections 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 person in charge, 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*

*(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,*

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*(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.*

*(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;*

*(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*

*(c) these Regulations.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a) A designated person in charge was available on the day of the inspection. A named person who could deputise was also available.

(b) The staff roster indicated that the designated person in charge or the deputy was rostered to work each day at the service.

(2)(a) Two written references were available for two new staff members who had taken up employment at the service since the last inspection.

(b) References were from previous employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for each staff working at the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had lived previously outside the Irish jurisdiction.

(4) Proof of qualifications were available for all new staff working at the service.

(7) All staff had induction training and were supervised on

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service.

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(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and  
(c) Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services Regulations 2016)

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### Compliance Information

The Statement of Purpose and Function of the service was displayed in the front hallway on a large notice board.

The following policies were recently reviewed and were found to be detailed and comprehensive.

Complaints policy

Administration of Medication policy

Infection Control Policy

Behaviour Management Policy

Safe Sleep Policy

Healthy Eating Policy.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) There were 14 Preschool Children and 6 adults available in the service on the day of the inspection. The adult/child ratio was correct. Additional staff were available to cover adults taking meal breaks. Staff were also available to reheat and serve food during the day.

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### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 7 registration forms for children attending the service were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars for these children.

- (a) The name and date of birth of the child.
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) provision to record 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 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 received by the child.
- (i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

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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, and*

#### Compliance Information

##### Basic Needs

A healthy eating policy was available at the service. Breakfast was offered to the children each morning on arrival. Parents provided healthy snacks for children morning breaks. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator until required. Frozen meals were purchased and reheated providing children with a hot dinner each day. On the day of the inspection children had meat balls, pasta, broccoli and cauliflower for dinner. Children had access to their own drinks at mealtimes. Staff were observed sitting with children while eating, making mealtimes a social occasion.

Nappy changing facilities and toilets were located close to each preschool room. This facilitated safe supervision of children at all times. A change of clothes was available for all children if needed. Outdoor jackets and footwear were available for all children to use in wet weather.

The children under 2 years of age had access to a separate sleep room on the ground floor. Each child had their own individual cot and bed line. Children were checked every 10 minutes, and all checks were documented in writing.

Large soft couches had been added to all rooms since the last inspection. This allowed staff sit comfortably when holding and feeding children. These also provided a quiet area for children to rest and relax when tired.

All children got to play outside each day regardless of weather conditions. A covered area outside allowed children a place of shelter in wet weather.

##### Supporting Relationships around Children

Details of each child's day, how they slept, what they had at mealtimes and their play activities were shared with parents using a cloud-based app. Any information parents wished to share with the staff at the service was also communicated using the app.

Childrens bags containing their personal belongings were stored on clearly labelled coat hooks with children's name and picture displayed. This helped children develop their self-caring skills and become more independent.

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Regular staff meetings took place at the service. A staff mentoring programme was in place to ensure adequate staff supervision at the service.

### Physical and Material Environment

Interest areas were clearly defined in both ECCE rooms with adequate resources available in each of the areas. All toys and equipment were clearly displayed in labelled boxes and baskets on low level shelves. Appropriate child sized tables and chairs were accessible for tabletop activities and for dining at lunch time.

In the Toddler room items of interest to the children and children's artwork was stored low on the walls for the children to view them. Lots of sensory play materials were accessible to the children. Soft climbing blocks were used to encourage children's gross motor development. Children in this room got outdoors on a regular basis each day.

Outdoors the children had access to 2 separate spaces. The front play area had a large, sheltered space. Here the children had access to lots of messy play and imaginative play areas. The larger play area was available for older children. Here children could use lots of ride on toys. A new play gym was recently installed, and work was in progress to add impact absorbent materials under the climbing structure. Children were supervised at all times while outdoors.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(1)(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.*

*(2) A registered provider-*

*(a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, or*

*(b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016,*

*shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.*

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### Compliance Information

- (1)(b) A separate sleep room was available on the ground floor for children under 2 years of age. There were 4 standard cots, and all were in good condition. Separate linen was available for each child. Staff closely monitored all children while they slept, and all observations were documented.
- (2) Children had access to an outdoor space on the premises. A covered space was available outside to provide shelter in wet or in warm weather. Age-appropriate play equipment was accessible in the outdoor area.

### 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 door to the building was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and preventing people gaining unauthorised access to the premises. A buzzer system was used to gain access to the facility.

All emergency exits and fire doors were unobstructed.

All blind cords were secured on tension hooks and made safe in all rooms.

Suitable handrails were provided on staircases and children were supervised at all times when using the stairs.

All highchairs were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.

All toys, furniture and play equipment were in good condition and free from sharp edges or corners.

No flexes or cables were located within reach of children.

#### Administration of Medication:

Consent forms were available for parents and staff to sign if children at the service required the administration of prescribed medication. All medicine administered was checked by 2 staff members and details were documented.

All medicines were stored safely out of reach of all children.

#### Safe Sleep:

There was evidence of the policy on safe sleep being implemented. Staff knew the requirements of the policy and had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on monitoring all children who slept at the service.

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### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

The front gate at the entrance from the car park was open on the day of the inspection. The magnetic lock connected to an internal buzzer system in the manager's office was not working. This posed a risk for the children of unauthorised access to the busy carpark as they exited the building.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

The service provider in their reply to the report stated that the magnetic lock on the entrance gate to the service has been repaired.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the repaired entrance gate was forwarded to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

### 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 record in writing of monthly fire drills was maintained. The last documented fire drill took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2024.
- (b) A maintenance record was available to show that smoke alarms were checked in the facility and a company have been contracted to regularly check all smoke alarms in the building.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the main hallway of 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

The current insurance certificate for the service was available. The service had insurance cover for 38 children to attend the full day care service. The commencement date of the policy was the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2023 and the expiry date of the policy was the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

### 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*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally.
- (b) The building appeared safe and secured. A buzzer system on the entrance door ensured all who entered the building were checked in by an authorised person in the manager's office. All visitor access was managed appropriately with a visitor book available to record details of all who entered the building.
- (c) Air conditioning units in all rooms ensured the rooms were adequately heated and ventilated. All areas were well lit by natural light and by artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation.
- (d) Since the service was last inspected all areas outside had been deep cleaned. The areas outside were all well maintained and routine cleaning schedules were in place for all internal and external areas. Broken toys were removed and all fencing surrounding the play areas outside had been repaired.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing areas available in the service. All waste was managed appropriately with lots of foot pedal operated, lidded bins in all areas. Handwashing and drying facilities were suitable and adequate.