

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2018LH505 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Pugwash Bay Ltd |
|-------------------------|-----------------|

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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Aston Village Green, Aston Village, Newtownstalaban, Drogheda, Co. Louth |
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|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | A92 N60W |
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|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | James Moore |
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| <b>Service type:</b> | Full Day |
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| <b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b> | 21/04/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 49 | PM | 43 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

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|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate<br>180-189 Lakeshore Drive<br>Airside Business Park<br>Swords, Co Dublin |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | M. McDonnell and S. McKenna                                                                       |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | 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).

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### Description of service

Pugwash Bay is based in Aston Village, in a residential area of Co. Meath. The service is registered to provide sessional and full-day care to children aged 0-6 years old. The service provides the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme between 9.30am to 12.30pm. Pugwash Bay is in a purpose-built ground floor building with the Little Lions, Zebra, Tigers and Giraffe rooms available for the children. There is also a dedicated sleep room, a kitchen and sanitary facilities and an outdoor area on the premises. There is a registered school age service in operation.

### Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. The registered provider employs 16 staff members to work in the service. This is inclusive of a person in charge and deputy person in charge, who work in a supernumerary capacity, 10 staff members who work directly with the pre-school children, a cleaner, a cook and an area manager and human resource manager provide support for the service. A student was being provided with work experience opportunities in the service.

### 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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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 16 (a-k) Records in Relation to a pre-school service, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of a child, Regulation 25 First Aid, Regulation 26 Fire Safety, and Regulation 28 Insurance. However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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 area manager, 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.*

*(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;*

#### Compliance Information

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, current rosters and a discussion with the area manager it was confirmed that there was one staff member and one student who commenced in the service since the last inspection on 12 December 2025. These two files were reviewed. The information on file for 15 staff members was compliant upon the service's last inspection; therefore, they were not reviewed upon this inspection. One staff member's file who was non-compliant in relation to qualification is no longer working in the service.

(a)(b) There were four written and validated references available for the staff member and student.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the staff member and student. A Garda vetting disclosure, dated within the last three years, was also available for the staff members who were working at the last inspection in December 2025.

(d) A review of the documentation available demonstrated that police vetting was not required for the staff member or student.

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(4) There was documentation available to demonstrate that the staff member, who worked directly with the pre-school children, held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(7) (a) (b) (c) Induction records for the new staff were available for review. Staff outlined they reviewed the services policies and procedures and completed specific training courses as part of their induction process and there were supervision sessions ongoing.

### 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

(2) On the inspector's unannounced arrival, the adult child ratio was observed to be correct and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult-to-child ratios were observed:

- In the Little Lions Room there were 2 staff members, and 8 children aged between 1 year and 2 months to 1 year and 8 months old, all of whom attended on a part time or full day care basis.
- In the Zebra Room there were 2 staff members, and 11 children aged between 2 year and 2 months to 3 years old, all of whom attended on a part time or full day care basis.
- In the Tigers Room, there were 2 staff members and 13 children aged between 3 years and 4 months to 3 years and 11 months old, one of whom attended on a sessional and 12 who attended on a full day care basis.
- In the Giraffe Room, there were 3 staff members and 17 children aged between 3 years and 7 months old to 4 years and 11 months old attending on a sessional basis. There were 3 staff members and 12 children who attended on a full day care basis.

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The area manager arrived during the inspection. The area manager and person in charge were available to provide cover for breaks and support with care for the children.

(8) (a) Following a review of rosters, sign-in records and discussions with staff members and the area manager, the inspectors could confirm that two staff members were always on the premises when the children were in attendance in the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1) There were inadequate adults to meet the care needs of the eight children present during the Little Lions outdoor play time between 10:51 to 11:02. The inspector observed that three of the younger children were upset, two of whom were settling in. Three older children were observed engaging in rough play with the younger children. Both staff members were providing comfort to the children who were upset and the older children continued with rough play. At 11:02 the inspector asked a staff member if they needed help or could they move the children to another room. The staff member agreed and the inspector sought the assistance of the deputy manager. Following the inspector's intervention, two older children were then taken to join the Zebra room in the larger outdoor area, and the two staff then had 6 babies whom they were able to provide comfort to. At 11:07 the 6 children appeared content and settled, and they then transitioned back into the care room.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The registered provider stated that the incident was reviewed immediately by management following the inspection. It was identified that, although the required adult-to-child ratio was maintained, the individual care needs of the children present at that time required additional staff support. Three new staff members, one specifically for the Little Lions room have been inducted. With the increased staffing levels, the service's floater is now more consistently available on the floor to provide additional support during busy periods, outdoor play, transitions, and settling-in times. As a preventive action staff have been reminded to continuously assess children's care and supervision needs and to seek additional support immediately when required. Procedures for outdoor play supervision and the grouping of children of different developmental stages have been reviewed. To further strengthen practice, staff have attended "Interactions with Under Twos" training course to enhance their skills in supporting the emotional wellbeing, development, and supervision needs of young children. Management will continue to monitor practice through regular supervision and room observations.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of roster/staff meeting notes and certificates.

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### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliance. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

- (1)(a) A review of documents demonstrated that there was information regarding the details of employees. This included an information board about staff members located in the entrance to the service.
- (b) – (f) Documents available in the service provided details of the age profile, ratios, type of care, facilities, opening hours and fees of the service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide.
- (g) The policies, procedures and statements of the service were available in the service in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) The inspectors observed that the attendance records, on their arrival to each room, was reflective of the children in attendance.

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(i) A staff roster, which was updated as required, was available.

### Non-Compliance Information

(j) Nine out of fourteen medication records dated between 09/01/2026 and 16/04/2026 were not fully completed. Details included a missing parental signature after administration of medication (on 5 records), prior parental consent was not obtained (on 4 records), and a second staff signature was not recorded (on 2 records).

(k) The registered provider did not ensure that an accurate record in writing was kept in respect of accidents and incidents within the service. A total sample of 18 forms and did not contain all information required. The following was found;

- 5 reports did not have parental signatures.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(j) The registered provider stated that following the inspection, a comprehensive review of all medication administration records was undertaken. Any missing information was identified and completed to ensure records are accurate, up to date, and fully compliant with the service's Medication Administration Policy and regulatory requirements. They confirmed that written parental consent for the administration of medication is obtained at the time of enrolment and is signed by the parent/guardian. This consent is maintained on the child's file.

In addition to the signed enrolment consent, staff always contact the parent/guardian to obtain verbal consent immediately prior to administering any medication. The verbal consent obtained is documented in accordance with the Medication Administration Policy. As a preventive action they stated that staff have been reminded that the witness section of the medication administration form must be completed by a member of the management team following the administration of medication. All staff have completed refresher training on the Medication Administration Policy and Reporting Procedures, with particular emphasis on documentation requirements, consent procedures, and the accurate completion of medication records and our staff meeting.

(j) The registered provider stated that following the inspection, all accident and incident records were reviewed, and any omissions identified were addressed to ensure that the documentation is complete, accurate, and compliant with the service's record-keeping requirements. As a preventive action they stated that all staff have undergone refresher training on the completion of accident and incident records, with particular emphasis on accurately completing all required sections and obtaining parental signatures on the day of the accident or incident. In addition, a new tracking system where it is logged into our app, so parents are aware they have an accident or incident form to sign on collection. Management will continue to monitor compliance through regular record audits.

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### Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of completed records, staff training and weekly checks list

Medicine policy

Enrolment form

### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection.

### 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*

*(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

#### Basic Needs

The children's water was accessible to them within their rooms. Children in the older rooms were provided with appropriate cutlery, and staff gave support and encouragement to the children who required it. Younger children were fed at meal times by the staff, with the older children in the younger rooms were encouraged to feed themselves with help given at the end when children looked for support. The children were observed to enjoy the 'lasagne mix' that was on the menu for the day. There were also alternatives available to cater for different preferences and allergies. A staff member was observed changing nappies as required in both the Little Lions and Zebra rooms. At these times the staff member engaged with the children and chatted with them throughout the process. The older children were observed to use the toilet independently with staff remaining close by for support if required. Children in each care room experienced a change of environment to the outdoors on the day of inspection.

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### Supporting relationships around children

The staff members were observed to interact kindly with the children within their care. The staff in the Little Lions and Zebra rooms were observed to communicate using soft, gentle tones while interacting with the babies and younger children. Floor play was availed of with the staff remaining close by for support. Activities of sensory play with cereals and toy animals plus block play were enjoyed in the Little Lions room where children and adults played together. The children in the Zebra room enjoyed outdoor play and were also observed confidently exploring their care room, playing with equipment and materials of their choice supported by the staff.

In the Tiger room children were participating in free play activities on the inspector's arrival into the room. Staff members sat with the children and supported them in their play with play dough and blocks. The planning in the room referenced space and a staff member discussed how the children had shown an interest in the topic and therefore it was reflected in planning. Another staff member was supporting children in doing hand prints for their rocket ship pictures. The inspectors observed that a key worker system was in place throughout the service, and this was supported by various long and short-term planning which were available for review. Staff members were observed to be aware of children's needs, for example children appeared restless during an activity in the Tigers room and the outdoor play time was brought forward. Staff members were able to discuss additional supports in place for children as required. For example in the Giraffe room staff spoken with were aware of the supports required for some children in the room. A staff member was observed taking their time and engaged with a child's play, when the child initially appeared reluctant, to encourage them to complete a specific goal orientated activity. The staff members and management team discussed documents and meetings with parents to provide appropriate support when required.

### Physical and material environment

Appropriate relaxation areas were available in the rooms, with cosy areas available in all rooms. Activities and equipment were available on open shelving at a low level for children to access independently, which included a range of books, tabletop activities, construction toys and sensory items. Role play materials which included doctor sets and dress up were available for play. The home corners in each of the care rooms were equipped with a range of materials which included play food, cutlery and dining items. There were also babies, buggies and clothes available.

The inspectors observed the children enjoying the outdoor play areas in the service. There was a large open outdoor area which had wooden and plastic climbing structures, wooden kitchens, and a slide. Tyres, large toys

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and ride on toys and a bench seating area were also provided. There was also a smaller covered area which was accessible for the younger children with a slide, books, blocks and ride-on toys.

### 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 service had a secure entrance to the service with a buzzer system and keypad locks in place. This prevented any unauthorised access to the service and exit from the service by children.
- A low gate had been fitted in the internal hallway; this was observed to support effective supervision when children transitioned in the service and left or entered the service.
- Blind cords were secured and were not accessible to children.

##### Infection Control:

- The inspectors noted that children washed their hands at appropriate times whilst they were in each room. For example, children washed their hands and were reminded to do so in the Tiger room once they had used the sanitary facilities. In the Giraffe room the children washed their hands after outdoor play and before dinner. In the Little Lions and Zebra rooms, hands were observed to be washed following nappy changing and before meal times.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Children under two were provided with a cot for sleep. Children over 2 were provided with appropriate facilities for sleep.
- Staff members supervising the children for sleep conducted 10-minute sleep checks and recorded information on a child's breathing, position and colour.
- Where children slept on stackable beds staff were observed to remain with sleeping children.
- The ambient temperature whilst children aged over 1 year slept in Little Lions sleep room and Zebra care room when used for sleep was maintained between 21.8°C to 21.9°C. Staff members were aware of measures required should the temperature increase. There were documented checks in the sleep room for temperature monitoring.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

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- The hot water within the mixer taps at a number of hand wash sinks used by children was above the safe recommended temperature of 43°C as follows;
  - The children's sinks in both toilets in the Zebra room were recorded at 47.3 – 49.1°C
  - The sink used for staff and children in the Little Lions sanitary area was recorded at 49.9°C to 51.9°C. It is acknowledged that the children, while using this sink, are supervised by staff.

It is acknowledged that when brought to the attention of the persons in charge, the thermostat was adjusted; however, water temperatures remained above 43°C.

- The inspectors observed cleaning chemicals and a bait box in low-level storage, which was accessible to children in the Tigers and Zebra rooms. This presented a risk of injury to the children. It is acknowledged that when brought to the attention of a manager, the items were removed from the storage area in the Tigers room.

### Infection Control:

- A swing-top bin was present in the Zebra care room, and not a pedal-operated bin as required; this poses a cross-contamination risk.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

- In the Zebra room Maintenance replaced the existing thermostat with a new thermostat control valve and adjusted the system to ensure that hot water temperatures at children's handwashing facilities do not exceed the recommended maximum temperature of 43°C. Staff in the Zebra Room have been reminded that water temperatures at children's handwashing facilities must not exceed 43°C. During routine water temperature checks, staff are required to immediately report any temperature reading above the recommended limit to management so that prompt corrective action can be taken. Ongoing monitoring and recording of water temperatures will continue to ensure compliance and maintain a safe environment for children. A new floor supervision form has been created to check all compliance on the floor such as water temperature are being checked by the management throughout the day.
- Immediately following the inspection, all cleaning chemicals were removed from areas accessible to children and relocated to secure, locked storage. New safety latches were installed on storage units within the Tigers and Zebra rooms to prevent children from accessing any potentially hazardous items. As a preventive action A memo was sent to all staff reminding them of their responsibility to ensure that

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cleaning chemicals, pest control products, and any other hazardous substances are stored securely and remain inaccessible to children at all times. A sign has been created for the cupboards to remind staff that such items should not be kept there. A new maintenance officer has been appointed in the centres where staff can report issues to. The officer checks the rooms every Tuesday. The room and health and safety check are checked by the manager each day.

### Infection Control

- The swing-top bin in the Zebra room was replaced with a hands-free pedal-operated bin to comply with infection prevention and control requirements and reduce the risk of cross-contamination. As a preventive action regular environmental health and safety checks will include verification that appropriate waste bins are in place and functioning correctly. Any non-compliant equipment identified during routine inspections will be reported and replaced immediately. Management will continue to monitor maintenance compliance with the floor supervision documents.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

- Photo of Thermostat controller
- Staff memo
- Copy of new supervision sheet

#### Infection Control:

- Photo evidence of new latches and no chemicals
- Photo Evidence of memo
- Health and safety checklist for rooms.
- New supervision checklist

### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 25 - First aid

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*(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 registered provider ensured that a person trained in a First Aid Responder (FAR) course was available to the children attending the service. It is acknowledged that 5 staff members had FAR training certificates.

(2) The first aid equipment available in the service provided adequate resources in the event of a first aid emergency.

### 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.*

*(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 of the fire drill on 10 March 2026 was available for review. The service had maintained a record of monthly fire drills.

(b) The registered provider had evidence of the annual maintenance of the fire extinguishers in November 2025 and the fire alarm on 5 February 2026.

(4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed on the noticeboard in the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

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### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 72 children at any one time attending for full-day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28 March 2026 to 27 March 2027.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

(c) A review of room temperatures in the Little Lions room indicated that preventions actions implemented since the last inspection were sufficient to ensure room temperature ranges were within acceptable limits.

### Non-Compliance Information

(d) Areas of wear and tear and chipped paint around hand-wash sinks and nappy changing area were observed as follows

- At the hand-wash sink in the Zebra care room
- At the hand wash sinks and the nappy changing area in the Zebra sanitary area
- At the handwash sink in the Little Lions sanitary area.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(d) At the hand-wash sink in the Zebra care room a washable vinyl tile covering was installed around the sink area to protect the wall surface from water damage and facilitate effective cleaning in the room. Staff have been reminded to report any damaged surfaces or chipped paint immediately. Regular health and safety checks will be carried out to ensure repairs are completed in a timely manner.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of area/maintenance sheets

### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection.

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