

# TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



|                          |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2020WH002 |
|--------------------------|-------------|

|                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Little Friends Pre-school |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|

|                            |                                         |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Townspark, Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|

|                       |                                |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Email Address:</b> | littlefriendspollard@yahoo.com |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|

|                                             |                              |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Service Provider:</b> | Anthony and Caroline Finegan |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------|

|                                    |                                                      |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of Service Registered:</b> | <b>Part-Time</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|

|                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

|                                                             |           |    |           |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----|-----------|----|
| <b>No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:</b> | <b>AM</b> | 39 | <b>PM</b> | 11 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----|-----------|----|

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate,<br>Tusla, Child and Family Agency,<br>Primary Care Unit,<br>St. Lomans Campus, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b> | C. O'Connor Hughes    |
| <b>Title:</b>                    | Early Years Inspector |

| Areas which were the subject of this Inspection |                                                |               |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Governance</b>                               | <b>Health Welfare and Development of Child</b> | <b>Safety</b> |

| 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). |

|                                 |                 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Conditions If Applicable</b> | Not applicable. |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|

# TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Description of Service</b> | Established in 2020 this private service is registered as a part time service catering for up to 55 children providing part time and sessional places. The age range of the children enrolled in the service is from 2 years to 5 years of age. An Early Childhood and Education scheme is provided from 09:00 to 12:30. The service operates between the hours of 09:00 and 14:00 on a Monday to Friday basis.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Premises</b>               | The Early Years' Service is located in an adapted single storey building in Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath. Four pre-school rooms, a kitchen, an office and sanitary accommodation are provided. An outdoor play area is located at the back of the service. On-site parking and set down facilities are available.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Staffing</b>               | One of the registered providers was the designated person in charge and five staff were present on the 25.11.2020. All adults working with children held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Methodology</b>            | <p>Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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.</p> <p>The findings on inspection are based on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information obtained through examination of documentation</li> <li>• Direct observation</li> <li>• Discussion with relevant staff</li> </ul> <p>This inspection was unannounced and focused on areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service.</p> <p>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.</p> |
| <b>Acknowledgements</b>       | The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

## GOVERNANCE

### 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,
  - (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.
- (6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who—
- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and
  - (b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date
- (6A is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of "paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)" for "paragraphs (5) and (6)", and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): ")

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

#### Compliance Information:

- (1) (a)  
The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b)  
The deputy designated person in charge was present during the inspection.

## Part III - Management and Staff

### Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

- (2) (a)  
The required number of written validated references from past employers were available in respect of all adults.
- (b)  
The required number of written validated references from reputable sources other than previous employers were available in respect of all adults.
- (c)  
Completed Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of all adults present in the service.
- (d)  
Police vetting was not required as no adults had lived outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4)  
Evidence was available to indicate that adults working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (6)  
Not applicable as no employees had signed a declaration on or before 30th June 2016 to the effect that they intended to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1st September 2021.
- (6A)  
A person was employed to work directly with children under the Access and Inclusion model.

## Part III - Management and Staff

### Regulation 11 -Staffing Levels

- (1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—  
(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times

#### Compliance Information:

- (1)  
There were thirty nine children attending the service being supervised directly by six adults at the time of inspection.
- (2)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to.

| Play pods | Number of staff                             | Number of Children                                      |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Pod 1     | 2 staff members                             | 16 children aged<br>3 – 5 years<br>15 sessional<br>1 PT |
| Pod 2     | 1 staff member (AIM)<br>registered provider | 11 children aged<br>2.5 -3 years<br>8 sessional<br>3 PT |
| Pod 3     | 1 staff member                              | 9 children<br>aged 3-4 years<br>8 sessional<br>1 PT     |
| Pod 4     | 1 staff member                              | 3 children<br>Aged 2-2 8/12<br>PT                       |

- (8)(a)  
There were at least two adults rostered to be on the premises between the hours of 09:00 and 14:00.

## HEALTH WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

### 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:

The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development including: self-feeding, self-toileting and caring for their belongings. Children were observed moving freely in the pre-school rooms and in the outdoor play area engaged in the various play activities. Children were observed to rest and relax on the soft furnishings provided in the pre-school rooms enjoying story time supported by staff. A key person system was in place helping to promote emotional security for children. Staff were familiar with the children and their personalities. Children requiring extra assistance received the support from attentive staff members. Staff were observed to sit and eat their lunch with children promoting conversation and interactions. Staff were observed to give a verbal handover on the child's day to parents at the end of the morning session.

#### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The four pre-school rooms were bright, colourful and stimulating. Low level tables and chairs were in place. Low level shelving with equipment and materials were accessible to the children. Areas of defined interest included a fully equipped home area, a construction area, rest area with reading books for children. Materials included paint, books, dolls, puzzles, blocks, trucks, animals and fine motor skill toys including pegboards, jigsaws and shape sorters. Children's artwork was displayed in the pre-school rooms. A large outdoor play area was available for children, the surface area consisted of grass and tarmac. Toys and equipment included a wooden boat, a wooden ship, a climbing frame with slide and an obstacle course. A sheltered outdoor area was laid out with picnic benches, kitchen and various activities. A shed was available for the storage of equipment.

## 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 entry to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within the service. A one way system was in operation for the drop off and collection of children from their assigned play pods. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents and hand sanitiser.

The external play area was appropriately secured with fences and gates so children could not leave the area and unauthorised adults could not access the area.

#### INFECTION CONTROL:

The service was maintained in a clean condition. All toys and materials were easily cleanable and cleaning schedules were available and reviewed.

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and meals, after using the toilet and after outdoor play. The nappy changing procedure observed was carried out as per the nappy changing procedure displayed.

There was an infection prevention and control policy available to inform practice that included detailed cleaning schedules, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and practices for isolation of a child or adult in the event of either displaying symptoms of COVID 19.

Information relating to children and staff in play pods for contact tracing was available for the public health department if required.

Adequate supplies of hot water, hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. A water temperature of 41.9 degrees Celsius was recorded. Hand sanitiser was available at the front entrance and in the pre-school rooms.

Personal protective equipment that included face masks, aprons and gloves were available in the pre-school rooms. A well ventilated area was identified for isolation of a child or person feeling unwell.

The pre-school rooms and sanitary accommodation were ventilated with windows open.

Foot operated pedal bins were noted in all pre-school rooms for personal and other waste products.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

No medicine was administered at the time of the inspection. Medication records reviewed noted correct procedures were in place for the administration of

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

|                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                     | <p>medication. In the sample of child records reviewed written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child.</p> <p><b>SAFE SLEEP:</b><br/>The registered provider stated children do not sleep in the service. Low level beds and linen are available for children if children wish to rest or sleep. A safe sleep policy was available and reviewed which met the TUSLA requirements.</p> <p><b>FIRE SAFETY:</b><br/>It was observed that staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service during the fire drill carried out during the inspection.</p> |
| Non-Compliance Information:                                         | <p><b>GENERAL SAFETY:</b><br/>There was no health care plan available for a child attending the service with a defined medical condition that required an auto adrenaline injector pen.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider | <p>The registered provider stated the following corrective and preventive actions in her response;</p> <p><b>GENERAL SAFETY:</b><br/><b><u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u></b><br/>A care plan has been put in place for a child attending the service with a defined medical condition.<br/><b><u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u></b><br/>A specific care plan will be put in place for a child attending the service with a defined medical condition.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Summary Comment:                                                    | <p>Evidence submitted and reviewed by the Early Years Inspector met the regulatory requirement.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

## 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: | <p>(1)<br/>A person qualified in First Aid for children was available on the premises.</p> <p>(2)<br/>(a) First aid boxes were suitably equipped available in the pre-school rooms.<br/>(b) A first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service.</p> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 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: | <p>(1)(a)<br/>A record of the fire drill was maintained and a fire drill was carried out on the 25.11.2020.</p> <p>(b)<br/>The number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises were available and the maintenance certificates were dated 02.07.2020 and 30.10.2020 respectively.</p> <p>(4)<br/>The fire drill procedure was displayed in main entrance to the service.</p> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|