

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DR110
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tree House Pre School & Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Minor Hall, Kilternan Centre, Enniskerry Road,, Kilternan, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D18 ET99
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Elaine Dunne
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	06/10/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	22	PM	22
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R. Duff
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector

### Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

This service was established in 2007 and moved to this location in 2018; it is one of two private services operated by the registered provider. Early education and care is provided on a part-time and full day care basis for pre-school children aged two to six years of age. The service also provides care for school-aged children in an additional room. The service operates from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a large room within a community centre in a residential area of south county Dublin. An additional sensory room is available to children, this room was used to allow children to sleep on the day of inspection. There is an enclosed outdoor space which the children have exclusive access to.

### Staffing

The service currently employs 9 adults including the registered provider and an adult employed to carry out administrative duties. The registered provider divides their time between this service and their second service. The registered provider and person in charge were both present, but did not work directly with the children, both were available to support staff and children throughout the inspection. There were 6 adults working directly with 22 children on the day of inspection.

### 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child, information and records and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2)(3)(4) Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels.

Regulation 15 (1)(3)(c) Record of a pre-school child.

Regulation 19 (1)(b) Health, welfare and development of child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of child.

Regulation 28 Insurance

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 registered provider, 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(a)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required, the person in charge was on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

The inspection included a review of the required documentation for six staff members employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 28 March 2022. It also included a review of the required documentation for a contractor employed to carry of an exercise class with the children. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for

each of the nine staff members and contractor employed in the service. The following documentation was available;

(a)(b) Of the 14 written and validated references that were required, 12 were available from a past employer and 2 were available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for nine staff members and the contractor employed to work in the service. Garda vetting disclosures from all staff members were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for two adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) had been carried out prior to the five adults commencing employment in the service since the last inspection on 28 March 2022.

(4) Records were available evidencing that six staff member who were employed to work directly with the children since the last inspection on 28 March 2022 held at least the required award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a letter of eligibility to practice or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

### Non-Compliance Information

(3) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2)(d) had not been carried out prior to one adult commencing employment in the service.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The person in charge has stated Police vetting is now place for the staff member and all staff files will be checked thoroughly in the future.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

### Summary Comment

The actions taken by the person in charge have addressed the non-compliance.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

*(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.*

*(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for full and part time services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 22 children attending the service being supervised by 6 staff members on the day of inspection.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

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

*(a) the name and date of birth of the child;*

*(b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*

*(c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*

*(d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*

*(e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*

*(f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*

*(g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*

*(h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*

*(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

*(c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

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

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

#### Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

*(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*

*(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

### Compliance Information

A busy and welcoming atmosphere was evident on arrival at the service and throughout the inspection. Children were engaged in a range of activities and had the opportunity to move freely to a new activity. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed children by name,

used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. Language used by the staff members was observed to be encouraging, supportive and informative.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to a new activity and to alert them of mealtimes. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment. Children brought lunch from home and a hot meal and afternoon snack is provided by the service. Meals times were social occasions with children and adults sitting together having the opportunity to chat about the morning, staff provided children with help when needed. Drinks were readily available within the care room. Children were encouraged to clean up after themselves and assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times. Older children used the toilet independently and children wearing nappies had these changed regularly.

Child sized tables and chairs allowed the children to eat and engage in tabletop activities. There was evidence that equipment and materials provided were based on the children's individual needs and emergent interests. The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving units and accessible to children. The main care room and sensory room had cushions and floor mats to facilitate rest or provide a place for children to take a break from activities. Children spent time outdoors throughout the day and were dressed appropriate to the weather, wearing wellington boots and outdoor suits. The outdoor area was equipped with a range of toys and materials to support play experiences.

Engagement with families and parents is facilitated by the daily sharing of information on the child's day. This is shared through conversations at drop off and collection and supported by electronic means. On the day of inspection children were observed to take part in an exercise class facilitated by an external contractor.

### 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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. In addition, the outdoor play area was enclosed, restricting unauthorised persons from gaining access to this area and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.

- Toys and equipment in the care room, sensory room, and in the outdoor area were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored in a locked press or out of reach of children.

### Infection Control:

- The indoor and outdoor environments were maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, paper towel, liquid soap, and pedal operated bin.
- The children were supported by staff members to wash their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection
- Children's lunch boxes containing perishable items which had been taken in from home were refrigerated.
- Staff reported that children's bedding was sent home to be laundered weekly and bedding was observed to be stored individually when not in use to prevent cross contamination.

### Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of procedures to safeguard children when administering medicine. This included getting written consent from parents or guardians, having a second staff member present as a witness during administration, and maintaining detailed records shared with parents or guardians upon collection.

### Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes and a sleep log was available detailing the room temperature, breathing pattern, colour and position of the child.

### Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.
- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire and evacuation procedures were on display in the care room.

## Non-Compliance Information

### Infection Control:

1. In the main care room, the pedal on the foot operated bin was broken and could not be used effectively by staff and children, as a result staff and children were observed using their hands to open the bin, this poses a potential risk of cross contamination
2. During the nappy changing procedure, practices observed were not effective for infection prevention and control purposes, the same pair of gloves were worn by a member of staff throughout the whole process.

This included redressing the child. This is at variance with the nappy changing policy of the service and poses a potential risk of cross infection to children.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Infection Control:

The person in charge has stated:

1. The bin in the main care room has been replaced.
2. The staff members have been retrained in nappy changing procedures. On the day of inspection, an event previously occurred, and the staff member was upset, this resulted in failure to follow nappy changing procedure.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Infection Control:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

### Summary Comment

The actions taken by the person in charge have addressed the non-compliance.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the full day service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for the 86 children and an expiry date of 27 March 2026.