

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS069
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Name of Service:	Lucan Child Nursery & Montessori
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Address of Service:	13 Westbrook Park, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K78 X765
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Name of Registered Provider:	Orlagh Curran
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	11/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	21
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
Inspection undertaken by:	S Quigley & H Sutherland
Title:	Early Years Inspector(s)

Authority to Inspect

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

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

Lucan Child Nursery and Montessori is a privately owned service which was established in 1996. The service is registered to provide full day, part time, and sessional care and education to children aged 1 to 6 years and also offers an early childhood care and education scheme. The service is registered to operate from 07:50 to 18:00 each weekday and is located in a residential area of Lucan, South County Dublin. The service operates from a purposely adapted, two storey residential premises and consists of three care rooms, a dining room/kitchen, and a designated sleep room. Two care rooms are located in the main building, and the third care room is located in a purpose-built building to the rear of the main premises. A fully enclosed outdoor play area is available.

Staffing

The service currently employs seven staff members, including the registered provider who works directly in the premises. On the day of inspection, six staff members were present and working in the service, including the registered provider.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities*. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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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 registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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.*

(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.

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(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

(2)

Following a discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that one adult had commenced working in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on the 04 July 2025. Documentation required under regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of this adult as detailed below. The requirement of Regulation 9(2)(c) was assessed for all adults employed to work in the service.

- (a) (b) There were two references available for the adult which had been appropriately verified.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) The adult did not require international police vetting.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had been carried out prior to the adult commencing employment in the service.

(4) The adult held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework (NFQ).

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)-

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(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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were 21 children present in the service being supervised by 6 adults during the inspection. The registered provider provided relief cover when required.

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

(1)(b)

Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed to be in place. Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the day. Self-feeding was promoted in younger care rooms and staff assisted children where required. The staff supported the children in managing their personal care. Children's nappies were changed routinely and as needed. Staff used opportunities when providing personal care for warm one-to-one interactions. Staff cleaned children's hands and faces after eating and addressed children by name, speaking to them in positive tones. Children were comforted promptly if they became upset. Children were visibly content and engaged in play during the inspection. All children accessed the outdoor play area for a period of time and were dressed appropriately for the weather.

Areas were available within the rooms with soft furnishings where the children could rest or take a break from activities. Younger children were provided with the opportunity to sleep at a designated time. Staff reported that children could be accommodated to sleep outside this time if they displayed signs of tiredness.

The children were made comfortable for sleep, with staff removing their shoes and outer clothing and providing soothers and comforters to those who used them. The sleep room was calm and conducive to sleep, with staff

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soothing the children to sleep as needed. Staff reported they communicate daily with parents at drop off and collection times.

Non-Compliance Information

Drinking water was not available to children in the Toddler room at all times. There was no water station in place and drinks were only observed to be offered to the children whilst in the dining room during mealtimes.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A water station has been introduced into the Toddler room. This includes a jug, cups, a tray and wall signage. Staff meeting is being held, and the introduction of the water station will be discussed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

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

The inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with the registered provider, and inspection of the premises that the following steps were taken to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door into the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons gaining access or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor play environment was safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet, after outdoor play, and before snack. Schedules were in place and

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maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff members outlined appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff members detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspector and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. One child was observed to have whole grapes in their lunchbox and another child had popcorn during snack time in the Montessori room, both of which posed a choking risk. The staff member present removed the popcorn immediately, and the grapes were cut appropriately at the inspector's request.

Infection Control:

2. There was no waterproof covering in place on the cot mattresses in use for sleep time to prevent cross contamination.
3. A swing lidded bin was observed to be in place in the Junior Preschool room for disposing of waste including used hand paper towels. Staff members were observed repeatedly touching the bin lid posing a risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective & Preventive Action

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General Safety:

1. The healthy eating policy was updated to highlight a list of foods that should not be in a lunchbox. The service has also asked parents to prepare fruits appropriately such as grapes. These should be cut into quarters lengthwise. A message has been sent to parents. Staff were informed of this issue in the staff meeting.

Infection Control:

2. On the day of the inspection there were no waterproof sheets on the cots. The service have these on site. A new set was purchased. A staff meeting was held, and this matter was discussed with staff, highlighting the infection control issue raised by the sheets not protecting the mattresses.
3. A new pedal bin was purchased. The Montessori staff will need to ensure the children can use the bin properly going forward. Spot-checks will be carried out on all pedal bins in the service monthly, and any issues will be reported to management.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

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

(iii) an employee, or

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

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

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

Compliance Information

(3)(a)(b)(4)

There was a record available detailing any persons entering the service other than those specified above under (3)(a). The inspectors were asked to sign in by the deputising person in charge on arrival.

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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.

Compliance Information

- (1) An adult trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was available to the children throughout the inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

Compliance Information

The assessment of regulation 30 formed part of this inspection to assess corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider following the last inspection of the service on 4 July 2025. The following space was available in the care rooms;

Room	Toddler	Playschool	Montessori	Dining room
Space available	12.61 square metres	17.5 square metres	20.14 square metres	12.1 square metres

An adequate amount of clear floor space was available to the children attending the Playschool, Montessori, and dining room during the inspection.

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Non-Compliance Information

(2)

A review of attendance records and discussions with staff members evidenced that the minimum amount of clear floor space required for the number and age of the children attending the Toddler room was not available at all times as follows:

- On the busiest day in the care room, three children aged 1 year and two children aged 2 years attending on a full day care basis requiring a minimum of 13.1square metres clear floor space when only 2.61square metres is available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

Going forward on a day when there are more 1 year olds than 2 year olds, the group will be split between the toddler room and the sleep room. The sleep room will be set up as a care room/sleep room. Square footage of this room is 14sq meters. More consideration will be had when a new toddler is starting in the service. The service will need to take into consideration of the children already attending our service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.