

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(s) of Inspection:	04/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	13
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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:	Sarah Quigley & Helen Sutherland
Title:	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).

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 one to six 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, two staff members were present and working in the service when the inspectors arrived. The registered provider and another adult arrived to the service in the afternoon and worked directly with the children.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(2)(3)(4), 11(1)(2), 19(1)(b), 23, 25(1), and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulations 24(3)(4), and 30(1)(2). These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation(s) 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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 4th July 2025 during the inspection in respect of Regulation 23, relating to first aid. A response was received from the service on the 4th July 2025 which sufficiently mitigated the risk identified.

On the 1st September 2025 a regulatory compliance meeting was convened with the registered provider to discuss corrective and preventive actions submitted in response to non-compliant findings identified on inspection and outline outstanding non compliances which did not meet the requirements of regulation. The registered provider was afforded a further opportunity to provide a response to the outstanding non-compliant findings the details of which are outlined in the inspection report.

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.

(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) Documentation was reviewed in respect of three adults who had commenced working in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on the 2nd May 2023. Regulation 9 (2)(c) was assessed for each of the seven adults employed in the service.

The following records were available for the adults:

(a) (b) The registered provider demonstrated that they had verified the references obtained from two sources for one of the three adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the seven adults employed. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years, as detailed under regulation 23.

(4) There was evidence that one of the three new staff members had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and education at level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure that some adults employed and rostered to work in the service were suitable and competent prior to allowing them access to children as follows:

- (2)
- (a) (b) (c) (d)
- There were no references available for one adult working with the children during the inspection.
 - There was no documentation available in the service pertaining to the requirements of regulation 9(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) for one adult who was rostered to commence work in the service on the afternoon of the inspection. The registered provider stated the adult would not be commencing employment as the inspection was taking place and the listed documentation was not in place.
- (3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified under Regulation 9(2) had not been carried out prior to one of the adult's commencing employment in the service, as detailed above Under (2)(a)(b).
- (4) There was no evidence available to show that one of the adults employed to work directly with the children, and one adult rostered to commence employment on the day of inspection had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and education at level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A new staff member had joined our team on the 25th August 2025. All documents have been acquired and put on staff file. Copy of cv, identification, proof of address, 2 written references, certs from Level 5,6 & 7 in childcare and also Garda vetting have been obtained. New staff rota has been set up and put in practice. Service provider will be present more regularly to over practices. One staff member has agreed to up their hours to help cover before ECCE hours. More holiday time cover has been added. Some staff have agreed to cover over holiday periods. Holiday request form introduced where staff must have cover before leave is granted.

Supporting documentation submitted

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

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection of the service.

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,

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

An adequate number of adults were not working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection as the minimum ratio of adults to children was not maintained at all times as outlined below.

(2)

The registered provider did not ensure that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service at all times. An insufficient number of adults were available to the children attending on a full day care basis in the service throughout the day of inspection from 9:30am until 12:37pm when the registered provider arrived as follows:

- At 9:20am, one adult was observed leaving the service and sitting in their car outside. The inspectors called into the service at 9:30am. One staff member was caring for eleven preschool children on the inspector's arrival, two aged 1year, three aged 2years, and six aged 3 to 5years. A school aged child was also present being cared for by the adult. The second staff member arrived back into the service at 9:30am when the inspectors arrived into the service.
- Throughout the inspection, one adult was observed caring for thirteen children, two aged 1year, three aged 2years, and seven aged 3 to 5 years whilst the second adult preformed cleaning tasks, prepared meals, and cared for individual children changing nappies, assisting with toileting, and preforming checks on a sleeping child. There were also two school aged children present being cared for by the adult during these times.

(8)(a)

The registered provider did not ensure that two adults were present in the service at all times on the day of inspection. From 9:20am on the day of inspection, one adult was alone in the service caring for eleven preschool children and one school aged child as detailed above under 11(2).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(2)(8)(a)

- New Rosters have been introduced to cover non-term and term times. These insure adequate staff levels at all times. The service has introduced a system where, depending on ratios, a relief staff have been put in place to ensure adequate child to adult ratios at all times.
- The service has introduced a holiday request system. This is to ensure that experienced, qualified staff are available to cover holiday leave going forward. Only one staff member can be away at a time. Cover needs to be arranged before holiday leave is granted.
- A new staff member has been employed and will start employment on the 25th August.

Supporting documentation submitted

Some supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

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)

Some appropriate and suitable care practices were observed to be in place. Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the day. Children's nappies were changed routinely and as needed, with staff using these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently. Staff addressed children by name and spoke to them in gentle positive tones. Children were

comforted promptly if they became upset. Staff encouraged children to be independent in cleaning up after play and meals. The children were all observed to be happy and content throughout the inspection.

Younger babies were placed to sleep in accordance with their individual routines and older children were given the opportunity to sleep after lunch. The children were made comfortable for sleep, with staff removing their shoes and outer clothing. Children were all provided with the opportunity for outdoor play.

Non-Compliance Information

1. From 9:30am, one child was observed to have a soother in their mouth for prolonged periods of time throughout the inspection, removing it only for mealtimes, without any indication that they were upset and required it. This may inhibit language and oral motor development and prevent children from interacting with peers. The soother was taken from the child at 13:00pm by the registered provider who arrived at the service at 12:37pm.
2. Some practices observed in place in the service were not in line with the behaviour management policy in place in the service. A staff member was observed telling children to 'stop', 'sit down', 'stop messing', and lift a child to their chair and push it assertively into the table telling the child to eat their dinner. This was at variance with the positive behaviour management practices outlined in the service policy.
3. From 12:18pm to 12:59pm on the day of inspection, younger children were strapped into highchairs and older children were seated at tables in a confined space in the dining area, as noted in Regulation 30. During this time children were observed finishing their dinner and becoming restless getting up and down from their chairs. Staff members repeatedly told the children to sit back down during this time until the last child finished eating at 12:59pm.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The service held a staff meeting which included a re-caping on the soother policy.
2. At our recent staff meeting the service went over our behaviour management policy. Staff members are currently undertaking courses relating to behaviour management to enhance practices.
3. Children will not be brought into the dining area until the dinner is ready to be placed on the table. As soon as a number of children are finished their food they will be removed from the area by one staff member either to the outside play area or to a care room.

Supporting documentation submitted

Some supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. The actions outlined will be assessed on the next inspection of the service.

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 to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Cleaning products and medicines were safely stored out of children's reach.

Infection Control:

Waste was managed appropriately using pedal-operated bins. Each child was provided with their own bed linen, which was laundered weekly and stored individually between uses. Warm water, soap and paper towels were available for handwashing. Plates were provided to children for all meals and snacks.

Administration of Medication:

Medications were stored in their original packaging out of reach of children.

Safe Sleep:

Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's ages and developmental needs. The temperature of the rooms where children slept were recorded and maintained at the required temperature ranges.

Fire Safety:

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 which was in line with records available in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years for four adults employed.
2. There was no restrictor in place on the first-floor window Toddler room window. A radiator cover with a ledge was in place beneath the window. This posed a potential risk of harm and injury to a child should they climb to access the window.
3. The passageway from the dining area to the outdoor play area was adjacent to a cordoned off kitchen used to prepare children's food. A kettle was in reach of the children on the counter beside the door to the outdoor play area which posed a risk of injury to a child.
4. A box of plastic connector cubes, which the manufacturers guidelines state are suitable for use with children aged 36months and over, were in use in the Toddler room during the inspection for children aged 13months and over. This posed a potential choking hazard to a child if ingested.
5. Electrical cables from a stereo, a phone, and a dishwasher were hanging in reach of the children in the dining area and posed a risk of injury to a child.

Infection Control:

A number of practices were observed which were at variance with the infection control policy in place in the service and posed a risk of cross contamination as follows:

6. Children did not wash their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection. There was no handwashing observed after outdoor play, after nappy changing, or before meals.
7. Some of the nappy changing practices in place were ineffective for infection control and posed a risk of cross contamination:
 - Staff members did not routinely wash hands after nappy changing. One staff member was observed changing a child's nappy with no handwashing afterwards and then proceeded to assist another child with toileting.

- The nappy changing mat in use was torn exposing internal foam which could not be effectively cleaned. The mat was not cleaned following a nappy change and had a build up of dirt and debris in the crevices.
 - The strap on the upstairs nappy changing table was heavily soiled and stained and required a deep clean.
 - A child's nappy was observed being changed in the dedicated sleep room after sleep. A nappy changing unit was in place in the sleep room situated beside an office cabinet. The soiled nappy was placed in a nappy bag on the floor of the sleep room after the change whilst the staff member was tending to another child.
8. Fridges used to store children's lunches in the Playschool room and the kitchen area were soiled with staining and food debris and residue and required a deep clean.
 9. The drawer in the kitchen used to store children's cutlery used to eat meals had a build-up of dirt and debris and required a deep clean.

Administration of Medication:

The practices surrounding the administration of medication and the medication records reviewed on the day of inspection were incomplete and posed a risk of harm or overdose to the children receiving the medication as follows:

10. There was no evidence that written consent had been obtained for the administration of prescribed medications to children in the service. During discussions with the inspectors, staff members stated that they complete the pre-consent section of the administration form, and that parents do not sign the records until the evening after the medication has been given.
11. Records of medication which had been administered did not contain evidence that a second staff member was present to verify the administration of the correct medication or that parents had been informed that medication had been administered to their child.

Safe Sleep:

12. Physical checks were not completed in timely manner on a child aged 13months who was sleeping in the designated sleep room on the morning on inspection which posed a risk of harm to the child as follows:
 - A child was placed to sleep at 9:48am on the morning of inspection. The child was not checked until 10:07 am and again at 10:23am. No sleep checks were completed or recorded during this time. A staff member was observed retrospectively completing a sleep check form at 10:24 am which

indicated the child had been checked every ten minutes since 9:48am. The child was not checked again until 10:39am.

Fire Safety:

13. The fire escape route from the first floor Toddler and Playschool rooms was partially blocked on the morning of inspection with boxes and toys which were at the top of the stairs on the evacuation route. This may impede the safe evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency. It is acknowledged that the registered provider cleared these items in the afternoon.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Updated Garda Vetting has been received for two staff members and applications have been submitted for the other two staff members. A form has been added to staff files and reminders set to ensure vetting documents do not expire.
2. A restrictor has been placed on the window. Window restrictors will be regularly checked by the registered provider.
3. The kettle socket has been moved to the other side of the kitchen and is no longer in reach of the children.
4. The connectors were removed from the Toddler room immediately. A risk assessment form has been introduced for the toys in all care rooms.
5. No corrective or preventive action submitted.

Infection Control:

6. Handwashing has been added to the team meeting agenda and all staff have been made aware of the protocols around handwashing. New handwashing signs have been added to each bathroom.
7. Handwashing was added to the team meeting agenda. Nappy changing procedure has been altered to include cleaning the changing mat. A new changing mat has been purchased. A new nappy bin is in place.
8. All fridges have been thoroughly cleaned, and cleaning schedules are now in place for all fridges to be cleaned weekly.
9. The kitchen drawers were thoroughly cleaned, and the cleaning of these drawers has been added to the service kitchen cleaning schedule.

Administration of Medication:

10. & 11.

No prescribed medication, with the exception of inhalers, will be administered in the service. Antifebrile medication will be administered with telephone consent with parents signing medication logbook on their arrival to collect their child. A medication administration book is in use to record administration which includes witness signatures. Antifebrile medication consent is on file for each child. Inhaler consent forms and asthma plans are available for each child where necessary and will be held on their file. Parents have been informed of the change in policy regarding prescribed medication, and antifebrile medication through a staff messaging group. Staff were informed at a staff meeting on the 8th of September.

Safe Sleep:

12. Sleep checks were discussed at the team meeting, and a new timer has been placed at the sleep room to ensure checks are completed every ten minutes.

Fire Safety:

13. These items were removed during the inspection. Items removed from care rooms will not be stored on evacuation routes. The fire drill form has been amended to include an assessment of the evacuation routes.

Supporting documentation submitted

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

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection of the service. 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.

Non-Compliance Information

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

There was no record available of any persons entering the service other than those specified above under (3)(a). The inspectors were not asked to sign in by the staff member present on arrival. During discussions with the inspectors staff members stated no such record is maintained in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A visitor's section has been added into our staff sign in sheets at the entrance. Staff have been made aware that all visitors must sign in.

Supporting documentation submitted

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

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. The actions outlined will be assessed on the next inspection of the service.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

There were no adults present in the service during the inspection with a first aid qualification until the registered provider arrived at 12:37am. An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider at the close of inspection.

The corrective and preventive actions submitted following the last inspection of the service on the 2nd May 2023 did not prevent the re-occurrence of the non-compliance. An immediate action notice was also issued to the registered provider on the last inspection of the service in relation to regulation 25(1).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All staff received paediatric first aid training on the 27th August. Two certified FAR trained staff members have been on site since the inspection. The provider has arranged that the remaining staff (5) will undertake the FAR first aid training and undergo the examination on 8th September.

Supporting documentation submitted

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

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. The actions submitted by the registered provider relating to Regulation 25(1) will be assessed on the next inspection of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service was adequately insured for the number of children registered to attend and the type of service provided.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

The minimum amount of clear floor space required for the number and age of the children attending the service was not available on the day of inspection as follows:

- From 9:30am to 9:45am twelve children were present in the dining room, two aged 1year, three aged 2years, six aged 3 to 5years, and a school aged child. At 9:46am one further child aged 3years and another school aged child arrived to the service requiring a minimum of 28.75 square metres where only 12.1sqm metres was available. The children were not eating in the dining area during this time.
- From 12:18pm to 12:59pm on the day of inspection, two aged 1year, three aged 2years, seven aged 3 to 5 years, and two school aged children were seated in the above dining area following dinner time.
- From 10:07 to 10:18am, one child aged 1year, three aged 2years, seven aged 3 to 5 years, and two school aged children were in the Playschool room engaged in activities requiring a minimum of 25.95 square metres where only 17.50 square metres was available.

Regulation 30 was found to be non-compliant on the previous inspections of the service on the 2nd May 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)

New protocols have put in place for children to spend minimal time in the kitchen. Going forward the child will be greeted in the morning time at the entrance door and escorted to the upstairs care rooms. Toddlers to the toddler room and ECCE/SAC to the playschool room. This is until the children are split up to go to playschool/Montessori or school. Children will spend less time in the kitchen at mealtimes. Children will only be seated as the meal is being served and removed in small groups as they finish their food, either to the garden or the appropriate upstairs care room.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. The actions outlined by the registered provider will be assessed on the next inspection of the service.