

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS183
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Name of Service:	Lily Pad Creche & Montessori
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Address of Service:	16 Main Street, Rathfarnham Village, Dublin 14
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Eircode:	D14 F5X8
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sharon Browne
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	01/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	56	PM	56
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Area 1 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Nelson and L.A. Webster
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).

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Description of service

Lily Pad Creche and Montessori is a full day care service located in Rathfarnham Village and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 76 children aged 0 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday. The service operates an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme sessional service from 9.00am to 12.00pm. The service is one of two services operated locally by the registered provider.

Lily Pad Creche and Montessori has a total of eight care rooms and operates from two adjacent two-storey converted residential dwellings each providing four care rooms.

Number 16 houses the Tadpole Room (12 to 18 months old), Froglet room (18 to 24 months old), Hoppers room (3 to 4 years old) and Leap Frog room (3 to 4 years old). Number 17 houses the Speckled Frogs Room (2 to 3 years old), Ribbit room (2 to 3 years old), Croakers room (2 to 4 years old) and Water Lily room (3 to 5 years old).

There are sanitary facilities located on each floor, and a cot room located to the rear of number 16. A fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 24 staff to work in the service who work directly with the children including the person in charge. The registered provider manages the oversight of the service. There were 21 staff present on the day of the inspection including the person in charge and 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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 21, 23 and 25

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment and Regulation 16(1) Record in relation to Preschool Service.

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, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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) The registered provider ensured that:

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.**
- (b) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.**
- (c) There was a clear outline of staff roles and responsibilities detailed in the staff job descriptions which were maintained in staff files.**

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(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined that 16 new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection and all 16 of these new staff members work directly with the children. In addition, a Garda vetting disclosure for 1 adult was requested for review.

The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) Twenty-one validated written references were available from recent past employers.
 - (b) Eleven validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 17 reviewed. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) International police vetting was available for the 16 adults that had lived outside of Ireland as adults for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (3) Documentary evidence available showed that all of the checks outlined in (2) had been carried out prior to any of the adults having contact with the children in the service.
- (4) Documentary evidence was available to show that the 16 staff who worked directly with children attending the service held a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent to a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

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Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs.
- There were 21 staff available to 56 children present on the morning and the afternoon of the inspection.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection. For example:
- Two relief staff and the person in charge were available to provide cover for breaks.
 - Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children in the rooms which was detailed daily in the attendance log.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

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

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

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) A record in writing was maintained for the following:

- (a) Details of the name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff were maintained within the staff files.
- (b) The service Tusla certificate detailed the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services. This was displayed in the hallway of the service.
- (c) The policy document outlined the adult: child ratios.
- (d) The policy document outlined the type of care or programme provided.
- (e) The policy document outlined the facilities available within the service.

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- (f) The policy document outlined the opening hours and fees of the service.
- (g) The registered provider maintained all the policies required in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) Attendance records detailing the daily arrival and departure of the children were maintained.
- (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.
- (j) Following a review of a sample of 20 records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for the administration of medication.
- (k) Following a review of a sample of 20 records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for accident and incidents.

(3) The records maintained for (1) were made available for review on inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service ensured there was adequate and suitable furniture and equipment available, for example:

- The furniture and equipment in the rooms were observed to be adequate for the number of children in the rooms, and it was appropriate for the age range and stage of development of the children attending.
- The furniture and equipment in the rooms were observed to be well maintained, durable and easy to clean.
- The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving, stored in clear plastic storage boxes leaving the equipment visible and accessible to the children.
- There was a variety of play materials and equipment available to the children according to their age and stage of development, which facilitated a range of play experiences including creative, imaginative and language play.
- The outdoor environment was well resourced and provided a seating area, climbing frames, slides and a range of ride on toys, footballs and rockers to promote physical and gross motor play suitable for the age range of the children who attended the service.
- The equipment in the outdoor area was observed to be well maintained.

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 main entrances to the service were secured on arrival, with entry managed and monitored by staff which restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- Stairways in the service were covered in non-slip surfaces, were well lit, and fitted with suitable handrails.
- All windows were suitably restricted, with blind cords secured out of reach of children.
- Hazardous equipment was observed to be stored out of reach of children.
- The kitchen and storage areas were observed to be inaccessible to children on the day of the inspection.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and single use hand towels were available at all wash hand basins used by the children and the staff members.
- Children were supported to handwash after outdoor play and before meals.
- Children's soothers were stored in individual labelled containers.
- Nappy changing practice was observed to be in line with appropriate infection control practice.
- Appropriate waste disposal units were in place throughout the premises.

Administration of Medication:

- Fever reducing medication was stored in date, clearly labelled and out of reach of children.
- The procedures for the administration of medication for children who required emergency medication were clearly documented and staff reported they were aware of these procedures.

Safe Sleep:

- All children under the age of two years old had access to a suitable cot.
- The temperature of the room while children were sleeping was maintained between 18 to 20°C.
- Staff were observed to complete physical checks on the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children every 10 minutes, and a log was maintained of these checks.

Fire Safety:

- Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in a prominent position throughout the premises.
- All children and staff were accurately recorded in the attendance logs.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The nappy changing unit which was fixed to the wall in the ground floor sanitary accommodation of number 16 was not suitable for the age range of the children who used it. The unit was recommended for the use of infants under the age of 12 months and the children who used the unit ranged in age from 11 months to over two years old. This posed a potential risk of becoming unsecured or unstable causing a risk of injury.
2. The soft close mechanism on the door to the Water Lily room was not operating correctly, causing it to slam closed. This posed a potential risk of injury to children. It is acknowledged that the registered provider submitted evidence the day after the inspection that this had been addressed.
3. Although it is acknowledged the service maintained a record of all accidents and incidents within the service; of the 20 records reviewed, seven did not record the date that the parents were informed of an incident. This posed a potential risk around the timely communication for the appropriate care of a child following an incident.

Infection Control:

4. Dirty bed linen was observed on a cot which was not changed prior to a child sleeping on it. This increased the potential risk of infection.

Safe Sleep:

5. An ill-fitting sheet was in use on a cot which a child was observed to sleep in. The sheet was too large for the cot and there was a potential risk the child could be tangled in the bedding.

Fire Safety:

6. The positioning of the cots in Lily Lodge cot room restricted access leading to one of the two emergency exits. This posed a potential risk for the safe evacuation in the case of an emergency. This was identified as a non-compliance on the last inspection in February 2025, and while it is acknowledged the cots were repositioned leaving a wider gap, the gap available still partially restricted access through the fire exit.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The changing unit was replaced with a unit suitable for the age range. The service report that a review process for all equipment has been implemented, and staff have been instructed to report any concerns regarding equipment suitability.

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2. The defective soft-close door mechanism in the Water Lily Room was repaired immediately following the inspection. The mechanism has been fully adjusted and tested to ensure the door now closes in a controlled and safe manner. The service report that a check is now included on a monthly safety check of all internal doors to confirm that soft-close mechanisms are functioning correctly.
3. The relevant files were updated and the service report that procedures have been strengthened to ensure full compliance with record-keeping requirements. Staff were informed to ensure that all accident and incident forms are fully completed. The service report that a monthly audit of records has been introduced by management to monitor compliance.

Infection Control:

4. The bed linen identified during the inspection was removed and replaced immediately to ensure the cot was clean and suitable for use. The service report that infection control procedures have been reinforced with all staff with a daily checklist introduced to confirm that all sleep areas meet hygiene standards. Regular spot checks will be carried out by management to ensure ongoing compliance.

Safe Sleep:

5. The ill-fitting sheet identified during the inspection was removed immediately and replaced with an appropriately sized, well-fitted sheet suitable for the cot. A clear protocol has been implemented requiring staff to check that all sheets are correctly fitted before each use which was added to the staff checklist.

Fire Safety:

6. The cots in the Lily Lodge cot room were repositioned immediately following the inspection to ensure a clear and unobstructed pathway to the emergency exit. The service report that daily visual checks are now carried out to confirm that evacuation routes are unobstructed. Regular fire safety checks and drills will also include verification of clear exit access.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic and documentary evidence.
2. Video and documentary evidence.
3. Documentary evidence.

Infection Control:

4. Photographic and documentary evidence.

Safe Sleep:

5. Photographic and documentary evidence.

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Fire Safety:

6. Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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

- (1) The service provided evidence that a person trained in First Aid Responder training was always available to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that:
 - (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in the care rooms.
 - (b) The first aid box was easily accessible and readily available.