

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY013
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Axis Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Main Street, Ballymun, Dublin 9
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D09 H588
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Charlene Campbell
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	19/11/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	30	PM	17
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8   D08 X01F
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Griffin
<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

Axis Centre is located on the ground floor of a resource centre in North Dublin. This childcare service is registered to provide full day and sessional care to a maximum of 44 children aged 0 - 6 years between the hours of 8.30am and 6.00pm from Monday to Friday. The service currently operates between 8.30am to 5.30pm from Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.

The service consists of four designated care rooms; to the front of the building there is the Baby room with an attached sleep room, the Toddler room and Pre-school room. There is a room in between the toddler and preschool room which is used for creative play during the morning and as a sleep room at midday. There is also an office, sensory room and a kitchen. To the rear of the building there is a portacabin; this room is called the Cabin ECCE room and can be accessed through the outdoor play area and operates between 9am to 12pm Monday to Friday school term only. There is sanitary accommodation for staff and children.

### Staffing

There are eleven adults employed to work in the service. This includes the registered provider who is also the person in charge, the deputy person in charge, eight childcare staff two of whom are employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM) and one auxiliary staff for cooking. On the morning of the inspection, the registered provider, deputy person in charge, eight childcare staff and the chef were present.

### 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Record of a Preschool Child Regulation 15, Regulation 16 Record in Relation to Pre-School Service (j) and (k), Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child (1) (a) and Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby Room and the Toddler Room.

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, deputy 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) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
  - (b) A review of the roster showed that there is a designated person in charge rostered to be on the premises during the service operational hours.
  - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.

- (2) It was confirmed by the registered provider that one new adult had been employed since the last inspection on the 20 June 2024. The staff file of the one new adult was reviewed alongside Garda Vetting disclosures for six adults whose files had been reviewed on the last inspection.
- (b) Two written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer in relation to the one new adult employed.
  - (c) A Garda Vetting disclosure had been obtained for the one new adult. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in relation to six adults whose files were reviewed on the last inspection.
  - (d) Police vetting was not required as the new adult had not lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out before employment of the new adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the one new adult who worked directly with the children held 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.

## 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 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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children throughout the inspection. During the morning there were nine adults caring for 30 children aged between 0 – 6 years and during the afternoon there were six adults caring for 17 children aged between 0 -6 years. In addition, the registered provider and the deputy person in charge were available to provide support where required.

(2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children.

### 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 sample of eleven children registration records were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured a record (1) (a), (b),(d),(e),(f), (g) (h) and (i) was maintained for each child. In addition, a space was available on the form to record the date the child ceased the service as required under (c).

(3)  
(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

### 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) The registered provider ensured the following information was maintained in relation to the service:

- (a) The name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff members was included in the parent handbook which was displayed on the parent notice board.
- (b) (c)(d)(e) The parent handbook contained the information required including details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services, details of the adult: child ratios in the service, the type of care or programme provided in the service and the facilities available.
- (f) The opening hours and fees were displayed on the parent’s noticeboard.

- (g) The service provided copies of all the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) Daily attendance records were kept in each care room in relation to every preschool child.
- (i) A staff roster was displayed on the parent notice board.
- (j) A record was maintained of administration of medication which occurred in the service. A sample of five records were reviewed. These records were completed in full and contained all the necessary
- (k) A sample of ten accident and incident records were reviewed as part of the inspection. All information was completed in full.

(3) All records and documentation requested by the inspector were available for review.

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

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

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

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

#### Compliance Information

##### (1)(a) Basic Needs:

- The service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals two of which were a hot meal for the children. All food was prepared in the kitchen of the service. Different dietary requirements were catered for if required and additional food was observed to be available, for example, at dinnertime the chef was observed to check with staff in each care room if children required additional food and if any child required an alternative dish. Water and milk were available in each care room for the children to drink.
- The presence of a visual daily routine on display provided the children with a sense of stability, security, and predictability. Staff were observed to give children verbal reminders in advance of moving from one activity to the next activity. In addition, staff were observed to use visual aids for example a sand timer was observed to be used to support children with turn taking.
- A sense of identity was promoted throughout the care rooms. For example, there were birthday wall displays and staff had developed bespoke 'Family Album Books' which contained photographs of the children's families. The children's artwork was displayed throughout the care rooms and children had their own personalised labelled coat hooks and storage space for personal items.

- There were cosy areas observed in each care room for the children to relax in as required. Each of these cosy areas had cushions and age-appropriate books for reading and relaxation. In the baby room there was a sensory corner with a soft mat and cushions. There was also one adult armchair which staff were observed to use to comfort and support children before sleep time.
- The children were observed to play outdoors during the inspection. This supported their social, cognitive, and gross and fine motor development. In addition, children were provided with suitable outdoor clothing to support a comfortable outdoor play experience.

### Supporting Relationships:

- Children were observed to have the freedom to move freely in their care room and independently choose their activities and play experiences including the option to go to the sensory room which was located nearby the preschool room.
- Staff were observed to interact continuously with the children. For example, snack time was observed to be a sociable event and staff chatted amicably with the children.
- Language used by staff was observed to be kind, considerate and supportive. For example, before outdoor play time staff were observed to be patient while gently encouraging the children to put on their own outdoor gear and offered support when required. This promoted independence.
- Staff discussed how they support children to transition from home by offering a settling-in period. Parents were also asked to complete in advance an 'All About Me' form providing essential details about their child.
- There was evidence to show that the service supported children to transition to school. For example, staff discussed how they made bespoke transition books with real photographs of local uniforms, local schools and what is inside the classrooms. Staff spoke about the benefits of using this visual aid as a tool to help children to become familiar with their new school environment.
- The service used an electronic application to communicate with parents daily and update them on their child's food, sleep, toileting and fun activities. In addition, staff discussed how parents are welcome into the service and the inspector observed staff greeting parents at collection time and updating parents verbally on their child's day in the service.
- There was evidence to show the service promoted links to nature. Staff discussed how the preschool children had recently been learning about worms. Staff showed the inspector the newly acquired materials to build a wormery. Staff discussed how the children will be involved in developing their own wormery and will see first-hand how worms help create compost from plant waste.

### Equipment and Materials:

- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children, providing a comfortable area to eat snacks and take part in tabletop activities.
- The care rooms had defined areas of interest with supporting equipment. For example, the toddler room had a home area, a costume dress up area, a library area, a building block area, a fine motor skills area, a nature table and a sensory area which included sand, water and mold making materials. This variety of materials and equipment facilitated a range of play experiences including creative, imaginative and language play and promoted exploration and curiosity. In addition, toys and materials were stored on low and accessible shelves and were themed and labelled which promoted spontaneous play opportunities.
- In the baby room there was adequate space for the babies and toddlers to explore their environment. Materials and equipment included climbing equipment, sensory materials such water and sand, push and pull along toys and cause and effect toys, for example, musical battery-operated toys. Cause and effect toys help promote joint attention, play skills and exploration.
- There was a sensory room with a ball pit, a sensory fish tank and specialised sensory toys. This room had low lighting and soft music. Staff spoke about how the children like to go there when they are feeling overwhelmed or when they just wanted some quiet time.
- The outdoor play area of the service was designed with the age and stage of development having been taken into consideration. For example, the large soft surfaced area was divided into two sections, one section for the babies and one section for the older children. Both sections had age and stage appropriate equipment. For example, the sectioned off area for the older children included three slides, a tunnel, pull along and ride on transport toys which promoted gross motor movement. There were also materials for exploring and creative play such as plastic building blocks, an outdoor kitchen with props, sand tray with supporting equipment and boxes with extra toys for play. The section for the younger children had an age and stage appropriate slide, a water station, a rocking toy and pull along and ride on transport toys.

### 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 entrance door which leads into the centre and the service is appropriately secured with a swipe/keypad system to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the service.
- The inspector was asked to sign in the visitor book and show identification on entry.
- The external outdoor play areas were securely gated reducing the risk of unauthorised access. Children who were brought out to the outdoor areas from indoors were observed to be supervised.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Blind cords were secured safely out of reach of the children.
- Cleaning agents were observed to be stored safely out of the reach to the children.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.

##### Infection Control:

- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, and hand drying facilities. Children were observed to wash their hands throughout the inspection, including before snack time, after outdoor play and after toileting.
- Foot operated pedal bins were observed to be used by children and staff for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- Children had individually labelled cups and bottles for drinking water and milk.
- Soothers were stored safely, and staff were knowledgeable on how to wash and sterilise soothers between use.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained throughout the care rooms.

- Windows were open in the care rooms and sanitary accommodations to allow fresh circulation of air.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic.
- Individual bed line was used for sleeping children.
- Cot mattresses were waterproof and in good condition.

### Administration of Medication:

- There were individual medical care plans in place for four children with a diagnosed medical condition. The medical care plans outlined information about the medical condition and the procedures to follow in the event of a medical emergency.
- The staff were knowledgeable regarding the needs of children in their care and were aware of allergies.
- Children who required medication had consent available and there was a written procedure in place for administration of medication.
- Medication was clearly labelled and was stored safely in its original box in a place that was inaccessible to the children.

### Safe Sleep:

- Outer clothing was removed from the children before sleep time.
- Children under two years of age were provided with a cot for sleeping.
- Children over two years of age were provided with low mats for sleeping.
- An ambient temperature of 16-20°C was maintained for sleeping children under one years of age.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained for sleeping children over two years of age.
- Children were monitored while sleeping at intervals of ten minutes or less. Staff recorded the breathing, position, and colour of each child at each check.

### Fire Safety:

- The emergency evacuation exits were observed to be unobstructed throughout the inspection. The children's attendance book was monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present. This ensured a safe evacuation of the children and staff in the event of an emergency

### 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) There was evidence to show that eleven adults hold certification in First Aid Response training. These adults were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service and were available during the duration of the inspection.
- (2)
- (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on a shelf in the care room.
  - (b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
  - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The registered provider ensured that a record of fire drills which were evidenced to occur monthly in the service was maintained. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on the 5 November 2025.
  - (b) The registered provider-maintained records relating to the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting was last serviced on 13 October 2025. The smoke alarms were last serviced on 25 April 2025.
- (2)
- (c) Records were open to inspection by an unauthorised person. All fire safety records requested by the inspection team were available for review.
- (4) Notices detailing the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency were displayed on the wall in the care rooms and on the wall of the corridors outside the care rooms. The fire assembly point was displayed to the front of the building.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance for a maximum of 50 children attending the service on a full day care basis with an expiry date of 27 March 2026.