

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY328
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Name of Service:	Leeson Park Creche & Montessori
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Address of Service:	39 Leeson Park, Ranelagh, Ranelagh, Dublin 6, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D06 CX63
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mícheál O'Ceallaigh
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	19/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	16
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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 & Emer Mulhern
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

Leeson Park Creche and Montessori is a private childcare service which was first established in 2006. Full day care is provided to children aged one to five years of age. The hours of operation are between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. The service operates from the lower ground floor of a period style domestic dwelling which is the registered provider's own home. The area has been purposely adapted to accommodate the early years' service. Care and education are delivered across three rooms; there is no dedicated sleep room. Children have access to an enclosed garden to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs seven staff members including a designated person in charge and an adult who works in an administrative role. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. On the day of inspection six adults were present and working directly with the children in the service. A seventh staff member who works in an administrative role was rostered off but arrived subsequent to the inspectors arrival and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

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

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 19th March 2025 during the inspection in respect of Regulation 23, general safety and first aid. A response was received from the service on the 20th March 2025 which sufficiently mitigated the risk identified.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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

(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 four adults who had commenced working in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on the 23rd April 2024. Regulation 9 (2)(c) was assessed for each of the seven adults working 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 2 sources for four of the adults

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the seven adults employed. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for one of the four adults who required it.

(4) There was evidence that three of the 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

- (2)
- (d) International police vetting was not available for three adults working in the service who had lived outside the state for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (3) A review of documentation evidenced the registered provider had not taken the required steps as outlined in Regulation 9(2)(d) to ensure that new recruits were suitable and competent before allowing them access to children, as detailed above.
- (4) There was no evidence available to show that one of the adults employed to work directly with the children 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.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

2(a)

Vetting from foreign police authorities has been obtained regarding criminal offences. All staff have their Irish and foreign vetting checked, their references checked, their education records checked, and all other requirements met. The specific general criminal offences clearance has been added to the recruitment checklist

(4)

Qualifications of one staff member of at least level 5 was not available but awaited. Evidence of the relevant qualification level 8 is attached. Staff will not be permitted to start until the evidence of at least level 5 qualification has been received. The specific general criminal offences clearance has been added to the recruitment checklist. (3) as above.

Supporting documentation submitted

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

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

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

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

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the 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 sixteen children present in the service being supervised by six adults during the inspection.

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

(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

The inspectors observed some appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

Older children were observed using the toilet independently, and staff promptly changed children's nappies when required. Staff engaged warmly with the children when providing personal care and availed of opportunities for one-on-one conversations with the children. The routine and play experiences in the service were child-led and children were observed to be content in their play-based activities throughout the inspection. Staff encouraged children to be independent in the classroom and assist with activities such as cleaning up following play and

preparing for mealtimes. The children all accessed the outdoor play area during the inspection and were dressed appropriate to the weather.

Staff provided comfort to children where required when going to sleep, offering reassurance sitting beside them and speaking softly. Rest areas were available in each of the care rooms for children to take time away from the group if desired. The care rooms and outdoor play area were adequately resourced and play material were made accessible to the children on low level shelving. Children who required sleep were given the opportunity to do so at a designated sleep time after lunch.

Non-Compliance Information

Some practices were observed which did not promote the positive health and wellbeing of the children in attendance as follows;

1. Children's noses were not cleaned in a timely manner in the Toddler room during the inspection. Some children were observed for prolonged periods of time with nasal discharges on their faces. One of these children did not have their face cleaned after dinner time and was placed to sleep with nasal discharges and food residue on their face.
2. Bibs were not worn in the Toddler room to protect children's clothing during dinner time resulting in some children's clothing becoming heavily soiled with food residue and wet from their drinks. A staff member was observed trying to remove food residue with a wet wipe from one child's top. The children's clothing was not changed, and they were subsequently placed to sleep in the soiled, wet clothing.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Staff reminded to keep regular check on runny noses and faces cleaned.
2. Bibs were available but not used by the staff. Twelve additional bibs purchased, and staff reminded to use same per meeting minutes attached. Regular checks completed and staff reminded including at staff meetings

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the 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 staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken 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. The entrances into the service were appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised access or a child exiting the service unsupervised.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy. Pedal operated bins were in place throughout the service for the disposal of waste.

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 adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance. Sleep logs were maintained in younger care rooms, and individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position every ten minutes. 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 maintained at the required temperature ranges.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Two portable heaters which were taken into the Toddler and the Wobbler room to heat the care rooms on the day of inspection were placed at a height which was in reach of the children. The surface temperature of the heaters were recorded to be 90°celsius and 93°celsius respectively, posing a risk of a burn injury to a child. It is acknowledged the heaters were removed once the risk was highlighted to the person in charge.

An immediate action notice was issued to the service on the day of inspection.

- A large electrical wire which ran along the surface of the outdoor play area at the base of the perimeter wall was in reach of the children during the inspection. The protective rubber coating had come away from the cable at the base exposing the metal wires inside posing a risk of injury to a child.

Infection Control:

- Some of the nappy changing practices observed were inconsistent and at variance with the policy in place posing a risk of cross contamination as follows;
 - Some staff members and children did not handwash following nappy changing.
 - Children were re-dressed by staff members using the soiled gloves which were worn during the nappy change.
 - Staff members did not routinely clean the nappy changing mat between uses.
- There was no system in place to manage mouthed toys in the Toddler room to mitigate the risk of cross contamination. Children were observed repeatedly mouthing toys and other children's soothers in view of staff members who made no attempt to clean them. One staff member was observed taking soothers from a child who had mouthed them and giving them back to the children they belonged to without cleaning.
- A child who arrived at the service at 9:00am had a bottle of milk in their bag which remained at room temperature until 12:16pm when it was given to them to drink, posing a risk of gastrointestinal illness.
- The three mattresses in use in the cots where children slept did not have a waterproof covering. One mattress was heavily stained and soiled, and the internal foam was exposed where the covering in place had worn away on one mattress.
- Children's hands were not washed after outdoor play posing a risk of cross contamination.
- The padded mats in use in the children's rest areas of the Toddler and Montessori rooms were torn in parts with internal padding exposed which could not be effectively cleaned.

Fire Safety:

9. Fires drills were not practiced on a monthly basis in the service as required. Records reviewed evidence that drills were taking place every two to three months. Not practicing regular fire drills may hinder the safe and timely evacuation of children and staff in the event of a fire.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The exceptional circumstances outlined in our communication to Tusla on 20/03/2025 refers. Heaters provided on the day are not used in the facility but were obtained elsewhere in response to Tusla request for additional heat. The heaters were immediately removed as per Tusla inspector instructions on the day.
2. This is dead source electricity. Electrical tape placed around the box which is pinned to the wall.

Infection Control:

3. Nappy changing: staff are constantly reminded about nappy changing procedures and have been reminded again per staff meeting minutes. The service has had Spanish speaking staff undertake an external language course on requirements.
 4. Mouthed toys and soothers: training provided, and Staff reminded again at staff meeting per minutes attached. New boxes provided for mouthed toys and steriliser container for soothers now provided in toddler and wobbler rooms as per photographic evidence attached.
 5. Bottle in child's bag – regular checks conducted and reminder to all staff per staff meeting minutes attached.
 6. Mattresses: new mattresses and protectors purchased per attached evidence. See staff meeting minutes attached reminding all staff to report all broken or soiled toys and equipment to the Manager so that these items can be repaired or replaced in a timely manner.
 7. Handwashing: regular reminding and training.
 8. Padded mats replaced per attached photographs.
- Point 3 to 8 have been and will continue to be addressed by training and reminders at staff meetings. In addition, the Manager will continue to supervise and oversee compliance.

Fire Safety:

9. Fire drills: the inspectors will recall that on the day of inspection the Manager and Administrator were adamant that monthly fire drills are undertaken, and paperwork completed. Attached are the relevant reports which were mixed in non-date order amongst the paperwork supplied to the inspectors on the

day of inspection. Reports attached. Fire drills were carried out and monthly fire drills as required by regulation will continue to be carried out.

Supporting documentation submitted

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

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. The actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance.

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

(2)
(a)(b)
A suitably equipped first aid box was observed to be immediately accessible to the children within the service and was stored in a conspicuous location on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
An adult trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) training was not available in the service as no staff member employed held the required qualification. An immediate action notice was issued to the service on the day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

New Manager has completed the FAR course (receipt attached). Copy of certificate will be submitted as soon as it is received. A further FAR course will be undertaken by another staff member shortly with evidence to follow. The Manager also has a Certificate in Management of Anaphylaxis and a Certificate in Paediatric/Basic First Aid/CFR

Course as per attached evidence. Reminder notices have been put in place to give adequate advance reminder that courses need to be undertaken or refreshed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the provider will address the non-compliance.

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.
- (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) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place on the 31st January 2025.
 - (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced in October 2024 and the smoke alarm system had also been serviced in October 2024.
- (4)
- The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

Non-Compliance Information

(c) Throughout the inspection, the children's care rooms and bathroom/nappy room were not adequately heated. The person in charge stated they were unable to operate the underfloor heating system, it was not accessible from the service and was located in the provider's own home who was not available. An adult arrived at the service who was rostered off with keys to access the heating system following a request by the inspectors. The adult stated they had turned it on, however the temperature of the service still did not meet the required range of 18 - 22°celsius as follows:

- At 12:35pm the Wobbler room was recorded to be 13.6°celsius. The inspectors requested that staff turned on the heating. The temperature was recorded to still be below the required temperature range at 14:33pm at 16.5°celsius.
- The nappy changing room was recorded to be 15.2°celsius at 11.51 am and 13.6°celsius at 12:35pm. The inspectors requested that staff turned on the heating. The temperature was recorded to still be below the required temperature range at 14:33pm at 15.2°celsius.
- At 11:51am the Toddler room was recorded to be 15.1°celsius. The inspectors requested that staff turned on the heating. The temperature was recorded to still be below the required temperature range at 14:44pm at 16°celsius.
- The floor temperature of the Toddler room was recorded to be 15.7°celsius at 14:40pm. The staff member who arrived to access the heating system stated they had turned the underfloor heating on at 13:06pm.

Children were observed during these times being undressed to use the toilet and have their nappies changed. Some children in the Toddler room were stripped to sleeveless vests and bare feet in preparation for sleep time to eat their dinner.

(d) Some areas of the service were found not to be cleaned, maintained and repaired as required as follows:

- The paint in the hallway outside the Wobbler room where children's bags and bedding was stored was bubbling and lifting off the wall in parts indicative of damp.
- The rest area in the Toddler room required a deep clean. Areas of the matting and the flooring had heavy accumulations of dirt, dust, and debris present indicating the area had not been effectively cleaned.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c)

The service permanently removed the owners plug-in fan heaters. The staff have put reminders in personal phones and owners phones to turn back on the heating timer when it has been switched off. In addition, staff have ensured that a key is available to open the fireproof door (to the owners private residence) to access the controls panel to turn on heating as required. The staff have been shown how to turn on the heating system.

(d)

All children's belongings and bedding have been removed from the relevant area and bedding stored in boxes as per photographic evidence attached. Relevant area in toddler room has been deep cleaned and new pink mat purchased as per attached photographic evidence. Cleaning is and continues to be on the staff meeting agenda. In addition, the Manager supervises and inspects cleaning correcting staff on cleaning regimes as required

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.