

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY370
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Name of Service:	Chestnut Daycare Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Unit 2 Oblates View, Tyrconnell Road, Inchicore, Dublin 8, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D08 EFY9
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Name of Registered Provider:	Laura Higgins
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	28/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	No.	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
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Inspection undertaken by:	Sarah Quigley & Mary Redmond
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Title:	Early Years Inspectors
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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

Chestnut Daycare is a privately owned service which offers care and education on a full day, part time, and sessional basis to children aged 0 to 6 years. The programme of care is facilitated through a blend of a play-based and Montessori curriculum and an Early Childhood Care and Education scheme is offered. The service comprises of 6 care rooms, 5 of which were in operation on the day of inspection. The service operates from 7:30 to 18:00 each weekday. Chestnut Daycare is located in an urban area in Inchicore, South County Dublin, and is one of 6 early years services operated by the registered provider. The premises consists of 3 adjoining commercial units which have been purposely adapted for use.

Staffing

The service currently employs 17 staff members, including a cook and three persons in charge who provide relief cover to the care rooms where required. On the day of inspection all 17 staff members 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/ information and records/ 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the persons 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)
Following a discussion with the manager it was confirmed that 5 adults commenced working in the service since regulation 9 was last inspected on the 2nd August 2023. Documentation required under regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of these 5 adults as detailed below. The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) were assessed for all adults employed to work in the service.

- (a) (b) There were 2 references each available for the 5 adults which had been appropriately verified.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all 17 adults employed to work in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for the 17 adults.
- (d) International Police vetting was available for each of the 5 adults who had lived outside the state for a period of 6 months.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were completed prior to the 5 staff members commencing in the service.

(4) Each of the 5 staff members held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 37 children present in the service being supervised by 13 adults during the inspection. The 3 persons in charge provided relief cover throughout the inspection where required.

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:

- (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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A record was available in each care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
 - (i) An accurate staffing roster was available in the service detailing hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection.
 - (j) Written records of medication which was administered in the service were available on the day of inspection.
 - (k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of 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 service had a weekly meal plan which detailed a range of nutritious meals and snacks served to children at regular intervals throughout the day. These were prepared on site and provided by the service. On the day of inspection drinking water was always available to the children in all care rooms. Staff sat with children during mealtimes and supported self-feeding, assisting younger children where required. Older children were encouraged to use the toilet independently, look after their own belongings and make their own choices during play and activities. Staff changed younger children's nappies at regular intervals and as required in between set times. Bibs were provided to protect younger children's clothing during mealtimes. Staff encouraged children to clean their noses, faces, and hands throughout the day.

Children's rest areas were available in each care room. Adult initiated and child led activities were observed in each care room throughout the day of inspection. Children moved freely in their environments, engaging in play and Montessori based activities of their choosing. Materials were made accessible to the children at all times on low level open shelving units. The children were all provided with the opportunity to play outdoors and were dressed appropriately to the weather.

Adults were observed to demonstrate kindness and warmth during interactions observed by the inspectors.

Minor disagreements between peers were managed in a positive manner.

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 entrance door into service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Cleaning products were stored out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after play, after toileting and nappy changing, and before meals. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff were observed to carry out consistent hand washing as appropriate. 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. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors.

Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance and placed babies on their backs to sleep. Sleep logs were maintained in the dedicated sleep rooms, and individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position at regular intervals. 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. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A trailing cable was in reach of the children in the Montessori 2 room which posed a risk of injury to a child.

Administration of Medication:

2. Although staff were aware of the procedures for medication administration in the service, there was no evidence available to show that parents had been informed that medication had been administered to their child. Records of administration available in the service did not contain a parental signature. This may pose a risk of overdose and continuity of care to a child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was submitted by the service to address the non-compliances identified:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Cable has been removed. The service will ensure all rooms are conducting risk assessment of each room each morning.

Administration of Medication:

1. Management reminded all staff of importance of documenting medication on the little vista tablet. All staff signed off on medication policy. Management will check little vista app every Friday to ensure all signatures are completed for relevant areas.

Supporting documentation submitted

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

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.