

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY370
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Chestnut Daycare Ltd.
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Unit 2 Oblates View, Tyrconnell Road, Inchicore , Dublin 8, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D08 EFY9
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Laura Higgins
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	02/09/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	41	PM	39
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Sarah Quigley and Olivia Quill
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Chestnut Daycare Ltd is a privately owned service which was established in 2011. The service provides full day care to preschool children aged 6 months to 6 years and also provides a facility for school aged care. The programme of care is facilitated through a blend of a play-based and a Montessori curriculum and the service is registered to operate from 08:00 to 18:00 each weekday.

Chestnut Daycare Ltd is located in an urban area of Inchicore in Dublin 8. The service operates from three adjoining commercial units which have been purposely adapted for use as an early years facility. Care and education are provided across six care rooms, and a dedicated sleep room is available to the children. The service has a fully enclosed outdoor play area located in an internal courtyard between two of the buildings.

### Staffing

The service currently employs 17 staff members including a cook and three centre managers. On the day of inspection each of the 17 staff members were present, 13 of whom were working directly with the children. The centre managers provided support to the care rooms and provided relief cover where necessary.

### 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. The following regulations were assessed during the inspection;

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 - First aid

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobble One Room, the Wobbler Two Room, the Toddler One Room, the Toddler Two Room, and the Montessori One 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 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)  
Following a discussion with the appointed person in charge it was confirmed that 8 adults had commenced working in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Documentation required under regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of these seven adults as detailed below.

(2)

- (a) (b) There were two references each available for 7 of the 8 adults which had been appropriately verified.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults working 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 three adults.
- (d) 5 adults required international police vetting, the required documentation was available for 3 of the adults.

(4) Each of the 8 adults held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

## Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) (b) There were no written references available for one of the adults.
  - (d) International police vetting was not available for one adult who required it. Documentation available for one other adult was not translated to the English language and therefore could not be assessed.
- (3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had not all been carried out prior to 3 adults commencing employment in the service, as detailed above under 9(2)(a)(b)(d).

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

### Corrective and Preventive Action

9(2)(a)(b)(d)

The service have obtained the relevant documents for the three staff members. The service have updated their filing system ensuring all staff documents are received before their start date.

### 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 41 children present in the service being supervised by 13 adults during the inspection. The persons in charge provided relief cover to the care rooms when required.

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

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

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

*(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

#### Compliance Information

Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed to be in place during the inspection. Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the day and were prepared on site by a cook. Drinks of water were available within the rooms and were observed to be offered regularly, including when children were eating. Self-feeding was promoted in younger care rooms and staff provided assistance to the children where required. Mealtimes were observed to be calm and relaxed and staff sat with children chatting to them while they ate. The staff supported the children in managing their personal care. Younger children were provided with bibs to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating. Younger children's hands and faces were cleaned after meals and older children were supported in cleaning their own. Children's nappies were changed routinely and as needed, with staff using these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions. Older children were encouraged to

use the toilet independently with staff providing support where required. Staff addressed children by name and spoke to them in positive, respectful tones. Children were observed to be comforted promptly if they became upset.

An area with matting and soft furnishings was provided within each of the care rooms where the children could rest or take a break from activities. Younger children were placed to sleep in line with individual care needs and older children were given the opportunity to sleep after lunch. The children were made comfortable for sleep, with staff removing their shoes and outer clothing and providing soothers and comforters to those who used them. The environments were calm and conducive to sleep, staff sat with the children, speaking quietly and soothing them as needed. Staff reported that a record was kept on an online application for staff to communicate with parents/guardians regarding individual children's care, including information about diet, sleep, and send photographs of children throughout the day. The children were all provided with the opportunity for outdoor play

### 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. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children. 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. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service and care rooms were regularly cleaned. Staff and children 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, 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 and detailed the safe sleep procedures in place in the service during discussions with the inspectors. Sleep logs were maintained in the rooms where children slept, 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. 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. In the Toddler 1 room, a trailing electrical cable was hanging from a shelf to a low level socket in reach of the children, posing a risk of harm.

### Infection Control:

2. The nappy changing practices observed were inconsistent and at variance with the policy and associated procedure in place, posing a risk of cross contamination as follows;
  - A staff member did not remove the soiled gloves worn during a nappy change prior to re-dressing a child.
  - A child being changed who had a wet nappy was not cleaned prior to a new nappy being applied.

3. There was no system in place in the Wobbler 1 room for managing mouthed toys. Babies were observed to repeatedly mouth toys in view of staff members which were not cleaned after use. Staff members reported during discussions with the inspector that these toys are washed at the end of each week.
4. The vinyl covering of a padded cushion in the Wobbler 2 room was torn and internal foam was exposed which could not be effectively cleaned for infection control purposes.

### Administration of Medication:

5. A sample of 14 medication administration records were reviewed by the inspector. There was no evidence to show that children's parents/guardians had been informed that medication had been administered to their child on 5 of these records.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. A shelf has been added to the Toddler 1 room. Rooms have been fitted with a shelf near the high plug sockets to ensure no trailing wires and this will be checked regularly by management.

##### Infection Control:

2. During a staff meeting the service re-visited the nappy changing policy and over the past month staff have demonstrated nappy changing and signed off on the policy. Nappy checks will take place weekly on a random basis to ensure nappy policy is being followed.
3. A box for mouthed toys is now in use in Wobbler 1. This has been Added weekly check on to management weekly check list.
4. The cushion has been removed and discarded. Staff reminded as stated on the indoor assessment to remove items that are broken or unsafe. This has been also added to the managers checklist.

### Administration of Medication:

5. The medication policy was discussed during the staff meeting and the service have decided to revert back to using paper forms to record the administration of medication as parents were unable to sign to the online application which was in use. The paper forms are now kept in the office to ensure they are signed by a parent and will be checked weekly by management to ensure all parents have signed.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

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

#### Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

### 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)  
An adult trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) training was available to the children on the day of inspection.
- (2)  
  - (a) The first aid box was stored in a conspicuous location within the service.
  - (b) A first aid box was available in the service at all times on the day of inspection.

### 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 28<sup>th</sup> August 2025.
  - (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system had been serviced within the required timeframe.
- (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.