

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL065
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Name of Service:	Chrysalis Montessori & Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Beechpark Lawn, CastleKnock, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D15 RH97
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Name of Registered Provider:	Teresa Horan
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	09/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	54	PM	33
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	E Hosford and Á Dunne
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable.
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Description of service

Chrysalis Montessori and Afterschool is an established childcare facility in Castleknock, Dublin 15. This service provides full day care, part time and sessional (for 38 weeks of the year) to preschool children from 2 to 6 years and also offers a school age service. The service operates from 8.00 to 6.25pm, Monday to Friday.

There are five rooms in the service as follows:

Room 1 cared for children aged between 3 years to 4 years,

Room 2 cared for children aged between 3 years to 4 years,

Room 3 cared for children aged between 2 years to 3 years,

Room 4 cared for children aged between 4 years to 5 years,

Room 5 cared for children aged between 4 years to 5 years,

with sanitary facilities, a kitchen and an office with an outdoor play area accessible from all five care rooms.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 12 staff in the service to include the designated person in charge, an administrative assistant, a cook and 9 staff who work directly with the children. The registered provider was not in the service on the day of inspection but is usually available in a supernumerary capacity.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,23,25 and 26.

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 designated person in charge, administrative assistant, 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.

(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) The files of 13 staff employed in the service were reviewed.

(a) Twenty validated written references were available from a past employer.

(b) Six validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 13 staff members employed in the service. 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 for all staff employed.

(d) International police vetting was available from 11 countries in respect of 11 staff members who had lived outside of the state for six months or more as an adult.

(4) On review of documentation available 11 employees employed in the service and working directly with the children had evidence to demonstrate that they held 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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) There were 7 adults working with 54 children in the morning and 5 adults working with 33 children in the afternoon.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection as follows:

Room 1: One adult caring for 11 children in the morning and 8 children in the afternoon.

Room 2: One adult caring for 11 children in the morning and 8 in the afternoon.

Room 3: Two adults caring for 11 children in the morning and 10 in the afternoon.

Room 4: One adult caring for 11 children in the morning and 7 in the afternoon.

Room 5: Two adults caring for 10 children in the morning.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that two adults were present on the premises at all times

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:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service with children enjoying a morning snack from home which consisted of fruit, yogurts, cheese and sandwiches and was eaten from 10.30 to 11.00am. At 1.00pm a hot meal of beef curry, rice, side salad and sliced pears was served to the children attending on a full and part time basis. Additional food was available to the children and water was served with each snack and meal.
- The staff members sat with the children at mealtimes encouraging conversations and extending interactions to create a relaxed and sociable environment.
- Staff members were observed to be kind and attentive in their interactions with the children and the atmosphere in the service was warm and child centred.
- The children were observed using the toilet under supervision, with assistance provided by a staff member when necessary.
- Children were observed moving freely within the care room and outdoor area and taking a break from activities and relaxing in a rest area when required.

Physical and Material Environment

- The care rooms were bright and promoted independent access to activities, equipment and materials, which were displayed on low shelving and accessible for children to choose their own work.
- Age-appropriate materials of the Montessori learning approach were available in the care rooms laid out in a variety of designated interest areas:
 - Practical Life (trays with jugs, bowls, spooning, threading, tongs and pegs with peg boards),
 - Sensorial (pink tower, brown stairs, long rods and knobbed cylinders),
 - Language (pencils, paper, insets for design, sandpaper letters, wooden letter puzzles books),

- Mathematics (number rods, sandpaper numbers, spindle box, cards and counters wooden number puzzles),
- Culture (maps of Ireland, Europe and of Continents, sandpaper and colour globes, land and water forms, plant and animal wooden puzzles),
- Arts and craft materials were present in each care room (paper, crayons, pencils, stencils),
- Rest areas were available in the care rooms to enable children to rest and take a break from activities, they consisted of soft mats with soft cushions and books.
- All materials and equipment in the care rooms were appropriate to the age and development of the child.
- The outdoor area consisted of a soft artificially poured surface with equipment available to include large wooden buildings, bricks, hula hoops, balls, a large climbing frame with slide and wooden bridge, a playhouse and bench seating.

Supporting Relationships

- Staff members were observed demonstrating sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's individual needs, likes and preferences, and frequently initiated conversations with the children, responded meaningfully to their verbal and non-verbal cues and provided regular praise and encouragement using a gentle tone of voice.
- The children were encouraged by the adults to take turns with their friends and share equipment and toys. Children were observed eagerly participating in the preparation for circle time following their morning snack.
- Staff members were familiar with the children's parents who could speak with staff at drop off and collection. The service engaged with parents via text message and an electronic application which updated them on planned activities, pictures of the children throughout the day and information regarding the service and upcoming events.
- Staff worked well together in supporting the children and were aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding maintaining flexibility with the daily routine to ensure the care was child led

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 premises and outdoor play area were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised people from gaining access to the service.
- The care rooms were observed to be suitable and safe with all cleaning agents, sharp implements, and flexes out of reach.
- The water temperature in the sanitary accommodation in the service did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children in attendance.
- Staff maintained a daily record of each child's arrival and departure to the service

Infection Control:

- Adequate hand washing facilities were available in the sanitary facilities used by the children, these included thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, paper towels and bins.
Children were supported to wash their hands before snack and after using the toilet.
- A refrigerator was available in the service to refrigerate perishable food items from home.
- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition throughout, with the premises and equipment observed to be visually clean.

Fire Safety:

- Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were completed in the service and all fire equipment to include fire extinguishers and smoke detectors were serviced yearly. The designated fire exits were illuminated and clear of any obstructions throughout the inspection.

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 two adults were trained in First Aid Response was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.

(2)(a) and (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in each classroom.

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 of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 15 September 2025.

(b) A record was available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment demonstrating they were last serviced 28 January 2025, and a record was available for the number, type and maintenance of the smoke alarms in the premises demonstrating they were last serviced 19 September 2025.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed on the premises