

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL079		
Name of Service:	The Crescent Academy		
Address of Service:	Millview House, Whitestown Road, Rush, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	K56 DH76		
Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Carrick		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	14/07/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM 12
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Nexus Building Block, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15		
Inspection undertaken by:	E Hosford		
Title:	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).			
Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable.		

Description of service

The Crescent Academy is a privately-owned service which provides sessional, part-time and full day care for children aged from 0-6 years of age. A school age service is also provided on the premises for children attending primary school. The service currently operates from 7.30am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday and operates from a 2-storey converted residential dwelling in Rush village, North County Dublin. There are five care rooms provided on the premises, namely the Montessori room, the Playschool room and the Full Day Care room which are located on the ground floor and the Wobbler room and the Toddler room which are located on the first floor. A separate sleep room containing 5 standard cots is located on the first floor in the service.

An enclosed play area is located to the front and side of the premises.

Staffing

The service employs a total of 11 staff members including the registered provider who engages in administrative duties off-site and does not work directly with the children in the service, a designated person in charge, a deputy person in charge and 8 childcare staff. The designated person in charge is not assigned to a specific care room but assists across the care rooms as required.

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 unannounced inspection focused on an examination of compliance under The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25 and 26. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations 19 and 23 as the inspector spent time in the Full day Care room and the Wobbler room as the other three care rooms were closed during the inspection. Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment and Regulation 11 Staffing levels were assessed in all care rooms.

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 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.

(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 11 staff employed in the service were reviewed.

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

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

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and 10 staff employed in the service. The service demonstrated adherence 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 one country for a staff member who had lived outside of the state for six months or more as an adult.

(4) On review of documentation available 10 employees employed in the service and who work 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 an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there were 6 staff working directly with 16 children aged between 1-6 years in the morning and 4 staff working with 12 children in the afternoon.

(2) The correct adult/child ratios were maintained in the service throughout the inspection at all times.

Wobbler Room: 3 adults caring for 4 children aged between 1-2 years in the morning and 2 adults caring for 4 children in the afternoon.

Full Day Care Room: 3 adults caring for 12 children aged between 3-5 years in the morning and 2 adults caring for 8 children in the afternoon.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times, verified by staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained at the service

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:

- Mealtimes and snacks were a sociable and relaxed occasion with staff sitting with the children and engaging in conversation. The children had breakfast of cereal and toast in the morning, a snack of fruit at 10am and a lunch of turkey sandwiches and yogurt at 11.30am. Children in the Full Day Care room had a snack from home at 12.30pm which consisted of sandwiches, yogurts, cheese and fruits. A hot meal of pasta carbonara was served at 3pm and a light snack of crackers and breadsticks was available at 2pm. Water was available in the care rooms and outdoor area for the children to drink and staff prompted the children to take drinks at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Each care room had incorporated outdoor play into their daily curriculum and the children were encouraged and supported to engage with activities while outdoors.
- The transitions between activities such as toilet visits, mealtimes, free play and outdoor play were observed to be calm and relaxed with staff available to care for the individual needs of the children.

Physical and Material Environment

- The care rooms were laid out in defined interest areas to prompt children to engage in self-directed and imaginative play. Interest areas included home and kitchen corners, construction areas, arts and crafts zones, rest spaces and library corners.
- The play materials and equipment were stored on low-level shelving to facilitate the children to select and replace items of interest independently. Play materials were suitable for the age and stage of development of the children in the individual care rooms.
- There was a suitable range of books available in the care rooms to support children's language development and provide choice at story time.

- The outdoor play areas were fully enclosed by wooden fencing, hedging and block walls with the ground space divided by wooden fencing into two separate areas, and the younger children and the older children accommodated in the two separate sections. The area used by the older children was mainly surfaced in grass and the section used by the younger children surfaced in safety tiles. The areas were resourced with play kitchens, sand and water trays, slides, balls and large building blocks.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Staff were observed to have respectful, warm and responsive interactions with the children using soft tones and positive non-verbal communication strategies such as being at the children's level.
- Staff were observed to be engaged with and sit with the children during play time and having positive interactions during play activities of drawing and colouring. They were responsive to the children and were observed to give them choices regarding their play activities.
- Staff members supported each other in the provision of care to the children.
- Communication with parents is through conversation at drop off and pick up and through email for service information.

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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspector, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- Play equipment was secured to reduce the potential risk of injury to a child.

Infection Control:

- The premises, play equipment and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition

- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included thermostatically controlled water, soap and paper towels and pedal operated lidded bins for disposal of paper waste.
- Food from home for lunch time was observed to be refrigerated to prevent spoiling of perishable items.
- The cots in the cot room were observed to be positioned with the recommended distance of at least 50cm apart.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff maintained ten-minute sleep checks on all the children to include their colour, breathing and position. Shoes, socks and excess clothing were removed from children while they slept.
- Staff recorded the temperature of the care rooms while children slept. Staff ensured that the room was cool and ventilated for the children at sleep time by opening windows and doors and closing window blinds on their arrival to the service every morning.

Fire Safety:

- Documentation available demonstrated that fire drills were completed in the service monthly. The emergency exit areas in the care rooms were observed to be unobstructed and clear of any obstacles during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. It was observed that handwashing was not carried out at the required times as outlined in the service procedures for nappy changing and assisting children when using the toilet. For example,
 - A staff member did not wash their hands or the child's hands after completing a nappy change.
 - Three children were not prompted or assisted to wash their hands after using the toilet.
 - The staff member did not wash their hands after assisting three children with using the toilet.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. In response to the non-compliance the service has stated that discussion was held with staff about the importance in hygiene when changing nappies and assisting children going to the toilet. Staff were reminded that although gloves are always worn it is policy that hand washing takes place after each nappy change alongside the

children's hands after they have used the toilet. Going forward all staff will take extra care in ensuring our infection control policy is followed correctly.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Documentation of meeting with staff members regarding non-compliance.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

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) and (b) First aid boxes were displayed in an accessible and conspicuous position in the service and well equipped.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The designated person in charge was trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) certification with an expiry date of the 20 November 2025. However, on review of the service roster on the week of inspection and on discussion with staff it was observed that a staff member with in date FAR certification was not available to the children during the operation of the service from 7.30am to 6.00pm daily. It is acknowledged that staff working with the children held in date paediatric first aid with an expiry date of 29 January 2026

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) To address the non-compliance an additional staff is now trained in FAR and we will ensure that FAR training is monitored and kept up to date and one member with FAR training is always present.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) Certificate of First Aid Responder training with an expiry date of 27 July 2027 for one staff member.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 25 (1) has been adequately addressed.

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)

The last recorded fire drills that took place in the service was the 11 June 2025.

(b)

The number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was present in the service, the fire extinguishers and smoke alarms were serviced in July 2025.

(4)

A notice of the fire procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were clearly displayed in the care rooms and main reception of the service.