

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL343
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Woodlands Crèche & Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	1 Dun Emer Rise, Lusk, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	K45 KX03
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Theresa Ryan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	07/10/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	49	PM	26
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Á Dunne, E Hosford
<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

Woodlands Crèche and Montessori is situated in Lusk Co. Dublin and is registered to operate from 7.30am to 6.00pm from Monday to Friday. It offers full-day, part-time and sessional childcare to children aged from 1 to 6 years of age and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for eligible pre-school children from 9.00am to 12.00 midday daily for 38 weeks each year. Two of the four care rooms in the service, namely the Wobbler Room and the Toddler Room are located on the ground floor of the premises, while Montessori Room 1 and Montessori Room 2 are located on the first floor. There is a designated sleep room adjacent to the Wobbler Room with six standard cots, and a fully enclosed outdoor play area adjoins the premises.

### Staffing

There are 17 staff members employed in the service, consisting of the person in charge and a further 14 staff members who work directly with the pre-school children and two ancillary staff members employed to clean the service. The registered provider does not work in the service

### 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 the regulations 9, 11, 16, 19, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31 and 32.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child. Regulation 11 Staffing levels was assessed across all rooms.

The scope of the inspection included the Wobbler room and the Toddler room and did not include the Montessori 1 or Montessori 2 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.

### Additional Information

This inspection was triggered by information received by the inspectorate.

### 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.

## art 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.*

*(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:*

*(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*

*(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*

*(c) these Regulations.*

### Compliance Information

(2) It was confirmed by the person in charge that one new childcare staff member had been employed in the service since the last inspection on the 12 May 2025. The files of this new staff member along with Garda Vetting disclosure for one staff member whose file was reviewed on the last inspection were reviewed.

(a) One written and validated reference was available in relation to one adult from a past employer.

(b) One written and validated reference was available in relation to one adult from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the two adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as the one adult had not lived outside of the State for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the one adult who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(7)(a) Through discussion with the person in charge new staff members were provided with induction to the service which included review of the policies and procedures used within the service and training provided by the two supervisors. In discussion with recently appointed staff member, the staff member was able to describe the induction process, training received and the system in place regarding the review of the service's policies and procedures.

Documentary evidence available demonstrated:

- New staff had completed online safeguarding children training prior to starting in the service.
- The service undertook meetings with all staff to review any issues and updates that had occurred in the service every four months.

### 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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

On the morning of the inspection there were 11 adults working directly with 49 children aged between 1 to 6 years and in the afternoon of the inspection there were 7 adults working with 26 children aged from 1 to 6 years.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection as the table below demonstrates.

Room Name	Age profile	Morning	Afternoon
Wobbler room	1 years to 2 years	3 adults with 8 children	2 adults with 4 children
Toddler room	22 months to 3 years	2 adults with 9 children	2 adults with 8 children
Montessori 1 room	2 years 8months to 5 years	3 adults with 17 children	2 adults with 9 children
Montessori 2 room	2 years 8months to 5 years	3 adults with 15 children	1 adult with 5 children
Total	1 years to 5 years	11 adults with 57 children	7 adults to 26 children

The person in charge, deputy person in charge, and two staff were available in a supernumerary capacity and covered in rooms as required.

(8)(a) On review of the service roster it was observed that two adults were on the premises during the operation

## 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.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

- (h) The details of the children attending the service to include their time of arrival and departure were recorded accurately.
- (i) A staff roster was available, and it reflected the staff present in the service and lunch and break cover.
- (j) Details of 9 medication administered records were reviewed and the required information was recorded.
- (k) Details of 11 accident and incident records were reviewed, and the required information was recorded.
- (3) The required records were available to the inspectors 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

#### Compliance Information

##### (1)(a) Basic Needs:

- The service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals and a hot meal to the children. The inspector observed a hot meal served in the care rooms at 11.30am/12.00pm of beef stew with mashed potatoes with chicken stew with mashed potatoes provided as an alternative for children and at 2.30pm / 3.00 pm, an afternoon snack of food supplied from home was served. At 10am and 5pm the service provided a snack. Water was available in each care room for the children to drink.
- In the Wobbler room, the transitions from activities to mealtimes to sleep time were observed to be calm and relaxed with the individual care needs of each child met.
- In the Toddler room
  - Transitions from dinner to sleep were smooth, with cots and low beds prepared, rooms darkened, and white noise played.
  - Evidence was present to demonstrate activities which the children had completed providing a sense of identity and belonging within the care room, for example:
    - Artwork displayed of pumpkins, leaves, autumn hands, and hedgehogs.
    - Presence of all about me for each child demonstrating their age, birth date, favourite colour and food, a family wall and a birthday wall
- Nappy changing and toileting were respectful and positive experiences for the children.
- All children in each room were observed to enjoy outdoor play during the inspection.

##### Supporting Relationships:

- Staff were observed to have respectful and responsive interactions with the children through the use of soft tones and positive non-verbal communication strategies such as being at the children's level.
- Children were happy and confident in their care environments.
- Staff members supported each other in the provision of care to the children.

- Communication with parents is through electronic application, newsletters and through a message application on a phone.

### Physical and Material Environment

- In the Wobbler room the play environment was spacious which promoted independent and child led play, for example:
  - Play materials were laid out well, available and accessible providing a positive play experience for the children in the room.
  - The play kitchen was available with supporting play equipment
  - Tables and chairs were made available for children for tabletop activities.
- In the Toddler room, the materials and equipment provided to the children in the room was suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment available to them.
- Low level shelving and child sized furniture supported children's independence.
- Cosy areas were present with books accessible offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day.
- The outdoor play environment to the rear of the premises were fully enclosed, the surface of which was covered with soft matting tiles There were two overhead shelters to enable the children to access the outdoor area during inclement weather. The outdoor toys were suitable and available and included a climbing frame with a slide, a climbing frame, a playhouse with climbing wall and two slides and outdoor play kitchen and sensory activities in boxes for water play and sand 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

##### General Safety:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors, 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.
- No trailing flexes were observed in the service.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- Blind cords for blinds on windows were observed to be secure.
- Room temperatures were kept between the recommended 18 °C to 22°C.
- Tall shelving units were anchored securely in care rooms.
- The outdoor area was a safe and secure environment with play equipment and materials clean, in good condition and suitable for use by the children.

##### Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition throughout, with the premises and equipment observed to be visually clean.
- At all handwashing facilities for hand hygiene in the service thermostatically controlled water, soap and paper towels and pedal operated lidded bins for disposal of paper waste were available.
- Staff were aware and kept used wet cloths separate from clean unused cloths.
- Nappy changing was completed as per service policy. Nappy changing facilities were available for the children and nappy changing was completed for the children at regular intervals and when required.
- Handwashing was observed after nappy changing, after bathroom visits and after outdoor play.
- Soothers were stored in individual labelled boxes.
- During sleep time, low stackable beds were positioned with the recommended 50 centimetres between each child

##### Safe Sleep:

- Shoes and clothing were removed from children while they slept.

- Ten-minute sleep checks were completed for colour, breathing, position while children slept.
- The temperature of the cot room and the toddler room at sleep time were recorded on the sleep check records.
- While children slept, the temperature of the cot room and the Toddler room were maintained between the recommended temperature of 18-22 °C for children over the age of one year.

## Non-Compliance Information

### Safe Sleep:

1. In the Toddler room at sleep time, sleep practices observed where not in line with the sleep guidelines issued by Tusla, in September 2023, as follows:
  - Three children under the age of two years of age were observed to sleep on low stackable beds, which are not recommended as suitable beds for children under the age of two years old.
  - Sleep risk assessments signed by parents were not available for the three children under two years of age who were observed to sleep on low stackable beds.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

### Safe Sleep:

1. Two Children are in foldable cots and one child has been returned to a cot in the cot room. The service has ordered one suitable floor bed for future use and appropriate sleep assessments forms are now available for parents to sign if necessary.

### Supporting documentation submitted

### Safe Sleep:

1. Photographic Evidence and Invoice for purchase of floor bed

## 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

- (1) The service provided evidence that six adults were trained in First Aid Response and were available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2) (a) and (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the utility room upstairs and in the Wobbler care room downstairs.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

### Compliance Information

On the day of the inspection, the inspectors observed that staff members were appropriately supervising the children in attendance, in each care room and during outdoor play.

## 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*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (c) The service was adequately lit, heated and ventilated.
- (e) The service was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities to include two available nappy changing units in the downstairs sanitary facility.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
- 1. In the sanitary facility upstairs, the wall behind one sink was in a state of poor repair with an unfinished surface which cannot be effectively cleaned.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d)
- 1. The unfinished area has been tiled and the service will track and repair maintenance issues better in the future.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

- (d) 1. Photographic Evidence.

#### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 29, has been adequately addressed.

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

*A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:*

*(d) a serious injury to a pre-school child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner whether in a hospital or otherwise;*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(d) The registered provider did not notify the agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of incidents which occurred in January 2025 and in September 2025 in the service.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

(d) Manager has taken on board the non-compliance, reviewed the service policies which states that Tusla should have been informed. Manager is far more aware of how important it is to inform Tusla of such incidents for the safety and protection of both children and staff. Policies have been reviewed and re-enforced with management and staff in case of future issues or concerns

##### Supporting documentation submitted

None.

#### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 31, has been adequately addressed.

### Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

#### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
  - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- 3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
  - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c) There was a complaints policy available detailing the procedures to be followed for making a complaint, the manner in how the service deals with a complaint, and the procedures for keeping the complainant informed of this process.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(a) The service had no record in writing of any complaints made in respect of the service.
- (b) The service had no documentary evidence to demonstrate that complaints received were dealt with in accordance with the service complaints policy as they had no system in place to record issues that arose.
- (3)(a) Documentation was not available of any complaints made against the service and the way in which they were dealt with.
- (b) These records were not available for inspection by an authorised person.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2) (a) (b) Paperwork involved in the complaint made has been accumulated into a file and stored accordingly. Management will write up documents, reports, conversations immediately as they happen and store them accordingly.

(3) (a)(b) A File is now collected and stored in filing cabinet for inspection purposes. Management will ensure to keep a record in writing for inspection purposes and accumulate information as it occurs.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

(2)(3) Photographic Evidence

**Summary Comment**

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 32, has been adequately addressed.