

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK021
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Name of Service:	Danesfort Childcare
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Address of Service:	Danesfort Childcare, 1 FR Campion Place, Danesfort, Co. Kilkenny
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Eircode:	R95 F856
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Name of Registered Provider:	Liam Mullen
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Dates of Inspection:	19/03/2025
Day 2	20/03/2025

No of pre-school children day 1	AM	54	PM	37
No of pre-school children day 2		54		N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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
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Description of service

Danesfort Childcare facility is a purpose-built service situated in a rural village in Co Kilkenny. It has been in operation since 2008 and provides a preschool service to children from the ages of 1 to 6 years of age. The service operates from 08:00 to 18:00. The service is registered to provide an Early Years Care and Education (ECCE) program to children. The service is also registered to provide a school age service.

Staffing

There were 17 staff employed in the service including the manager who also works directly with the children. There was one staff member employed to prepare snacks and meals for the children. All staff working directly with the early years children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 the following regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment

Regulation 10 Policies and procedures

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 15 Record of preschool child,

Regulation 17 Information for parents,

Regulation 21 equipment and materials,

Regulation 22 Food and Drink,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child,

Regulation 25 First aid,

Regulation 26 Fire Safety,

Regulation 28 Insurance.

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 registered provider, 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

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and

(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

(1)(a)(b)

The manager was the designated person in charge on both days of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection. There was also a person available to deputise if required. The registered provider was also in the service on the second day to facilitate the inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 17 staff employed in the service.

All required written and validated references were available on file for all staff working in the service.

(c)

There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for all staff members. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate regulatory notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for all staff.

(d)

Police vetting was available on file for one staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

There were qualifications on file for all staff working directly with the preschool children. These staff held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

(7)

The manager had ensured that all employees were supervised and provided with appropriate information. Staff who spoke to the inspector were clear in their understanding of the policies and procedures in place in the service. There was an induction policy in place for new staff. There was evidence that new staff were given all required training prior to starting work in the service. There was a check list of information given to new staff on the required policies procedures and ethos of the service.

There was evidence of regular staff meetings where staff were given the opportunity to share any areas for improvement they had identified in the service. There was evidence of regular 1-to-1 meeting between the manager and staff to discuss their progress and development working in the service. Staff also had weekly meetings to discuss the care needs of the children in their respective rooms.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

There were policies and procedures in place in the service specified in Schedule 5 of these regulations. The policies reviewed for this inspection were the policy on infection control, and the policy on the administration of medication in the service.

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)(2)

There was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children on both days of the inspection.

Day 1

At 10:45

There were 54 children in the care of 10 staff.

At 13:30

There were 37 children in the care of 7 staff.

Day 2

At 10:45

There were 54 children in the care of 11 staff.

There was also a chef employed to prepare all meals and snacks provided for the children. The manager was also available to assist in the rooms if required.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

There was a registration form available in respect of each child enrolled in the service. A sample of 10 forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The parents of children were sent a suite of documents when they had accepted a place in the service. The inspector reviewed the information given to them. The service provided parents with information as required under regulation 17. The information provided for parents contained an outline of the curriculum, the hours of

operation, contact details and the facilities available within the service. There was also information included on funding schemes available for parents to apply for.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The equipment and materials provided both in the preschool rooms and outdoor areas were presented and maintained to provide for the play and learning needs of the children attending the service.

Children in butterfly room were observed making telescopes out of kitchen rolls. There was a supply of arts and crafts materials in the room for all the children to use. There was a small room off the main room which had a supply of dress up outfits for children to play with. This was the designated role play area. There was a construction area with miniature tools, there was a supply of real-world materials consisting of items normally saved for recycling at home. Staff who spoke to the inspector said they had observed children found open ended items sparked their imaginations to become creative making up games between each other.

There was extensive use of real-world items in the lady bird room. There were items for recycling and a decommissioned microwave and kettle for children to play with in the home corner.

There was photography used in all rooms in the service. My weekend was an art installation in the butterfly 2 room. Parents had sent photos of various activities their children had enjoyed over the weekend. Children took great delight showing the inspector the photos of various family members they had enjoyed their weekend with.

The equipment and materials supplied in both outdoor areas were adequate and suitable for the children attending the service. The areas were equipped with slides, ride on toys, jungle gyms, sand pits and balls for children to play with. The third outdoor area was not in use as there were maintenance workers implementing construction plans to further develop the extensive play area with toys and equipment for the children.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy. All meals and snacks were supplied and cooked on the premises by the chef from the onsite kitchen in the service. The service had a 3-week rotating menu which was available for parents to view in the service. The children attending the second year of their ECCE year brought in their snacks in the last semester to help them get ready for attending national school the following September. The dinner served at mid-day was chicken curry and rice. Water was served to all the children from large jugs in all preschool rooms. Children were served extra portions when they requested additional helpings. Children enjoyed a snack of sausage rolls and fruit in the afternoon

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:

Access to the service was gained through the door in to butterfly 1 which was secured on arrival and remained secure for the duration of the inspection. The outdoor areas in the service were safe, suitable and secure.

Infection Control

The service was clean. There were daily and weekly cleaning schedules maintained. The service had an infection control policy. Staff were vigilant in attending to children's personal hygiene during the day. The staff were observed to be attentive in supporting the children in washing their hands before meals, after using the toilet and after messy play. There was warm water to support hand washing, liquid soap, disposable hand towels and foot pedal operated bins provided across the service. Children were encouraged to cough in to their elbows to prevent cross infection in the service. The nappy changing area was well organised and situated beside an openable window to provide ventilation in the area.

Safe Sleep

The service had two designated sleep rooms. Individual bed linen was available. Staff who spoke to the inspector were knowledgeable in the importance of adhering to safe sleep guidelines. For example, they were knowledgeable on how often a sleeping child is physically checked, recording of the observations such as colour, position and breathing rate and temperature of the sleep room. Observations on the sleeping children's colour, position and breathing were carried out and recorded every 10 minutes on the services mobile tablet.

Administration of medication:

The service had an administration of medication policy. The policy was reviewed by the inspector and was found to contain the required aspects for the safe administration of medication in a preschool setting. Previous records of medication that had been administered in the service were reviewed by the inspector. It was clearly documented; the consent was signed by the parent and the document of the administration procedure was verified and signed by two staff members.

Outings

The service did not facilitate outings.

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)

There was a person trained in first aid responder course immediately available to the children attending the preschool service. There was evidence that there were 12 staff trained in a first aid responder course available to the children attending the service which was sufficient to cover across the rota in the service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position to the staff on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool service.

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 firefighting 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)

There were records of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was carried out in February 2025.

(1)(b)

There was a record available to demonstrate the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. This maintenance was last carried out in February 2025.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance in place to cover the number of children in the service who were present on the day of inspection.