

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Tusla I.D: TU2015LH052

Name of Service Little Legs Creche & Montessori Limited

Address of Service: Grangebellew, Drogheda, Co. Louth A92 YH42

Email Address: littlelegscreche@gmail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Denise Curran

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed change:	Proposal to increase the number of children accommodated in the service up to a maximum of 30 children at any one time. Proposal to increase the number of staff members employed in the service up to 6.
Proposed Number of Children:	Proposal to accommodate a maximum of 30 children in the service.
Recommended Change Following Inspection:	The application to increase to 30 children accommodated in the service can be approved, subject to the numbers attending each room to be in accordance with those specified in Regulation 30. The application to increase the number of staff members employed in the service to 6 in total can be approved.
Registered change:	Change in Number of Children From 27 to 30 Change in Number of Staff Employed: From 5 to 6.

Date of Inspection:	1	3	0	4	2	0	2	3
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Inspection undertaken by: S. Taaffe
Title: Early years inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.

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Rationale for Inspection:

Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered for 30 children at any one time and number of staff employed 6
Date of Registration	01 st May 2023

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Little Legs Creche & Montessori Limited was established in 2014 as a privately-owned full day care service and school age service. Pre-school children aged 1-6 years and school age children up to 12 years of age are accommodated in the service which operates from 7.30am to 6.00pm each weekday. Pre-school children of eligible age are facilitated to participate in the state funded early childhood care and education (ECCE) scheme each morning from 9.15am to 12.15pm for the first year and from 9.30am to 12.30pm for the second year, for 38 weeks annually.
Premises	Little Legs Creche & Montessori Limited is conducted from three care rooms and ancillary accommodation attached to the ground floor of the registered provider's family home which is located in a rural setting near Dunleer in Co. Louth. The service consists of the Primrose room, the Buttercup room and the Snowdrop room, a sleep room and sanitary facilities, all of which are separated from the residential accommodation by a locked internal door. Access to the service is gained through a designated entrance door to the rear of the premises. A fully enclosed outdoor play area is provided to the rear of the premises.
Staffing	The registered provider and 5 core staff members work directly with the children in the service on a daily basis. One of the 5 core staff members is employed as the service manager, with both the registered provider and the service manager jointly co-ordinating the day to day operational and administrative management of the service on a daily basis.
Methodology	The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the

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	<p>following themes: Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>
Acknowledgements	The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, service manager, 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.

Requirement met:

(1)(a) The requirement has been met.

The registered provider was the designated person in charge and the service manager was available to deputise when required.

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.

(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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider was aware of the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in Part 1 of Schedule 6. During the fit for purpose inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service and staffing levels were appropriate to accommodate the proposed increased number of children.

The following adult to child ratios were observed:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Primrose room there were 5 children (of whom 2 children were aged 1 year 10 months and 1 year 11 months, and 3 children were aged between 2 years 7 months and 2 years and 11 months) being cared for by 2 staff members. In the Buttercup room there were 3 pre-school children aged between 2 years 9 months and 3 years, in addition to 2 school aged children, who were being cared for by 2 staff members. The Snowdrop room was unoccupied as the inspection took place during the Easter holidays when the ECCE programme was not in operation. <p>(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times when the service was operating, as evidenced in the staff roster and sign-in records.</p>
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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

- (1) *Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—*
- (a) *having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*
 - (b) *there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—*
- (a) *a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises*

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>(1)(a) The three care rooms were well resourced with play equipment and books which were laid out in well-defined interest areas to facilitate a range of play opportunities for the children in attendance. The interest areas included home corners, shop areas, construction areas, arts and crafts areas, and libraries. Push along toys and stable props were provided in the Primrose room to support children’s pre-walking skills. The play materials in each care room were stored in open-fronted low-level shelving units which facilitated the children to see what they wished to play with and access the materials independently. A broad range of equipment was provided in the outdoor play area to facilitate play opportunities outside. A large well-resourced outdoor kitchen, a wooden climbing frame with swings, climbing wall and slide attached were amongst the play equipment provided in the section used by the older children. A large outdoor kitchen,</p>
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	<p>push-along and ride-on toys, sit-in self-propel cars and a plastic playhouse with slide attached were provided in the section used by the younger children.</p> <p>(b) The service provided a sleep room containing 3 standard cots. Additionally, ten stackable beds were available and set up in the Buttercup room at the service's designated sleep time after lunch, to facilitate children aged 2 years and older who required or wished to sleep. A rest area was available in the three care rooms with mats and cushions provided to enable a child to rest and relax during the day and take a break from activities if required.</p> <p>(3)(a) The fully enclosed outdoor play area was subdivided by sturdy fencing into two separate sections with play equipment tailored for the younger and the older children in attendance. The play equipment in both sections was suitable for the age and stage of development of the children who accessed the particular areas. The area designated for use by the older children was surfaced in wood chippings whilst the area designated for use by the younger children had sections surfaced in wood chippings and also in safety matting. The registered provided demonstrated that all children have daily access to the outdoors, as reported by staff members and also as detailed in the documented daily routine on display.</p>
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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.

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>A two-week menu was on display. A selection of cereals and toast was available for the children to have breakfast in the service until 9.00am, if required.</p> <p>The parents provided the children with their morning snacks. The service supplied all other meals and snacks to the children attending the service, cooked and prepared on site on the premises. Lunch was served between 11.30am and 12.00midday daily and listed meals included toasties, fruit, yogurts and pancakes. Dinner was served between 2.30pm and 3.00pm daily and listed meals included stew, chicken curry and rice and vegetable pasta bake. Fruit, bread sticks and yogurt was available from 5.00pm as an evening snack, if required.</p> <p>Drinking water was available and accessible to the children in the individual care rooms.</p>
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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

The inspector did not identify any hazards that would impact the health, safety or welfare of the children attending the service. It appeared that appropriate measures had been undertaken in the service to ensure the safety of the children including the provision of thermostatically controlled warm water in the sanitary accommodation and the premises and outdoor play area being appropriately secured. Medication and cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children. Blind cords were appropriately secured.

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.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid for children including first aid response (FAR) training was, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a) and (b) The suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored in conspicuous locations in the front hallway, out of the reach of children, and these were available at all times for the children, if needed in the event of an emergency.

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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.

Requirement met:	<p>(1)(a) A record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. The records indicated that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis, with the most recent fire drill undertaken on 27/03/2023.</p> <p>(b) The fire fighting equipment was certified as having been serviced on 01/03/2023. Following the inspection, a maintenance certificate was subsequently received from the registered provider confirming that the smoke detection system in the premises was serviced on 15/04/2023.</p> <p>(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.</p>
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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>A current insurance certificate was available which showed that there was insurance cover in place for 35 children attending the full day care service. The policy showed that the service was insured until 27/03/2024.</p>
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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,
- (b) safe and secure,
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(a) The premises and outdoor area appeared to be in good condition and was well-maintained.

(b) A high level magnetic gate release button was provided which needed to be activated in order to open the entrance gate leading from the driveway and parking area into the premises. A doorbell was provided at the secured entrance door to allow parents or visitors notify staff members of their arrival to the service. Glass panels in the doorway facilitated staff members to see visitors before facilitating their entry to the service. The outdoor play area was fully enclosed by high level fencing and gates fitted with latches out of the reach of children.

(c) Lighting

- Windows provided the care rooms and sleep room with natural lighting which was supplemented by artificial lighting.

Heating

- The service was heated by means of an oil-fired central heating system.

Ventilation

- Ventilation in the three care rooms and sleep room was provided by means of openable windows and trickle vents. Mechanical ventilation was provided in the sanitary accommodation.

(d) The premises was clean and appeared to be in a good state of repair.

(e) The service was equipped with adequate sanitary facilities for the increased proposed total number of 30 children.

Three toilets, 4 wash hand basins and 2 nappy changing mats were provided for children's use in the sanitary accommodation.

Separate toilet facilities are provided in the registered provider's adjoining family home for staff use.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Adequate clear floor space is available for the safety, play and movement of the 30 pre-school children proposed to attend the service.

(2) The minimum space regulatory requirement can be met for the proposed number of 30 pre-school children to be accommodated in the service. The registered provider is aware of the minimum clear floor space requirements as specified in Schedule 7.

- The clear floor space in the Buttercup room measured 23.5 square metres. This meets the space requirements for 5 children aged 1 - 2 years and 4 children aged 2 – 3 years being accommodated in this room on a part-time or on a full day care basis.
- The clear floor space in the Snowdrop room measured 22.1 square metres. This meets the space requirements for 12 pre-school children aged 2½ to 6 years attending the service on a sessional basis whilst availing of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme or 9 children aged 3 – 6 years attending on a part-time or full day care basis.
- The clear floor space in the Primrose room measured 18.35 square metres. This meets the space requirements for 10 pre-school children aged 2½ to 6 years attending the service on a sessional basis whilst availing of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme or 7 children aged 2 – 3 years attending on a part-time or full day care basis.