

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D.: TU2015LH052

Name of Service Little Legs Crèche and Montessori Limited.

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

Email Address: littlelegscreeche@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 from 30 to 45.

Proposed Number of Children: 45

Recommended Change Following Inspection: The application to increase to 45 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.

Registered change: Change in number of children from 30 to 45 children

Date of Inspection:	2	6	0	8	2	0	2	4
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Inspection undertaken by: S. Cully

Title: Early Years Inspector

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

Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

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

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional service for 45 children
Date of Registration	29 th August 2024

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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 early years service. The service is currently registered to accommodate preschool children aged 1-6 years and school age children up to 12 years of age from 7.30am to 6.00pm each weekday on a sessional, part time and full day care basis. Currently there are no children aged 1 – 2 years in attendance. Pre-school children of eligible age are facilitated to participate in the state funded Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for 38 weeks annually. This service is also registered to provide School Age care.
Premises	Little Legs Creche & Montessori Limited is currently conducted from two care rooms attached to the ground floor of the registered provider's family home, which is located in a rural setting near Dunleer, Co. Louth. The proposed increase in number of children will be accommodated by the provision of a new prefabricated building located to the rear of the outdoor play area referred to as Room 508. In the main building, the former Primrose room and Buttercup room have been combined to create the Wobbler/Toddler room which currently provides care for children aged 2 years and above. The Snowdrop room accommodates preschool aged children from 2.5 to 6 years (ECCE) and from 3 – 6 years part time or full day care. The former sleep room is now a staff room. There is also an office, kitchen and sanitary facilities on 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	<p>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 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, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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:

- In the Wobbler/Toddler room there were 5 children (of whom 2 children were aged 2 – 3 years and 3 children were aged between 3-4 years) being cared for by 2 staff members. It is proposed that 12 children aged 2-3 years will attend this room on a part time and full day care basis and will be cared for by 2 adults.
- In the Snowdrop room there were 5 children between the ages of 3 to 5 years being cared for by 1 member of staff. It is proposed that 11 children aged 2.5-6 years will attend this room on a sessional basis and will be cared for by 1 adult.
- It is proposed that room 508 will accommodate a maximum of 22 sessional preschool children being cared for by 2 members of staff in the morning and 8 full day care preschool children being cared for by 1 member of staff in the afternoon.

(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.

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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:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) The two care rooms in the main building were equipped with adequate and suitable facilities to support a range of learning and play opportunities indoors. The Wobbler/Toddler room and Snowdrop room were organised by identifiable interest areas and well-resourced with age-appropriate furniture, equipment and materials to facilitate a range of learning and play opportunities. The care room in the prefabricated building, referred to as Room 508, also had adequate and suitable facilities to accommodate a preschool group of children. The room was organised by interest areas such as a well-resourced home corner, construction and small world area, a reading and rest area, and tabletop activities. The doors of the care room led directly to the secured outdoor area.

(b) As the service is currently accommodating children over the age of 24 months, they have an adequate supply of stackable floor beds to facilitate sleeping children. A rest area was available in all 3 care rooms with mats and cushions available, with a small sofa and teepee available in the new care room, Room 508.

(3)(a) The fully enclosed outdoor area is separated in to 3 play areas so that all age groups can maximise time outdoors together safely. One area was surfaced partially with wood chippings and artificial grass with a range of equipment available including balance beams, a playhouse, sensory tables, outdoor kitchen and ride on toys. A second area had a wood chippings surface with equipment such as a playhouse with a slide, tunnel, wooden stumps, resourced outdoor kitchen and open-ended materials. The third area was surfaced with grass and was equipped with small goalposts, balls, ride on toys and outdoor toys.

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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:

The requirement has been met.
The service provided the children with snacks and meals including breakfast, morning snack, lunch, a hot meal for dinner and a light afternoon snack when required. All snacks and meals were prepared and cooked on-site.
Children attending for ECCE preschool programme will bring their morning snacks to the service.
Drinking water was available and accessible to the children.

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. The entrance to the premises was secured by a gate with an electromagnetic lock. The external and internal doors of the service and Room 508 were secured. Thermostatically controlled warm water was available in the sanitary accommodations. Medication and cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children. Windows and blind cords were appropriately secured.

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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 and these were available at all times for the children, if needed in the event of an emergency.

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:

- (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.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was certified as having been serviced on 08/04/2024. The smoke detection system in the premises and Room 508 was serviced on 10/05/2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

Documentation was submitted to the Registrations office to demonstrate that the service will be adequately insured to accommodate 45 children attending full day care at any one time from 02/09/2024 to 27/03/2025.

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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 including the additional room and outdoor area appeared to be in good condition and well maintained.

(b) An entrance gate leading from parking area into the premises was secured by an electromagnetic lock released by an internal button in the garden and premises, which was out of reach of the children. A doorbell was provided at the secured entrance door to allow parents or visitors notify staff members of their arrival 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. A security system was installed in the new room to allow staff to approve parent access through the main gate from Room 508.

(c)

Lighting

- Windows provided all care rooms with natural lighting which was supplemented by artificial lighting.

Heating

- The service was heated by means of an oil-fired central heating system. Room 508 was heated via underfloor heating.

Ventilation

- Ventilation in the three care rooms was provided by means of openable windows and trickle vents. Mechanical ventilation was provided in the sanitary accommodation in the main building, while a window provided ventilation in the sanitary accommodation in Room 508.

(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 45 children. Three toilets, 3 wash hand basins and 2 nappy changing mats were provided for children's use in the sanitary accommodation in the main building. A toilet designated for staff use was also available. In Room 508 there was 2 child-sized toilets and 2 wash hand basins available.

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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 45 pre-school children proposed to attend the service.

(2) The minimum space regulatory requirement can be met for the proposed number of 45 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 Wobbler/Toddler room measured 43.44 square metres. This meets the space requirements for the proposed 12 children aged 2 – 3 years being accommodated in this room on a part-time/full day care basis.
- The clear floor space in the Snowdrop room measured 22.1 square metres. This meets the requirements for the proposed 11 preschool children aged 2.5 years to 6 years attending sessional preschool care or a maximum of 8 children aged 3 – 6 years on a part-time/full day care basis.
- The clear floor space in Room 508 measured 43.32 square metres. This meets the requirements for the proposed 22 preschool children aged 2.5 years to 6 years attending morning sessional preschool care and the proposed 8 preschool children aged 3 -6 years attending on a full day care basis in the afternoon.