

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LH071
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Peter Pan Crèche & Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Martello Village, Bryanstown, Dublin Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A92 HHT2
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Adrienne O'Neill
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/06/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	82	PM	32
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath C15 CP23
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S Taaffe and S McKenna
<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

Peter Pan Crèche & Montessori is one of two early years services operated by the registered provider, both of which are located in Drogheda, with this service providing sessional, part time and full day care for pre-school children from 12 months of age and for school-aged children aged up to 12 years. The service is registered to operate from Monday to Friday between 7.30am and 6.15pm and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.00am to 12.00 midday daily. This service is conducted from a 3-storey purpose-built premises located beside a GP surgery in a residential setting in Drogheda. There are 7 care rooms provided in the service, namely the Baby Room, the Toddler Room and the Junior Pre-school Room which are located on the ground floor; Pre-school Room 1, Pre-school Room 2 and Montessori Room 3 which are located on the first floor, and Montessori Room 2 which is located on the second floor.

### Staffing

The registered provider works between both early years services on a daily basis, with 25 core staff employed to work directly with the pre-school children in this service, of whom one staff member is employed in the role of service manager and two staff members are on extended statutory leave. In addition, a cook is employed to work in this service on a daily basis.

### 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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 - health, welfare and development of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms the Baby Room, the Toddler Room, the Junior Pre-school Room, Pre-school Room 1, Pre-school Room 2 and Montessori Room 3.

The inspection did not include Montessori Room 2 in view of the children's graduation and celebration day taking place as planned in this room on the day of inspection.

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 inspectors wish 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,

(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

(1)(a) The service manager was the designated person in charge of the service. In the absence of the designated person in charge of the service, the registered provider or the assistant manager are present and in charge of the service.

(b) The service manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced at 9.45am on the day of inspection. The registered provider was also present in the service during the inspection.

A total of 28 staff files were reviewed, maintained in respect of the registered provider, all 26 staff members employed in the service and for the external contractor who delivers an activity programme to the children in the service on a regular and scheduled basis.

(2)(a)(b) In respect of the 28 files reviewed, there were two written, validated references available for each adult.

(a) Thirty-eight written references were from past employers.

(b) Eighteen written references were from sources other than a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the registered provider, all 26 staff members employed in the service and for the external contractor who delivers an activity programme to the children in the service. The records demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting, provided in English or subsequently translated into English, was available for 6 adults who had lived outside the State for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) The registered provider and the 25 core staff members who work directly with the pre-school children in the service all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service during the inspection. The following adult to child ratios were observed:

- In the Baby Room there were 5 children (of whom 4 children were aged 1 year 5 months to 1 year 11 months and 1 child who was aged 2 years 2 months) being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In the Toddler Room there were 6 children (of whom 5 children were aged 2 years 4 months to 2 years 11 months and 1 child who was aged 3 years 2 months) being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In the Junior Pre-school Room there were 11 children aged 3 years 3 months to 3 years 8 months being cared for by 3 and, at times, 4 staff members. One of these staff members was employed in a post which was funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.
- In Pre-school Room 1 there were 10 children aged 3 years 6 months to 4 years 5 months being cared for by 2 staff members. One of these staff members was employed in a post which was funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.
- In Pre-school Room 2 there were 10 children aged 3 years 6 months 4 years 4 months being cared for by 3 staff members. One of these staff members was employed in a post which was funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.
- In Montessori Room 3 there were 21 children aged 4 years 8 months to 5 years 4 months being cared for by 4 staff members. One of these staff members was employed in a post which was funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.
- In Montessori Room 2 there were 19 children aged 3 years 3 months to 5 years 5 months being cared for by 3 staff members. One of these staff members was employed in a post which was part-funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.

During the inspection the registered provider, service manager and 2 additional staff members provided support and assistance in the care rooms when required.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times, as evidenced in staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained in 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) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service.

#### Basic needs:

- The staff members were observed to be respectful and responsive in their interactions and with meeting the needs of the children in their care, displaying sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for the children throughout the inspection.
- Food was prepared and cooked in the service on a daily basis and a varied and nutritious 3-week menu was on display in the premises. Porridge, a selection of cereal and toast is provided to children for breakfast if required. On the day of inspection, a variety of diced fruit was served for morning snack and boiled ham, mixed vegetables, mashed potato and gravy was served for dinner. Dietary requirements specified by the parents were accommodated, as stated on the menu and observed in practice during the inspection. The staff members sat at the children's level at mealtimes, including when feeding the younger children and supporting the children to feed themselves where appropriate. Mealtimes were observed to be social, interactive occasions with the children in each room given plenty of time to eat and not rushed.
- The children had their nappies changed regularly and in a timely manner. Staff members were observed warmly engaging with the children during these procedures and taking the opportunity to chat with and sing songs to the children. The staff members were observed to be responsive to the children's cues to use the toilet with prompting and support provided when required.
- The staff member in the Baby Room informed the inspector that the sleep needs of the children in this room were generally met in line with their home routine but that the children would be facilitated to sleep when they showed signs of tiredness outside of their normal routine, if required and in collaboration with parents. The children were observed being placed to sleep when they showed signs of tiredness

during the inspection. The children in the Toddler Room and Junior Pre-school Room who still availed of a day-time nap were facilitated to sleep after dinner, on stackable beds set up in the Toddler Room.

- Outdoor play was facilitated for the children at various intervals during the inspection and limited to beneath the covered section in the outdoor area due to the heavy rain on the day of inspection.

### Supporting relationships:

- The staff members demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's needs (both individual needs and, for some children, their additional needs), their likes and preferences, thereby fostering each child's inclusion and involvement in activities. The children in each room were observed engaging in activities using play equipment of their own choice under the guidance of the staff members, with adult assistance provided when necessary and children readily supported to engage in large group, small group and one-to-one activities. Staff members were heard using warm tones of voice and appeared interested and enthusiastic when engaging with the children in a kind manner, including times when the staff members acted as play partners with the children, making jigsaws, stacking bricks, and when playing with dried pasta and with peg boards.
- Family photographs were available in each room which supported the children to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness in the service. It was observed during the inspection that staff members facilitated children to spend time with their older siblings during the graduation ceremony in Montessori Room 2 for a period of playful family interaction which all seemed to enjoy.
- There was a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the service and staff members greeted children and parents individually on arrival, spending time conversing and sharing information in a friendly way. Staff members in the Baby Room and in the Toddler Room recorded information regarding the children's snacks and meals, activities, and nappy changes and sleep times if relevant, and this information was shared with parents when they were collecting their children at the end of the day, either verbally or documented in communication books, depending on the parents' preferences.
- Children's behaviour was managed positively and, in an age-appropriate manner with distraction, re-direction and problem-solving techniques observed being used to good effect to prevent any minor issues from escalating.

### Physical and material environment:

- The care rooms were laid out in designated areas of interest including well-resourced home corners with real packaging, baby care items and dress up costumes; office areas; construction areas; arts and crafts stations; and rest areas. The Baby Room contained equipment to provide opportunities for the youngest children in the service to engage in physical activity through self-initiated movement with padded floor mats, covered foam wedges and push-along toys provided to support the children’s gross motor development. Wall-mounted mirrors supported the development of the children’s visual senses.
- In each care room, play materials and equipment were accessible on low-level shelving to facilitate children’s independent choice and play. Age-appropriate table-top games and play equipment to support the development of the children’s fine motor skills were provided in the care rooms. These included jigsaws, wooden and plastic bricks, shape sorters, magnets, interlocking plastic toys, stacking toys, threading equipment and peg boards.
- Sensory play was facilitated in the service. For, example, a plentiful amount of dried pasta was provided in a tray-top table in the Baby Room, while playdough and sand and water tables were provided in the Toddler Room and Junior Pre-school Room. Playdough and sand were provided for sensory play in Pre-school Room 1, Pre-school Room 2 and Montessori Room 3.
- The rest areas provided in the care rooms were suitably equipped with mats, cushions and soft seating to facilitate children to relax and rest comfortably if they wished to do so during the day. A suitable range of books were provided in each room to support the children’s language development and provide choice for storytelling.
- The fully enclosed outdoor play area which was located to the side of the premises was secured by high level fencing and walls. A ground surface of soft impact covering covered the majority of the ground with a gravel flooring provided in the covered section. Trees and plants along with tyres, chalkboards, a music wall, a playhouse, climbing structures, rocker toys and see saws were provided in the soft surfaced area. In the covered area which was observed in use on the day of inspection there was a stone pit and a gravel pit with digging materials provided, along with tyres and some ride on toys and a mud kitchen.

## 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

The following are examples of the measures undertaken by the registered provider and staff members to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service:

#### General Safety:

- The entrance doors leading into the service and the garden gates were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The warm water temperature in the sanitary accommodation and the sinks in the care rooms did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C which reduced the risk of scalding for the children.
- The kitchen, when unoccupied, was inaccessible to the children during the inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children in locked presses or on high shelves.
- Stairways were fitted with appropriate handrails and children were observed to be appropriately supervised when using the stairs.
- The windows in the care rooms were fitted with restrictive opening devices and blind cords were appropriately secured.

#### Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled running warm water, liquid soap and hygienically dispensed paper towels were provided at the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation of the service and at the sinks in the care rooms.
- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet, and after messy play.
- The service's nappy changing policy and hand washing policy were observed to be followed by staff members during the inspection. Suitable disposable gloves and aprons were available and observed being used and disposed of appropriately when children were having their nappies changed. Staff members washed their own hands and supported the children to wash their hands after each nappy change.

- Pedal operated lidded nappy bins were provided for the disposal of nappies which reduced the risk of cross-infection.
- Soothers were stored in personalised lidded containers when not in use. Portable microwave sterilisers were available in the service. In discussion with the inspector, staff members clearly communicated appropriate management of soothers and mouthed toys on a daily basis.

### Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection. In discussion with the inspectors, staff members described appropriate procedures for the administration of medication to children when required in the service.

### Safe Sleep:

- All children aged less than 2 years slept in a standard cot on the day of inspection. Based on an examination of the children's attendance records maintained in the service, all children under 2 years of age had access to a standard cot on a daily basis.
- In discussion with the inspectors, staff members described safe sleep practices. The records indicated and staff members reported that sleep checks were carried out and documented at 10 minutes intervals, noting the child's position, colour and breathing pattern.

### Outings:

- The inspectors were informed that children were not taken on outings from the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Medication Administration:

1. A child attending the service was prescribed an inhaler for use when required. There was no detailed written care plan or medication protocol available in the service to authorise staff members to use the inhaler when necessary.

#### Infection Control:

2. Some of the children's snacks which were provided by parents contained perishable items and were inappropriately stored in the children's bags in the hallway and care rooms and not in a refrigerator at the recommended storage of 5°C or below.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### **Medication Administration:**

Service sent the parents a template to fill in regarding the administration of the child's medication when needed in creche. Once the Medical care plan had been returned to our service the parent and teacher discussed the information provided. One copy of the care plan was placed in the child's file, and another was placed in a visible spot in the child's classroom where all staff have access to it. The care plan was sent to all staff so we all have the information, and we would all know what to do if a situation arises. Going forward any child who presents with a medical condition will be given the new template to fill in. Staff will liaise with the child's parents to see if there is an update regarding their child's care plan.

The care plan will be displayed in the child's room and communicated to all staff, the medication will be stored in a press in the child's room out of reach, dates on medication will be checked each term. If there are any changes with the child's care plan management will be informed, and they will then notify all staff members. The child's care plan will be updated and signed by the parents.

#### **Infection Control:**

Some of the children's snacks provided by parents were not in a refrigerator - to correct this we have given each class a box, any snacks brought from home will be placed in the box with the child's name clearly marked on it. The boxes will be placed in a refrigerator and only removed when it is snack time. Management will check each morning that snacks are placed in the fridge, some staff members will need cover to leave their classroom to get to the fridge so management will step in to cover this.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### **Medication Administration:**

Photographic evidence of detailed care plan.

#### **Infection Control:**

Photographic evidence of lunches stored in refrigerator.

## Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 23.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The service maintained accurate details of all children in attendance during the inspection. The children were entered as present in attendance records provided in each care room, noting each child's arrival and departure times.

(3)(a)(b) The service ensured that no person other than the children and their parents or guardians, employees, approved students, or authorised visitors could enter the premises. A visitor's book was maintained and on arrival the inspectors were requested to record their attendance in the service and the purpose of their visit.

### 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) A sufficient number of staff members held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training to ensure that a person with FAR training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service. This was evidenced in the registered provider's and 8 staff members' training records and the service's staff roster.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) The first aid boxes provided in the service were not suitably equipped as the majority of the sterile wound dressings and eye pads supplied were out of date.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The day after the inspection 2 large first aid boxes were purchased, one located in office and another on the second floor with an expiry date of 11/27. All class rooms have a small first aid box containing gloves, plasters, alcohol swabs, arnica, thermometer. The Kitchen First aid box contains all of the above and burns dressing. All first aid boxes in the rooms will be regularly checked by management and restocked when needed.

The bigger First aid boxes will be checked each term, restocked when needed and new boxes will be purchased before the expiry date 11/27.

All staff have been informed - if they need anything out of the first aid boxes please inform management and it will be replaced immediately.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of new first aid materials and invoice.

#### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 25 (2) (a) (b).

### 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) A record was maintained of fire drills which had been completed in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 03/06/2025.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers were certified as having been serviced on 30/10/2024 and the smoke alarms were serviced on 03/06/2025.
- (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.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for 95 children attending the full day care service. The policy showed that the service was insured until 27/03/2026.