

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK060
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Name of Service:	Daydreams Childcare
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Address of Service:	The Meadow, Ros Fearna, Murroe, Co Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 P8A0
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Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Griffith
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	09/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	67	PM	52
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick
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Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan, M Creagh
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Title:	Early years inspectors
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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

Daydreams Creche is private, full day care, part-time and sessional pre-school service operating from a purpose build premises in Murroe, Co. Limerick. It caters for pre-school children from 0 to 6 years old. A school aged service is also provided each afternoon.

This service operates from a two-story, purpose-built premises located in a housing estate in the rural village. On the ground floor, there is a Baby room, a Wobbler room, a Toddler room, a designated sleep room, a kitchen and a dining room and the manager's office. On the first floor, there are 3 pre-school rooms. Nappy changing areas and toilet facilities are located within close proximity of each room. There is a large outdoor play area at the rear and the side of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider is the owner and the manager of the service. There are an additional 16 staff employed to work at the facility. All staff have achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. Staff participate in ongoing and continuous professional training and development.

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.

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, 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge of operating the service on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present, and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy was always available on the premises.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources, such as previous colleges or schools attended.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for 16 staff employed to work at the service. However, for one staff member, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was available for three staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

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) The registered provider ensured that there were at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service. This was evidenced in the staff roster viewed on the day of the inspection.

(2) On arrival to the service, there were 10 adults caring for 67 pre-school children on the premises.

The adult to child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

The Baby Room was closed.

There were 9 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Wobbler Room.

There were 11 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Toddler Room.

There were 19 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Preschool Room.

There were 20 pre-school children and 2 staff in Montessori Room 1.

There were 8 pre-school children and 2 staff in Montessori Room 2.

Relief staff were available to replace staff while taking meal breaks. A designated person was available to prepare, cook and serve food to all children who attended 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

BASIC NEEDS:

Healthy eating was encouraged throughout the service. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were prepared fresh on site each day and were served at regular intervals. Younger children dined in their rooms, while older children used a dining room. Children had easy access to their drink containers at all times, including during outdoor play periods.

Sanitary accommodation was located next to each room in the service. Nappy changing facilities were provided close to the Baby, Wobbler, and Toddler rooms. Two waist-high changing units were available with steps for older children to use. All toiletries for the children were safely stored, clearly labelled, and within easy reach of staff.

Nappy changing policies were displayed on the wall, and all observed practices aligned with these procedures.

Sanitary accommodation for toilet-trained children was located next to each pre-school room, allowing children to independently use the toilet facilities while remaining under staff supervision.

Each room had a supply of tissues and wipes within easy reach of the children. Foot pedal operated, lidded bins were provided in all rooms for the safe disposal of waste.

A separate sleep room was available for children under two years, with a sufficient number of standard cots.

Room temperatures were monitored, and air conditioning units were used to maintain safe temperatures while children were sleeping.

Rest areas with soft seating, floor coverings, cushions, and blankets were accessible in each room. Staff encouraged quiet periods during the day to facilitate each child's need for comfort, rest, and relaxation. Yoga classes were held to teach children relaxation techniques.

Children experienced regular changes in environment. They spent long periods outdoors in a well-resourced play area at the back and side of the premises. Children not yet walking had exclusive access to their own space for safe outdoor play time. A large, sheltered area was provided outside for children to use in all weather conditions.

On the day of the inspection, children wore sun hats and sunscreen was applied before they went outside.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

Each room in the service was planned to meet the needs of different age groups. The wobbler and toddler rooms had soft mats for floor activities and low shelves for easy access to toys. Tables and chairs were accessible for tabletop activities. Each child had a personalised coat hook labelled with their name and photo. Artwork and family photos were displayed on the walls at child height. Large trays with sand and rice allowed for sensory play, while low book stands offered age-appropriate reading material.

Pre-school and Montessori rooms featured interest areas, art stations, messy play zones, imaginative play corners, and well-resourced libraries. Toys and equipment were rotated based on children's interests and abilities.

Children spent time outside every morning and afternoon, using tunnels, climbing frames, slides, swings, ride-on toys, rockers, and basketball nets for gross motor development. A covered area provided shelter, and mud kitchens, sand pits, and jungle gyms encouraged imaginative and sensory play. Impact-absorbent matting reduced injury risk, and blackboards and wall puzzles promoted interactive learning.

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 19 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.

(2) A registered provider-

(a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, or

(b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016,

shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider ensured at all times that

(a) Adequate and suitable facilities for children to play indoors and outdoors were provided during the day.

All play areas in the internal and external environment were clean, organised and free of clutter. Areas were designed to accommodate children playing individually, in small groups or in large groups. Play spaces were divided into distinct areas of interest, equipped with materials organised in a way to support children's play and learning.

(b) Adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day were provided.

A separate sleep room was provided for children under two years of age to ensure children had a safe place to sleep each day. All cots were in good condition and in a proper state of repair. Safety mattresses were provided in each cot, and all mattresses were clean, firm and correctly sized. Cot barrier height was sufficient to prevent a child falling out. Sleep was child led and access to sleep facilities in a suitable environment was provided when the child showed signs of tiredness or required rest. Temperatures in the sleep room were monitored and an air conditioning unit in the room ensured a safe temperature between 16 and 20° was maintained. Black out blinds were on all windows to ensure lighting was dimmed for sleep time. There was a minimum space between each cot of 50 centimeters, allowing staff easy access to all children while sleeping. Bed linen was suitable, and each child had access to their own bed linen. Cots were stored away from blinds, radiators and windows. All outdoor clothing, shoes and bibs were removed before children's sleep time. Children were physically monitored while sleeping and all sleep records were maintained electronically for each child. For children over two years of age, low level sleep mats with sheets, blankets and pillows were provided. Staff were observed staying with children while they slept on the low-level beds.

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 pre-school provided nutritious and varied food and drinks. A healthy eating policy was available, and a detailed menu plan outlined the following details. Breakfast was served at 7.15 am which included cereals like porridge, Weetabix, Rice Krispies, and Cornflakes, along with brown toast, butter, milk, and water. At 11.15 am, children were offered dinner options such as spaghetti bolognese, lasagna, fish, chicken curry, beef stroganoff, beef cottage pie, chicken casserole, and turkey meatballs. On the day of the inspection, a chicken pasta bake was served for dinner. At 2.15 pm, an afternoon snack included chopped salad, brioche buns, filled wraps, sandwiches, homemade brown bread with cheese, breadsticks, fresh natural yogurt, and various fruits. Evening snacks featured rice cakes, homemade brown bread, banana bread, or fresh scones. Additional portions and alternatives were available if needed.

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:

The external doors to the premises were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the premises unsupervised. All internal doors were appropriately secured where necessary to prevent children from accessing any unsafe areas. Suitable handrails were provided on the stairs. All floor covering was in good condition and non-slip. Toys and play equipment were safe for the age group using them, were in good condition, free from pinch and crush points, exposed bolts or any sharp edges. All outdoor areas were surrounded by a high wall which prevented a pre-school child from gaining any unsupervised access to a roadway or other sources of danger.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting dated within 3 years was available for 16 of the 17 staff members working at the service. However, for one staff member their vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. The flexes of the air purifying units located in the Toddler room and in Preschool room 1 were low lying and accessible to children. This could pose a safety risk to children when cables or flexes were located within children's reach.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was updated for the staff member whose disclosure was out of date.
2. Leads and flexes were checked, and all were secured to a location and at a height that was not accessible to children.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

A copy of the updated Garda vetting document was forwarded to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

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

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 a current insurance certificate, which outlined that adequate insurance was available for 80 preschool children to attend the full day care service. The insurance cover commenced on the 28 March 2025 and expired on the 27 March 2027.