

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LS012		
Name of Service:	Daisy Chains Childcare		
Address of Service:	Spink, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois		
Eircode:	R32 DK70		
Name of Registered Provider:	Laura McKenna		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	24/11/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.		
Inspection undertaken by:	K. Murphy		
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.		

Description of service

Operating under the current registered provider since November 2024 the service is registered as a sessional service to accommodate children aged 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates between the hours of 09:15 and 12:15 on a Monday to Friday basis.

The Early Years' Service is located in a single storey community building. The pre-school service operates from one main pre-school room and has exclusive access to another break out room and the shared facilities of the community building including a large hall, a kitchen and sanitary accommodation for staff. An outdoor play area is attached to the side of the service and accessed directly for the pre-school room. Onsite set down and parking facilities are available. The service is in a rural setting in Spink, County Laois.

Staffing

There are three staff employed in the service. The registered provider and two childcare practitioners were present during the inspection.

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.

Regulation 8- Notification of Change in Circumstances (1)

Regulation 9- Management and recruitment - (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4)

Regulation 11 -Staffing levels - (1) (3)

Regulation 16- Record of a pre-school service – (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j)(k)

Regulation 19- Health, welfare and development of child - (1)(a)

Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and Play -- (1)(a)(b) (4)

Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 24- Checking In and Out and record of Attendance

Regulation 25- First aid - (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 -Fire safety measures - (1)(a)(b) (4)

Regulation 28 – Insurance

Regulation 29 – Premises

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

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, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Compliance Information

(1)
In November 2024, a change of circumstances was submitted relating to a proposed change to the service name, legal name, registered provider, person in charge, email address of the service and associated telephone contacts. This change in circumstance was approved by the TUSLA registration office.

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 registered provider and a deputy were available in the service.

(b)

The registered provider was present for the duration of the inspection.

Three files including the file of the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available in respect of the files reviewed from a past employer or from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Staff working directly with children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at least level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was exceeded during the inspection.

(3)

There were nine children attending the service supervised directly by three adults.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) and (k).

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 children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development. Children were encouraged to be independent in caring for their belongings and putting on their coats. All children were observed to enjoy free play, choosing their own activity to participate in supervised and supported by staff.

There was a calm and happy atmosphere in the service. Children were content with their carers and staff were familiar with each child and their personality. Adults were observed to be positive towards children evidenced by individual names used, eye contact and praise for children on completion of activities. Children were supervised to use the toilet independently and regular hand washing was observed.

The routines were child led with the staff following the individual verbal and non-verbal cues of the child. The adults were observed to interact in a kind and caring manner with the children.

The children were supported in accordance with their preference on an individual level and as part of the group. Staff used individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during all activities.

Seamless transitions were noted as the children were given a lead in time to change from one activity to another. A range of developmentally appropriate experiences were available for the children. Areas of interest were noted and included a home area, construction area, arts and crafts, dress up, sensory play and small world items.

The service worked in partnership with parents. At collection time parents were provided with a verbal handover on the activities and progress of each child throughout the morning.

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.

(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable and adequate play and work equipment were provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, tabletop activities, arts and crafts and home corners.

(b)

Soft furnishings provided appropriate rest facilities for any child who wished to avail of rest and relaxation.

(4)

A separate outdoor play area was available to the side of the service. An artificial grass surface area was in place. A high-level concrete wall and a gate secured the perimeter of the outdoor area. Children's play equipment and materials for use outdoors was stored in a large playhouse.

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 entry to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable and cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. There was an adequate supply of paper hand towel and liquid soap in the sanitary accommodation. Hand washing was facilitated before snack time and after using the toilet. The pre-school room and the sanitary accommodation were ventilated by means of openable windows.

Administration of Medication:

No medicine was administered during the inspection. Temperature reducing medication was available if required by a child with a high temperature.

Fire Safety:

The fire exit routes in the premises were unobstructed. An assembly point was located to the front of the premises.

Outing:

The registered provider stated that outings are not currently carried out from the service.

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.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The records of arrival and departure reviewed verified that each child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by a nominated staff member.

(3)(a)

All entry to the service with the exception of (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) has to be approved by a staff member.

(b)

A visitor log was in place to record the details and purpose of all visitors to the service.

(4)

The visitor log is retained throughout the annual operation of the service.

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)
Two adults were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation.
- (2)(a)
A fully equipped first aid box was readily available in the service.
- (b)
A first aid box was accessible to the adults caring for the children in the pre-school 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)
A written record for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 3 November 2025.
- (b)
A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises were serviced

in September 2025.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in 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 evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2026.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (a)
The premises which has been in existence for several years visually appeared to be of sound and stable structure.
- (b)
The entrance door to the premises was secured by a locked door. Unauthorised access to the service and unsupervised exit of children from the service is controlled. A visualised doorbell was in place so visitors can be viewed prior to being allowed access to the service.
- (c)
Openable windows provide both natural light and ventilation in the pre-school room. The light fittings were covered and operational to provide adequate artificial light to the pre-school room.

The oil-fired central heating system was operational. Radiator covers were in place on the two radiators in the pre-school room. An environmental temperature of 18 degrees Celsius was noted in the pre-school room.

(d)

The floors and walls were in a good state of repair and maintenance. A cleaning schedule was available for the service and records were in place. A pest control system is in place with up-to-date records available for review.

(e)

Two water closets and one wash hand basin have been provided for children's use in the sanitary accommodation co-located and accessed directly from the pre-school room.

In separate sanitary facilities one water closet and one wash hand basin are designated for staff use.

The sanitary accommodation is ventilated by means of natural ventilation in the form of openable windows.

The sanitary accommodation is stocked with a sufficient supply of liquid soap and paper hand towel.

Non-Compliance Information

(c)

Two of the three light fittings in the children's sanitary accommodation were not operational to provide adequate artificial light to the sanitary accommodation area.

(e)

1. A required second wash hand basin was not available in the children's sanitary accommodation.
2. The water at the existing wash hand basin in the children's sanitary accommodation was not thermostatically controlled. No warm water was available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c)

The two light bulbs and fittings were replaced and are now operational. (Photographs included).

The service has now set up a maintenance log to ensure that these issues are logged and resolved in a timely manner and all staff have been shown this logbook. The registered provider will also run checks on a weekly basis for maintenance issues.

(e)

1. The old wash hand basin has been replaced with two new wash hand basins with lever taps and steps for the children. (Photographs included).
2. The undersink water heater installed was serviced and set to the appropriate temperature by our plumber. It is now working effectively. (Photographs included).

The service will ensure that the unit is serviced regularly and have introduced a daily water temperature check to ensure that the correct water temperature is maintained.

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective actions taken documentary and photographic evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.

(3) A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
Adequate floor space for the work, play and movement of children registered to attend is available.
- (3)
The space measurements recorded for the pre-school room provide an area of approximately 28 m² ensures that the minimum amount of clear floor space is available in respect of up to 15 children to attend on a sessional basis. The current maximum registered capacity for the service is 12 children.