

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MH041			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Daisy Chain Montessori & Creche			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	4 Blackbush Lane, Drogheda, Co. Meath			
<b>Eircode:</b>	A92 NX40			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Ursula Regan			
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day			
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	04/10/2023			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	53	PM	27
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co.Meath			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D. Murray & AM Cunningham			
<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

Daisy Chain Montessori & Crèche is a privately owned service operating since 2006. The service provides sessional, part-time, full day and school aged care to children from 1 to 12 years. The service operates from 07:30am to 6:15pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service consists of 5 care rooms all on the ground floor, a cot room, kitchen and sanitary facilities with an office on the first floor. An outdoor space was located to the rear of the premises which had an additional room which was used for storage.

The rooms in the service were as follows:

The **Sunshine Room** provided care for children from 1 to 2 years.

The **Rainbow Room** facilitated the care of children from 2 to 2 years 8 months.

The **Stepping Stones, Little Scholars and the Little Cherubs rooms** provided education and care to children from 2 years 8 months to 6 years.

### Staffing

Staff employed in the service were 2 managers, 1 supervisor, 11 core childcare staff, 1 relief staff, 1 cook and 2 household staff. Two students doing the Early Childhood Care and Education course were on work placement from college. The only staff member not present on the day of inspection was the relief staff member.

### 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.

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 co-operation of the 2 managers, supervisor, 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*

*(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.*

*(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”*

### Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b)Forty validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c)Garda vetting disclosure was available for 19 adults. One student was exempt from Garda vetting as she was under the age of 18 years.

(d) Police vetting was available for three staff who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Fifteen childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6A) Three staff members were employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

### 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 12 adults and 2 students working directly with the 53 children attending the service. The 2 managers were available to provide assistance to the care rooms as needed.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity on the day of inspection:

The **Sunshine Room** had 4 children ranging in age from 1 to 2 years being cared for by 1 staff member and 1 student.

The **Rainbow Room** had 9 children ranging in age from 2 to 2 years 8 months being cared for by 2 staff members.

The **Stepping Stones Room** had 17 children ranging in age 2 years 8 months to 5 years being cared for by 3 staff members (one staff member providing AIM support).

The **Little Scholars** room had 12 children ranging in age from 3 years to 5 years being cared for by 3 staff members (one staff member providing AIM support).

The **Little Cherubs Room** had 11 children ranging in age from 3 years 4 months to 4 years 8 months being cared for by 3 staff members (one staff member providing AIM support) and 1 student.

(8) (a) The designated person in charge ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

### 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 observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

##### Basic needs:

- The adults spoke to all children in a positive way and listened attentively to each child. The adults were observed offering choices to the children, using the child's name, making eye contact and facilitating age appropriate choice. The children showed confidence around the staff members and sought out staff members for reassurance, comfort and support.
- Children individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required. Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Older children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.
- Children were observed enjoying meaningful, sustained play with tabletop activities, art and crafts and free playing with lots of conversation and laughter observed. Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. In the Rainbow, Sunshine and Little Scholars rooms the staff members stated that the theme of the week was "Autumn" with artwork of painted leaves and squirrels displayed which supported their individual efforts. In the Stepping Stones room the children were learning about the human body and senses with the children getting the opportunity to smell and touch different items and then placing them on the picture related to that sense. In the Little Cherubs room, the theme of the week was healthy eating. Children sat with the staff members and as they held up photographs of different foods with the children stating if they were healthy or not. All children were given the opportunity to participate and were praised for their efforts and participation.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning with all children observed enjoying outdoor play with their peers on the day of inspection.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed on “The Family Wall and Family Tree’ in the care rooms.
- In the older care rooms staff used a child centred approach, creating an inclusive and multi-cultural learning environment to support the learning needs and language development of the children in these rooms.
- Individual care plans were available for children who required additional support and were adapted to suit the individual child.
- Staff members meet the parents at pick-up time and any issues pertaining to the child was discussed.

### 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-

(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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b) Cosy areas consisting of mats, cushions and soft furnishings were available in all care rooms should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. A cot room was available with 5 standard cots for the younger age group who required sleep. The older children requiring sleep were accommodated on stackable beds in the Little Scholars room.

(3)(a) The outdoor space was suitable, safe and secure and was divided into 3 areas by fencing with an all-weather and wood chip surface. The smaller area accommodated the Sunshine and Rainbow rooms. The larger area facilitated the Stepping Stones, Little Scholars and Little Cherubs Rooms.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- The care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving at their height which supported children to select and become involved in meaningful, sustained play experiences. The areas of interest were richly enhanced with colourful, creative up-cycled furniture which created a real home from home environment.
- The outdoor spaces were equipped with age-appropriate play materials and equipment to facilitate the children to engage in energetic play and physical activity. Equipment included slides, ride on toys, stationary wooden train, play houses, activity units mounted to the walls with pots, pans and musical instruments, gutters for pouring, pebble and planting areas, mud kitchen, tyres and a construction area.

## 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 service had a 2-week menu plan with a selection of meals ranging from meat and poultry along with a variety of snack. Parents have an option of sending snacks in with their children or the children can avail of all the snacks supplied by the service. For the children attending the service on a full day care basis, breakfast was available from 7:30am to 8:30am consisting of a choice of cereals. Morning snack was served between 10 and 11am which consisted of banana, apple and crackers. Dinner was served between 11:40 and 12midday which consisted of turkey curry with rice and vegetables. A snack of cheese sandwiches and orange segments was served before leaving for home. Water was the drink of choice with individual bottles/cups for the children in the care rooms.

## 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The gate entering the side entrance to the service was secured by 2 bolts and the main door to the service was secured by a buzzer system. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- An indoor and outdoor risk assessment was conducted on a regular basis.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.

##### Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.
- Fridges were available in the care rooms for the refrigeration of perishable items.

##### Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- Temperature of the cot room was maintained between 16 to 20°C and between 18 to 22°C in the Little Scholars room while children were sleeping.
- A sleep log recording the position, colour and breathing pattern was recorded at 10 minutes intervals on all sleeping children.
- Block out blinds were available which created an atmosphere conducive to sleep.

### 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) The service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

### 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 written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 20/09/2023.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment was last serviced on the 01/03/2023. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 11/07/2023.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 70 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 23/03/2023 to the 27/3/2024.