

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015MN020 |
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| Name of Service: | Daisy Chain Childcare |
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| Address of Service: | Cluain Alainn, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan |
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| Eircode: | A81 W215 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Charlotte Gavin |
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| Service type: | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional |
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| Date of Inspection: | 15/01/2025 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 42 | PM | 33 |
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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84 |
| Inspection undertaken by: | S Mc Kenna |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not Applicable |
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Description of service

Daisy Chain Childcare is a privately owned service which commenced in 2007. The service provides Full Day care services to children aged 0- 6 years, and operates from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, catering for a maximum of 52 children. This service is located in a two-storey purpose-built dwelling in a housing estate in Carrickmacross in Co. Monaghan. There are 4 care rooms named Baby, Toddler, Preschool and After School. Designated sanitary accommodation, nappy changing facilities and a sleep room are provided. There are 2 outdoor areas to the rear and side of the service. Parking is available to the front of the building.

Staffing

There are 15 staff employed in the service which includes the registered provider. Twelve staff work directly with the children, which includes one adult employed on the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) programme. One staff member works with school aged children and 2 adults are employed as cooks.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding

Health, Safety and Welfare of Child and Regulation and 26 Fire Safety measures. However, on inspection an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 16. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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, 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, 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.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge, who is the registered provider, and a named person to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the registered provider and deputy person in charge, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation the designated person in charge or the named person in charge were on the premises.

(2) The staff files for fifteen adults were reviewed.

(a) Nineteen written and validated references from a previous employer were available on file.

Three written references from a previous employer were on file.

(b) Two written and validated references from a reputable source were available on file.

Four written references were available on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 15 staff. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for 9 staff.

(d) A review of the employment history for the fifteen staff, demonstrated that four staff had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. A total of six police vetting certificates were required. Five police vetting certificates were available on file.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that twelve staff employed to work with children, held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. A qualification for three staff was not required as they do not work directly with the children.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) (b)

The registered provider had not completed the validation process in relation to four written references. There were no written references on file for one staff member.

(2) (d)

One police vetting certificate was not available for one staff member.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Reference Validation for four references. Ensure reference checks are completed as Staff are recruited. Written references for staff member were put into file. Ensure regular checks and organisation of staff files. Police vetting obtained. Regular checks of staff files, maintain a checklist for all needed on files.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of validated references, and two new written validated references.
Copy of police vetting.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 9 (2) (a) (b) and (2) (d).

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 the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.

The following adult to child ratios were observed upon the inspectors arrival:

Two adults cared for 8 children aged 6 months to 1 year 2 months in the Baby Room.

Three adults cared for 18 children aged 1 year 10 months to 3 years in the Toddler Room.

Three adults cared for 17 children aged 3 years 2 months to 4 years 12 months in the Preschool Room.

In addition to the above, the registered provider assisted in the Baby and Toddler rooms during nappy changing and break times.

(8) A review of the staff rosters demonstrated that there are at least 2 adults on the premises while the full day care service is in operation.

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;

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a) An employment record for one adult was unavailable.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Employment record obtained. Regular checks of staff files.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of employment record.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 16 (1) (a).

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that the children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

Basic Needs

Healthy eating was promoted within the service. A 3-week rolling menu was in place. All snack and meals eaten by the children are made fresh onsite by the childcare cook. On the day of inspection, a choice of cereal was available for breakfast, morning snack was a selection of fruit. Dinner was sausages, potatoes, peas and gravy, with freshly made scones and fruit for evening snack. Appropriate plates, bowls and cutlery were used and was suitable for the children's age stage and development. The staff and cook advised additional foods are available to the children if required.

The younger children had their nappies changed in line with their individual routine and care needs. The older children were encouraged to be independent while using the toilet. An adult remained with children from the Toddler room due to the location of their sanitary area, and the Preschool children were observed to use the toilet by themselves, with adults close by if needed.

There was spare clothing available for the children, with boots and suitable clothing provided for use in the outdoors. The children in the Toddler and Preschool rooms were observed to take part in outdoor play time on the day of the inspection and were dressed in their welly boots and waterproof clothing. Bib cloths were used by the children in the Baby and Toddler rooms at meal times, with the children's faces cleaned with individual face cloths after dinner time.

Younger babies were observed to crawl, lay and roll on soft floor areas within their care room. Changing of positions of younger babies was observed to be provided by the staff. The children were facilitated to play on soft mats, to sit up with adult support, to relax and lay down on soft mats, and tummy time opportunities was also facilitated by the staff.

Where minor disagreements were observed on occasions between children over sharing of toys, the staff were observed to speak to the children about the disagreement in age-appropriate language and come to a solution together.

Supporting Relationships

The staff demonstrated sensitivity and positive regard for children and their families through respecting parental wishes, and dietary preferences. Communication with parents is through use of a digital application and in person at arrival and collection times.

Curriculum planning was on display, with observations and activities reviewed which are sent home to parents/carers through a digital application on a regular basis.

There was minimal changeover of staff observed, allowing for consistency of carers for the children. Opportunities for siblings to play together and see each other during their day was provided during outdoor play time, and the

door between the Baby and Toddler room remains open most of the day where siblings were observed to interact with one another.

The staff in all care rooms engaged in story time and singing songs with the children through the inspection. The children in preschool listened to a story about a penguin and took part in some child led dancing with music. The Toddler children enjoyed washing dolls in large floor tubs with wet cloths and bubbles. The babies were observed to enjoy songs, one to one time with adults, playing with sensory toys and interacting with their siblings when opportunities arose.

The staff team were observed to work well together. Regular staff support meetings are held with management

Physical And Material Environment

The care rooms are bright and welcoming. Children’s art work is displayed on the walls, which is sent home at the end of each term. The care rooms were laid out to facilitate free flow between the children’s choice of activities and interest areas. The care rooms were resourced with various interest areas and resources.

The Baby room had a soft floor covering area with adequate play equipment to include many sensory, musical, pop up and fidget toys. Balls, blocks and soft books were also observed to be used by the babies. There was a low-level window allowing children to see outside. The babies were observed to interact with their siblings at the window while they were in the outdoor play area.

The Toddler room had areas to include home corner, construction, push a long trucks, rest and book area, small world toys, animals, cars, dolls and equipment. Additional play materials were stored on high shelving that the staff provided for use by the children at various intervals throughout the day.

The Preschool room included a home corner with resources, a construction section with building toys, a soft mat with cushions and books, where children on several occasions were observed to relax and read the books. Table top toys and creative materials were also provided. Painting easels were available located in the hallway to the care room where the children’s own individual cubby boxes were stored.

Materials available to the children were placed on low level accessible children, to promote the children’s choice of what to play with and encourage independence at clean up time.

There are two outdoor play areas available for children’s use. The Baby room have their own designated outdoor area which has concrete and artificial grass ground coverings. Wooden games are attached to the walls, with a planting area available. The other outdoor area is spacious, with ground coverings of concrete, tarmac, artificial grass and bark. There is a covered area which allows use during inclement weather conditions. Planting and digging and playing in the mud kitchen proved very popular among the children observed in the outdoor area on

the day of inspection. Push a long and ride on toys with open spaces for use of these toys, as well as climbing structures were also provided for large physical play time in the outdoors. A shed that stores additional outdoor toys was provided.

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 observed on the day of inspection:

- Upon the inspectors arrival the main entrance door was secured, preventing unauthorised access to the building. The garden areas were secured by high level wooden fencing and lockable gates.
- The children were observed to be adequately supervised during the inspection.
- The equipment and play materials used by the children were observed to be maintained in a good state of repair.
- Blinds cords in the care rooms and sleep room windows were secured.
- Handrails were provided on the stairway. The floors throughout the building were maintained in good repair.

Infection Control:

The inspector observed the following infection control measures in practice within the service:

- Warm running water, hand soap and paper towels were provided for handwashing purposes. Hand washing was observed following nappy changing practises.
- Aprons and gloves were used during nappy changing. The sanitary areas were ventilated through means of openable windows and mechanical ventilation.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned before and after meal times.
- Milk bottles were stored in the fridge in the Baby Room when not in use.
- Cleaning schedules were on display and completed up to date.

Safe Sleep:

- A sleep room was provided for children aged under 2 years. Six cots were provided, with waterproof safety mattresses. Cellular blankets were available for children aged under 1 year old. Individual bed sheets and blankets were stored individually and laundered at least once a week in the service.
- Sleep checks were carried out and recorded at a minimum of 10-minute intervals, which detailed the sleeping child's skin colour, breathing pattern, position, room temperature and staff signatures.
- Stackable beds with individual bedding were provided and observed in use by children aged over 2 years.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for 15 staff members. However, six of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. A cord from the sleep room temperature recording device was sellotaped to the wall. There was a cot used by children placed against this wall, therefore the cord was accessible to the children using this cot. This poses a risk of injury to a child.
3. Two cleaning materials were placed within an under-sink cupboard in the Baby Room which was unlocked. This poses a risk of harm to a child.

Infection Control:

4. The bins provided within the Toddler nappy changing area had broken pedals, requiring the bin lid to be handled each time a nappy needed disposed. This poses a risk of cross contamination.

Fire Safety:

5. Fire drills were not carried out on a monthly basis, as per the recommended guidance for fire safety in premises used by preschool services.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting updated for six staff members. Regular checks of staff files, keep list updated of dates of Garda Vetting.
2. Sleep room temperature recording device replaced and cord removed. Ensure wire free temperature recording devices are used.
3. Cleaning materials were removed from the under-sink cupboards and placed out of children's reach in the Nappy Change room.

Infection Control:

4. Bins in Nappy Change areas replaced and labelled. Regular checks in bins to ensure hygiene levels are maintained.

Fire Safety:

5. Fire drills carried out monthly. Keep record of dates of drills and make sure they are carried out monthly

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copies of six garda vetting disclosures.

Photographic evidence of new wireless room temperature device in place.

Photographic evidence of cleaning materials removed from under-sink cupboard and stored up high.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of new labelled, pedal operated bins in place.

Fire Safety:

A copy of a fire drill record dated 06 February 2025.

Summary Comment

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

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 of fire drills that had taken place was available for review.
- (b) The annual maintenance certificate for the fire extinguishers was dated July 2024 and smoke alarms was dated December 2024.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed on walls throughout the service, which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.