

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Tusla I.D.: TU2015WD003

Name of Service: An Duine Beag Montessori School

Address of Service: Ballynageeragh, Dunhill, Co Waterford, X91 DH33

Email Address: elainelyonswalsh@gmail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Elaine Walsh

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	✓	Part-Time		Sessional	✓
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change: Increase the number of pre-school children from 22 to 44, aged from 2 to 6 years, and increasing the opening hours from 07:00 to 14:00 to 06:45 to 18:00.

Proposed Number of Children: 44

Recommended Change Following Inspection: AM: 22 Full day care and 22 sessional care (44 total)
PM: 22 Full day care (22 total)

Registered change: Change in number of children from 22 to 44 (Max 22 full day) children
Change in hours of operation from 07:00 – 14:00 to 06:45 – 18:00

Date of Inspection- Day 1	1	1	0	9	2	0	2	5
Date of Inspection- Day 2	1	3	0	2	2	0	2	6

Inspection undertaken by: A. Bradshaw

Title: Early years inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Community Care Building, Cork Road, Waterford City

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day & Sessional Service for 44(Max 22 Full Day) Children
Date of Registration	3rd March 2026

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	<p>An Duine Beag is a private preschool service operating from a purpose-built premises on the grounds of the registered provider's home. The service is registered to care for up to 22 children aged from 2 to 6 years from 07:00 to 14:00. The registered provider proposes to care for up to 44 children aged from 2- 6 years on a full-day care basis operating from 06:45 to 18:00.</p> <p>The service also offers school-aged care.</p>
Premises	<p>An Duine Beag has two care rooms divided by a sliding door. There is a small kitchenette in one of the rooms with a fridge, a sink and two microwaves. There are sanitary facilities in both rooms and a large play area to the front and rear of the building. Each room leads directly to the outdoor area.</p>
Staffing	<p>The registered provider is the designated person in charge and is on the premises daily. The registered provider will work directly with the children in the service, and there is a second named person available to deputise as required. The registered provider currently employs six staff members in the service.</p>
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes: Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p>

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	<p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>
<p>Additional information</p>	<p>During the inspection on the 11 September 2025, the inspector observed that the building may have undergone material alterations and that it differed from the documentation received in the application. As a result, this process was put on hold and the application referred to the registration office for follow up.</p> <p>The inspector observed, and the registered provider confirmed that they had increased the number of children attending the preschool service without awaiting the conclusion of the change in circumstance process. As a result, the matter was referred to the Inspectorate’s SOORS team.</p> <p>Both matters reached a successful conclusion, and a second day of inspection was carried out on the 13 February 2026.</p>
<p>Acknowledgements</p>	<p>The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.</p>

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement of the regulation is met.

The registered provider is the designated person in charge and assists across the rooms with the children as needed. A second named staff member is available to deputise as required.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—

(a) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a childminding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

Requirement met:

The requirement of the regulation is met.

(1) The registered provider stated they will ensure that adequate numbers of staff will be working directly with the children attending the service. The registered provider employs six staff to care for the pre-school children currently attending.

(8)(a) The registered provider is aware of the requirement to ensure two adults are on the premises at all times.

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.*
- (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 or*

Requirement met:

The requirement of the regulation is met:

(1)(a) The service operates from two care rooms. Both rooms are bright, warm and lit by natural light. The rooms were set up with child-sized tables and chairs. They are equipped with toys which include Montessori materials, tabletop activities such as puzzles, threading and sorting/grading objects suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children who will attend the service. Children’s imaginative play is supported by dress-up clothes and small world play equipment. The layout of the rooms allows the children the space to move freely and choose their own activity. There is a cosy corner with soft furnishings close to the bookshelves for children to take a break or rest during the day.

(1)(b) Provisions are in place for children to rest and or sleep while attending the service. There are stackable beds available for the proposed 22 children attending on a full-day care basis. The rest area is away from the main play area but is adjacent to the care room.

(3)(a)

The registered provider described how the children have daily access to the outdoor areas. The care room leads directly to the outdoor space. There are two fenced grassed areas in the driveway of the service. The children have access to the driveway when the gates are secured. This space is equipped with toys and materials which

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

support children’s physical development, including slides, wheeled toys, and ball games.

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 service.

Requirement not met:

The requirement has not been met. The registered provider does not have provisions in place to ensure that 22 children attending on a full-time basis will receive the required two meal (one of which is a hot meal) and two snacks. The registered provider stated that parents provide the children’s food. There are two microwaves in the kitchenette which is not sufficient to reheat food for 22 children in a timely manner.

The fridge is not suitable to store perishable food for the children attending on a full-time basis. The services Healthy Eating policy referred to children attending the service for a short time and gave examples of healthy lunches which includes sandwiches, rolls and pieces of fruit but did not refer to food that can be served as a hot dinner.

Response from Provider:

The registered provider has stated that the parents of children who will attend the service on a full-time basis have been requested to ensure all children have enough food for a main meal and snacks during the day. This must include one nutritious meal which will be reheated by the service at lunch time. A copy of the amended Healthy Eating policy was submitted.

A large fridge is available to accommodate the storage of perishable food which will be supplied by the parents.

Evidence of additional microwaves purchased was submitted.

Evidence was submitted to demonstrate that four staff members had completed a food safety and HACCP Level 1 course.

Summary Comment:

The requirement has been met.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

- The main entrance door to the service is appropriately monitored. The main entrance door has large glass visual panels and is secured with a thumb lock during operational hours. The garden exits are also secured.
- The tables and chairs in the care rooms, which will be used for tabletop activities and mealtimes, are at the appropriate height for the age of the children accommodated in the room.
- All storage of waste, both indoors and outdoors, and cleaning materials, are inaccessible to the children.
- There is a cleaning schedule in place, and the cleaning products are stored out of reach of the children
- Shelving and storage units are stable and secure.
- The waste bins in the building are pedal operated.
- There is a high shelving in the sanitary areas to store cleaning products and equipment.
- Exit doors were unobstructed during the inspection, and the emergency lighting is mounted over these doors.
- The kitchenette is inaccessible to the children.
- All cables and flexes are adequately secured to reduce the potential risks to a child. Electrical sockets are covered when not in use.
- Shelving and storage units are stable and secure.
- The outdoor area is secure with a high fence and a locked gate
- There is liquid soap, warm water and disposable paper towels to ensure effective handwashing

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider and the person in charge are trained to the First Aid Responder level and are available to the children at all times.

(2)(a)(b) The main first aid box is prominently available to all staff, and easily accessible on a shelf in the kitchenette.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement is met.

(1)(a)(b) Records of monthly fire drills are available for review by the inspector.

Evidence reviewed demonstrated that the firefighting equipment was serviced in February 2025, and the smoke alarms were maintained in April 2025.

(4) Procedures for the evacuation of the building in case of fire are displayed in each room. The evacuation meeting point is signposted outside the building.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

The service has insurance to cover a maximum of 54 children on a full-time basis. The expiry date on the insurance certificate is 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.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been partially met.

(a) The person in charge confirmed that they knew of no structural defects and that the building is structurally sound.

(b) The main entrance door to the building had a large glass panel to allow a visual on anyone exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the premises.

(c) The care rooms have large windows which provide natural lighting. The natural light can be augmented with artificial ceiling lighting, which is covered. The windows could be opened to allow the circulation of fresh air.

(d) The care rooms are in a clean condition, and there is a cleaning schedule.

Requirement not met:

(e) The half doors on the children’s toilet cubicles are unfinished and do not have a wipeable surface. There is no disposable paper in one of the children’s toilets. There is no warm water for hand washing in the sanitary area in the 2nd care room.

Response from Provider:

The registered provider stated that the doors of the children’s toilets have been painted and are now washable. Photographic evidence was submitted. They stated that on the day of the inspection the switch for the water heater had not been turned on and they would ensure this is not the case going forward.

Summary Comment:

The requirement was met.

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.*
- (2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

- (1) The proposed registered provider has allowed for adequate, clear floor space to be available to allow children free movement to work and play.
- (2) There are two care rooms available to preschool children in the morning. This reduces to one with the arrival of school age children in the afternoon. As a result, the service has sufficient clear floor space for 44 children (22 sessional, 22 full day care) in the morning and 22 children attending full day care in the afternoon.