

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WX053
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Higgy's House Creche and Montessori
-------------------------	-------------------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ramsgate Village, Gorey, Wexford
----------------------------	----------------------------------

<b>Eircode:</b>	Y25 X285
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Hilary Lantzós
-------------------------------------	----------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	05/04/2023
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	32	PM	30
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Tulsa Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital Ferrybank Wexford
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C. Ryan
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
---------------------------------	----------------

### Description of service

Higgy's House Creche and Montessori is registered as a full day care service for children aged 1 to 12 years. The service offers Montessori and play based learning programmes. The service is open from Monday to Friday, 07:30 to 18:30 hours. The service is located in a purpose-built premises for the sole use of the early years service. The building consists of four playrooms, a kitchen and dining room, sleep room, entrance lobby, office and sanitary accommodation. Outside is an enclosed garden/play area. The ethos of the service "to provide a safe and secure environment where each child is respected and treated as an individual where they are encouraged to express themselves freely and an enthusiasm for learning promoted."

### Staffing

The childcare manager is the designated person in charge and works directly with the children in the service. The staff working directly with the children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at the minimum Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 10, 11, 19, 22, 23, 25 and 26.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9, 10, 11, 19, 22, 23, 25, and 26. As a result, the scope of the inspection included time spent in 3 early years rooms.

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 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
- (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)(b)

The childcare manager was the designated person in charge when the inspector arrived at the premises. There was a second named staff available to deputise as required. The childcare manager stated that there were seven new members of staff employed in the service since the last inspection on 20 January 2021. The files for the new staff members were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

There were two validated references available on file for each of the new staff members.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available on file in the service for all the new staff members.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were available on file as required for the new staff member who had worked or lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Certificates of qualifications for all the new staff members working directly with the early years children were available on file.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### Compliance Information

There were written policies, procedures, and statements, as specified in Schedule 5, available for the service. The following sample of policies were reviewed on this inspection, behaviour management policy, complaints policy, accidents and incidents policy, nappy changing policy, healthy eating and the infection control policy were found to be satisfactory and specific to the setting.

### 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.*

*(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.*

*(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*

*(a) a sessional pre-school service, and*

*(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3)*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(2)

There was an adequate number of staff working with the children for the duration of the inspection.

(3)(4)

During the morning, there were 32 children being directly cared for by 7 staff.

During the afternoon, there were 30 children being cared for by 6 staff.

The childcare manager was present also and available to assist across the rooms as needed.

## 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 and discussions with staff reflect the children's experience within the service focusing on the area of supporting relationships on the day of inspection:

The children in the pine room were enjoying their morning snack with the staff. The staff and children chatted, and discussed what they would like to do after snack. The children enjoyed circle time, singing and dancing. During circle time a child approached a staff for a cuddle, and this was reciprocated. The tabletop activity was gluing and sticking Easter crafts.

The staff showed respect with their interactions with the children. For example, one child wished to sit at a different table by herself to do her gluing and crafting and this was facilitated by staff. The staff were observed to support children to use the toilet independently during the morning and prompted handwashing. The interactions between the staff and children during the morning were kind and caring, with plenty of chatting and praise given to the children.

The children in the oak room were observed making Easter nests and were very excited to tell the inspector about going outside later to look for the Easter bunny. The children were observed to enjoy periods outside during the day.

In the willow room, the children's needs such as nappy changing and sleep needs were child led. Nappies were changed as part of the daily routine and also as needed. The children enjoyed listening to stories and dancing in circle time. The staff were attentive and kind with the children. For example, a child who rolled over and banged their head while exploring on the floor was picked up and comforted swiftly. Minor incidents over grabbing of toys were managed calmly and kindly.

Relationships between siblings were fostered while in the service, with older siblings of children waving into rooms to younger siblings. The service used a digital application to communicate with parents daily. The application was used to email parents newsletters, menus, photographs, learning stories and daily updates.

## 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 supplied the food and snacks to the children. The service employed a cook to assist with preparing the food. Jugs and beakers of water was available in all the rooms and was refreshed during the day. During the morning children ate corn cakes and cream cheese for their mid-morning snack. The dinner was baked ham, vegetables and mashed potatoes. A small bowl of fruit was provided after dinner.

In the afternoon children were offered brown bread with jam and freshly chopped fruit for all children. A 3-week food and meal plan were available to view and emailed to parents. Children ate their snacks and meals in their rooms. Children were helped with handwashing before eating and staff gave help with feeding as 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:

Access to the service was appropriately secured with an electronic keypad lock system that ensured restricted access to unauthorised persons. Cleaning products were stored away and inaccessible to children in the utility room. The kitchen was secured to restrict access to children. The outdoor play area was fully enclosed and secured to the rear of the premises.

##### Infection Control:

The service was clean and well maintained with cleaning schedules maintained daily by staff. Children were observed being supervised with washing their hands before eating, after messy play and after toileting. Staff were observed to wash young children's hands after nappy changing. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand drying throughout the service. Staff advised that mouthed toys were washed and sterilised daily. Nappy changing procedures observed on the day were in line with the services nappy changing policy. The windows in the playrooms were open to provide natural ventilation.

##### Administration of Medication:

There was an administration of medication policy. The staff showed the inspector the procedure to follow when a child required administration of medication. Medications were supplied by parents and stored securely in a designated area inaccessible to children. Where regular medication was required by a child, the service put an action plan in place.

##### Safe Sleep:

The service had a designated sleep room, located off the willow room. There were 10 standard cots and 1 evacuation cot for use by children who were less than 2 years of age. Individual bed linen was available, which was laundered as needed. Staff in the willow room, who spoke with the inspector, were aware of safe sleep practices for example, how often a sleeping child is physically checked, recording of the observations such as colour, position and breathing rate and the optimum sleep room temperature.

In the pine room there were sleep mats for children over two years of age to sleep on during the day. The staff stated they remain in the rooms with the children and record sleep checks as per the services policy on safe 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)

There were staff trained in first aid available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the premises and was available for use.

## 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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
  - (b) an employee, and
  - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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)

Monthly fire drills were carried out within the service. Records reviewed on inspection confirmed that the last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 15 February 2023.

(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment was serviced. The last maintenance carried out in the service was recorded as having taken place in February 2023.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the service. The fire assembly point was clearly identified.