

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018DR504
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Tree House Pre-school & Montessori
-------------------------	------------------------------------

Address of Service:	Glencullen Community Hall, Carnegie Building, Glencullen Village, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	D18 KR63
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Elaine Dunne
-------------------------------------	--------------

Service type:	Part Time
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	17/09/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Duff
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

Tree House Montessori and Afterschool was established in 2018 and is one of two privately owned services operated by the registered provider. Part-time care and education are provided Monday to Friday to children aged two to six years between the hours of 09:00 to 13:00. The programme of care is facilitated through a blend of a Montessori and play based curriculum. The service operates from a community hall in a rural area of South County Dublin in the village of Glencullen. An outdoor play space is available to the children to the rear of the premises with natural grass surfacing.

Staffing

The service currently employs six adults including the registered provider and an adult employed to carry out administrative duties. The registered provider divides their time between this service and their second service. The person in charge works directly with the children but was not present on the day of inspection. There were three adults working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider arrived subsequent to the inspector's arrival to facilitate the inspection and was available to support staff and children throughout 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child, information and records and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2)(3)(4) Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels.

Regulation 15 Record of a pre-school child.

Regulation 19 (1)(b) Health, welfare and development of child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of child.

Regulation 28 Insurance

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
- (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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required, the deputy person in charge was on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2)
- The inspection included a review of the required documentation for three staff members employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 28 March 2022. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for each of the six staff members employed in the service. The following documentation was available;

- (a)(b) Of the six written and validated references that were required, six were available from a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for six staff members employed to work in the service. Garda vetting disclosures from all staff members were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (3) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had been carried out prior to the two adults commencing employment in the service since the last inspection on 28 March 2022.
- (4) Records were available evidencing that three staff member who were employed to work directly with the children since the last inspection on 28 March 2022 held the required qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

- (3) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2)(a)(b) had not been carried out prior to one adult commencing employment in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has stated that the reference is now in place and was received on the day of inspection. The staff member had previously attempted to secure a reference from previous employer.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for part time services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 13 children attending the service being supervised by 3 staff members on the day of inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

(a) the name and date of birth of the child;

(b) the date on which the child first attended the service;

(c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;

(d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;

(e) authorisation for the collection of the child;

(f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;

(g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;

(h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;

(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The registered provider ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

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-

(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

(1)(b)

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place. Staff were observed interacting warmly with the children throughout the inspection and engaging with them positively. The children moved freely throughout the room – exploring their environment, playing and engaging with each other and the staff. Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to a new activity and for mealtime. Children brought snacks from home. Drinks were readily available within the care room. Mealtime was a social occasion with children and adults sitting together, staff provided children with help when needed. Children had the opportunity to extend mealtimes according to their individual wishes or to leave the table when finished eating. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment.

Children were assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times. Child sized tables and chairs allowed the children to eat and engage in tabletop activities. There was evidence that equipment and materials provided were based on the children’s individual needs and emergent interests. Toys and equipment were laid out on low

level shelving units and accessible to children. The care room also had child sizes sofa, cushions and floor mats to facilitate rest or provide a place for children to take a break from activities.

Children spent time outdoors throughout the day and were dressed appropriate to the weather, wearing wellington boots and outdoor suits. Staff members were observed to react quickly to children's ques whilst outside and supported them to come back inside to use the toilet.

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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorized persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. In addition, the outdoor play area was enclosed, restricting unauthorized persons from gaining access to this area and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Toys and equipment in the care room were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored in a locked press or out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- The indoor and outdoor environments were maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, paper towel, liquid soap, and pedal operated bin.
- The children and staff members washed their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection
- Children's lunch boxes containing perishable items which had been taken in from home were refrigerated.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of procedures to safeguard children when administering medicine. This included getting written consent from parents or guardians, having a second staff member present as a witness during administration, and maintaining detailed records shared with parents or guardians upon collection.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- In the outdoor area, a shed used by the caretaker was left unlocked. The shed contained paint and tools. It is acknowledged that a member of staff remained in close proximity to the shed when the inspector brought this to the staffs' attention. This poses a potential risk if harm to a child if they accessed the shed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider has stated that a lock has been placed on the shed door and staff will ensure the door is kept locked at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

Click or tap here to enter text.

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 the part time service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for the 25 children and an expiry date of 27 March 2026.