

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2018DY508
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Discovery Queen B's Creche & Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Unit 1 Discovery Building, Royal Canal Park, Dublin 15
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D15 EW70
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Bernadette Hill
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	13/01/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	32	PM	30
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	T Nelson and E Griffin
<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).

Conditions if applicable

Not applicable

### Description of service

Discovery Queen B's Creche & Montessori is a full day care service located in a residential area of Dublin 15 and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 43 children aged 0 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday. The ECCE sessional service is delivered from 8.45am to 12.15pm. The service is one of three services operated locally by the registered provider. The service is based on the ground floor of a residential complex in a purpose-built unit. There are three care rooms; Baby Toddler Room, Pre Montessori-Room and Montessori Room with sanitary accommodation located off each of these care rooms. The Baby Toddler Room has direct access to a sleep room. Further facilities include a reception area, kitchen and staff toilets. There is an enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

There are currently twelve staff employed including the person in charge, eight staff who work directly with the children, two support workers and one kitchen staff. The registered provider manages the oversight of the service. There were twelve adults present on the day of the inspection including the person in charge and the registered provider who arrived during the course of 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 area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9(1), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3) (4) Management and Recruitment
- Regulation 11(1), (4) Staffing Levels
- Regulation 16(1)(h)(i)(j)(k) Records in relation to the Preschool Service
- Regulation 19(1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of child
- Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials
- Regulation 22 Food and Drink
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Child
- Regulation 30 Minimum Space Requirements

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following:

- Regulation 9(1), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3) (4) Management and Recruitment
- Regulation 16(1)(h)(j)(k) – Records in relation to Preschool Service.

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

- (b) The deputy person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived at the service, and the person in charge arrived later in the morning and was present for the duration of the inspection.

- (2) Following a review of the staff roster and discussion with the registered provider, it was established that there were five staff new to the service since the last inspection on the 25 April 2024 and these files were reviewed.
- (a) Five validated written references were available from recent past employers.
  - (b) Five validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.
  - (c) Completed Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the five staff members.
  - (d) Four adults who had lived in a state other than Ireland for six months or more as an adult had international police vetting from that state available for inspection.
- (4) Of the five files reviewed, the three staff who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (3) Documentary evidence available indicated that one staff member had commenced employment within the service prior to receipt of Garda vetting.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

All garda vetting must be completed and submitted to service, before any training or employment can commence in our service. No preventative action submitted.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

No evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the action submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(3) has been addressed and will be reviewed the next inspection.

### 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.*

*(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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service to meet their basic care needs. There were six adults available to the 32 children when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service at 9.42am.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(4) The minimum adult to child ratios were not always maintained in the Pre-Montessori and Montessori rooms which had a potential impact on the supervision and safety of the children. The following was observed:

Room	Time	Age range:	Number of Children present	Number of adults present	Minimum number of adults required
Montessori Room	On arrival to the service at 9.42am - 10.00am.	3-5 years old.	17	1	2 required. Ratio 1:11 during ECCE sessional hours.
Montessori Room	12.15pm - 12.56pm	3-5 years old	17	2	3 required. Ratio 1:8 after ECCE sessional hours.
Pre-Montessori Room	12.32pm - 12.57pm	2-3 years old.	9	1	2 required.

This was identified as a non-compliance on the previous inspection held on the 25 April 2024 and actions put in place failed to prevent a recurrence.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The service ensure 2 members of staff will be present in the Pre -Montessori room when children are sleeping, adhering to child / adult ratio. The service has developed a staff roster for sleep time in the Pre-Montessori room to ensure that 2 members of staff are in the room when children are sleeping.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of staff roster for sleep time.

#### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted which partially addressed the non-compliance identified. The registered provider did not address the non-compliance in relation to ratios in the montessori room, this will be reviewed on the next inspection.

### 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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

#### Compliance Information

- (1) (h) Attendance records detailing the arrival and departure of the children on a daily basis were maintained.
- (j) Following a review of a sample of ten records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for the administration of medication.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider did not ensure the following:
- (i) The staff roster was not reflective of the adults who were working in the service as evidenced by the following:
    - A staff member who no longer works in the service was included in the roster.

- No staff had signed the staff roster and attendance log when the inspectors had arrived at the service at 9.42am and there were six staff present in the premises at that time.

All adults working in the service must be detailed on a daily staff roster, including start/finish and break times. This was identified as a non-compliance on the previous inspection held on the 25 April 2024 and actions put in place failed to prevent a recurrence.

- (k) The registered provider did not ensure a full record in writing for accident and incidents was maintained. From a sample of ten records four did not record the date of the parents' signature and one did not record the parents' signature.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (i) A new staff roster was created, all staff members must sign into staff roster book and initial new staff roster on arrival to work, sign in lunch breaks and sign out when leaving premises in the evening. The service will ensure the staff roster will reflect the adults who are working in the creche, all staff must sign in each day which management will monitor.
- (k) Staff were informed to ensure accident and incident is filled in completely and correct ensuring parents sign and date it correctly. Notes were attached to the accident and incident book explaining the procedure.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- (i) New staff roster.
- (k) Photographic evidence.

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 16 has been addressed.

### 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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider ensured the following:

- Drinks of water were available in the care rooms throughout the day.
- Practices such as mealtimes, nappy changing and toileting were observed to be regular, timely and pleasant experiences for the children.
- The staff interacted with the children in a playful, respectful, warm and sensitive manner. They were familiar with the children and with their interests and followed the child's lead in their play.
- Children's personal care needs were attended to in a timely manner, for example a child who was dribbling from teething had their bib checked regularly to ensure they weren't wet.
- Transitions were observed to be smooth, timely and supportive for children. For example, the mealtime experience was calm and strategies such as routine and verbal cues were used to facilitate this.
- Strategies such as praise and encouragement were observed throughout the inspection.
- Children had access to the outdoor play area on the day of the inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

1. (a) Two children were observed to be fed their dinner from the same bowl by a staff member in the Baby Toddler Room. All children should be served meals in individual bowls in order to support the development of children as individuals with their own sense of identity around basic needs such as mealtimes.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The children will now be served their meal in an individual bowl.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Updates on meals to parents.

#### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted which address the noncompliance found under Regulation 19.

## 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 registered provider ensured the following:

- The furniture and equipment in the rooms was observed to be adequate for the number of children in the rooms and was appropriate for the age range and stage of development of the children.
- An area was available in the care rooms which allowed a child to take a break from activities and rest.
- The furniture was positioned to allow children to engage in solitary or group play.
- In the Baby Toddler room the furniture was positioned effectively, and there was equipment available to promote pulling up, cruising and the early stages of walking.
- In the Montessori room, equipment was labelled and accessible to the children allowing independent decision making in play.

#### Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure the following:

1. In the Baby Toddler room, of the 13 battery operated toys available, 6 were not working. This can limit the cause and affect experience and play value for the children. This was identified as a non-compliance on the previous inspection held on the 25 April 2024 and actions put in place failed to prevent a recurrence.

In the Pre-Montessori Room, the following was observed:

2. The following equipment was not directly accessible to the children which can limit their engagement in developmental play experiences:
  - There were no props or resources in the wooden play kitchen. These were stored in a box on a shelving unit which was not adjacent to the play kitchen.
  - The dress-up equipment in the Pre-Montessori room was stored in a locked press. These were identified as non-compliances on the previous inspection held on the 25 April 2024 and actions put in place failed to prevent a recurrence.
  - There was no mark making equipment directly accessible to the children. The chalk, chalkboards, paper, crayons and pencils were stored out of reach of children.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Toys removed from the room and all batteries replaced immediately. A notice was placed in the room explaining all toys / batteries must be checked regularly. There is a supply / overflow of batteries in the service for when they are required.
2. Props for the kitchen area were immediately put in the kitchen area giving access to the children. Dress up press/ lock was removed immediately. Mark making equipment made directly accessible for the children. All resources for the kitchen are now placed in the kitchen being fully accessible for the children to help their engagement in their developmental play experiences. Lock was removed immediately giving the children full accessibility to the dress up equipment. All mark making equipment, paper, crayons, and pencils are directly accessible to the children

#### Supporting documentation submitted

1. Evidence of notice reminding staff.
2. Photographic evidence of kitchen with associated props stored within, lock removed from dress up press, and mark making equipment accessible on low shelving.

#### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 21 have been addressed and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

### 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 registered provider ensured the following:

- The service provided a breakfast on arrival and an afternoon tea. There was a menu plan available for this. Lunch and dinner were provided by parents.
- Staff were aware of the different dietary requirements of the children in their care room.
- The mealtime experience was observed to be a pleasant sociable occasion, where staff were observed to sit with the children and support them during the meal.

## Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure the following:

1. Two children aged over one year were observed to be served a pureed meal. Children require age and stage appropriate food, and texture should be added to meals in order to facilitate the development of chewing and swallowing.
2. There was no evidence or documentation in place to record and track what the children have eaten. This is not in line with the service policy which states a record of what the child has eaten will be maintained to ensure that a child's nutritional needs are being met.
3. The provision of alternative meals was not in line with national guidelines on food and nutrition which state that a healthy alternative should be offered. An alternative meal of spaghetti hoops and bread was given to a child. Every hot meal should include ½ to 1 serving of vegetables, 1 serving of either bread, potatoes, pasta and rice, and 1 serving of either meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and cheese.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Parents were advised that children must have different textures of food for their appropriate age.
2. The registered provide ensure a food log now in place.
3. The registered provider ensures healthy alternative foods for the children are now available.

### Supporting documentation submitted

1. Email to parents.
2. No evidence submitted.
3. Email to parents.

## Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 22 have been addressed and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

## 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

The registered provider had ensured the following measures were in place:

##### General Safety:

- The entrance to the service was secured on arrival and throughout the inspection. Entry was managed and monitored by staff.
- Blind cords were observed to be secured.
- Cleaning products were observed to be stored out of reach of children.
- The outdoor play area was fully enclosed.

##### Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, single use hand towels and thermostatically controlled warm water were available at all wash hand basins used by the children and the staff members were observed supporting children to hand wash before and after mealtime.
- Appropriate food safety practices and documentation were observed around the reheating of meals.
- A cot shared by two children had a wipeable mattress.
- Bed linen in use was individual and was laundered regularly.
- Soothers were stored in individual lidded containers.

##### Administration of Medication:

- There was an appropriate care plan in place for the administration of medication for a child who required a specific type of medication.

##### Safe Sleep:

- A log was maintained where the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children was checked every 10 minutes.

##### Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed.
- The details of the attendance of the children were recorded in the attendance book in a timely manner, supporting accurate attendance logs.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. The handle on the door of the play kitchen was broken leaving a screw protruding. This posed a potential injury risk to the children.

### Infection Control:

2. The nappy changing mat in the Pre-Montessori room was torn leaving foam exposed. This reduced the risk of effective cleaning and increased the risk of cross contamination.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

### General Safety:

1. The handle on the kitchen was replaced immediately. The service ensure that staff will notify management of any handles/ doors etc broken. Maintenance man available on call 24 hrs.

### Infection Control:

2. The nappy changing mat was replaced immediately. The service ensures there will be always duplicate nappy changing mats available to be replaced immediately.

### Supporting documentation submitted

### General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence.

### Infection Control:

2. No evidence submitted.

## Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

*(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.*

### Non-Compliance Information

(2) The registered provider did not ensure there was a minimum clear floor space available for the number of children registered in the Pre-Montessori room. This can impact on the safety and supervision of children. The room measures 25m<sup>2</sup> which can accommodate up to ten children in the 2 to 3 year age range\*. Staff reported 12 children were registered to attend the room and a review of the attendance log showed that between 10 and 12 children were regularly present in the room at any one time. This was identified as a non-compliance on the previous inspection held on the 25 April 2024 and actions put in place failed to prevent a recurrence.

\*2.35m<sup>2</sup> space required for each child in the 2 to 3 age range

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

Two children from this room were returned to the baby room. The registered provider will ensure no more than 10 children will be in this room at one time adhering to the space required for each child in the 2 to 3 age range.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 30 has been addressed.