

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021DY006
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Name of Service:	The Nest Charlestown
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Address of Service:	Unit 2006 Charlestown Park, Charlestown, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D11 XW6H
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Name of Registered Provider:	Colm Bowers
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	11/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	59	PM	48
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Hosford and Á Dunne
Title:	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
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Description of service

The Nest Charlestown is a private service, one of four early years services operated by the registered provider. It provides sessional, part time and full day care to children aged between 1-6 years of age. The service operates from 7:30am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme which operates from 9.00am to 12.00pm in the three Montessori care rooms.

The service operates from a two-storey purpose-built facility situated in a retail development on the north side of Dublin city and consists of five care rooms. On the ground floor are the Tweenie room (1-2 years) and the Toddler room (2-3 years), a reception area, a cot room, a service kitchen, and an outdoor area. On the first floor are three care rooms, namely the Montessori Blue room (3-4 years), Pre Montessori room (2-3 years) and the Senior Montessori room (3-6 years) which all have access to a first-floor outdoor area. All the care rooms were open on the day of inspection.

Staffing

The service employs 17 staff members to include, the designated person in charge, deputy person in charge, a cook, a cleaner and 13 childcare staff, one of whom was employed under the Access and Inclusion Model. The registered provider was not present during the inspection and the designated person in charge and deputy person in charge were not assigned to a care room but available to assist staff and children if required.

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. This inspection focused on Regulation 9,11,15,16,19 and 23.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, 16, 19 and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Tweenie room, Toddler room, Montessori Blue room and the Senior Montessori room and did not include the Pre Montessori room.

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 person in charge, deputy 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

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5

Compliance Information

(2) The files of seven new staff members employed in the service since the last inspection were reviewed to assess compliance under Regulation 9 Management and recruitment. The Garda vetting disclosures for all 17 staff were reviewed also.

(a) The following references were from a past employer.

- Two validated written references for three members of staff employed.
- One validated written reference was available for two staff members.

(b) The following references were from a source other than a past employer.

- Two validated written references for two staff members.

- One validated written reference was available for two staff members.

(2)(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 17 staff employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available from five countries in respect of five staff members who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Five staff members employed within the service and working directly with the children had evidence to confirm they held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications

(7)(a) Documentary evidence available demonstrated that staff members received regular appraisals and review of their practice in line with the service policy on staff supervision and practice. The review meetings with senior management included their knowledge of their role, training needs, policy review along with health and safety.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

International police vetting was not available in respect of one staff member who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for more than 6 months as an adult.

(4)

One staff member employed within the service and working directly with the children did not have a final certificate to confirm they held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) and (4)

In response the service has stated that the staff member has ceased employment within the service. To ensure future compliance a checklist of documents has been created when recruiting new staff members. The checklist will form part of the staff profile folder to make sure that all the documents needed are provided.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(d) and (4)

Photo of the checklist in the staff profile folder.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 has been adequately addressed.

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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there were 12 adults 59 children in the morning and 12 staff working with 48 children in the afternoon. The person in charge and the deputy person in charge were available to cover breaks and lunches in the care rooms throughout the inspection.

(2) The adult to child ratios were maintained on the day of inspection as outlined below.

Tweenie room-

- At 9.55am there were 2 adults caring for 7 children aged between 1-2 years with a third staff member available in the room at 11.15am.

- At 2.52pm there were 3 adults caring for 7 children aged between 1-2 years.

Toddler room-

- At 9.57am there were 3 adults caring for 12 children aged 2-3 years.
- At 2.53pm there were 3 adults caring for 12 children aged 2-3 years.

Montessori Blue room-

- At 10.03am there were 3 adults caring for 18 children aged 4-5 years.
- At 3.04pm there were 3 adults caring for 15 children aged 4-5 years.

Pre Montessori-Room

- At 10.06am there were 2 adults caring for 11 children aged 2-4 years.
- At 3.03pm there were 2 adults caring for 7 children aged 2-4 years.

Senior Montessori-Room

- At 10.02am there was 1 adult caring for 11 children aged 3-5 years.
- At 3pm there was 1 adult caring for 7 children aged 3-5 years.

(8)(a) A weekly staff roster available demonstrated that two adults were always present on the premises.

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:

- (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;
- (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)(f) and (g)

The service had a detailed plan of care in place for a child that required regular and frequent care and attention while present in the service. The Information available included the details of their medical practitioner, contact details of their parent, signs and symptoms of illness along with interventions required.

(i) Written parental consent was available for the provision of treatment required for the child.

(3)(c) Information regarding the care needs for a child were available for inspection by an authorised person.

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) The arrival and departure of children in the four rooms inspected were maintained in an electronic application.
- (i) Weekly staff rosters were available to demonstrate the details of staff present in the service daily.
- (j) On review of 7 administration of medication records the required information to include parental consent was recorded.
- (k) On review of 15 accident and incident records the required information was recorded in line with the service policy on accidents and incidents.

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)

Basic Needs:

- The service provided all the snacks and meals eaten by the children. Breakfast of cereal, milk and toast was offered in the morning followed by a snack of apple, banana, orange and melon slices at 10.30am. A hot meal of fish pie was served from 11.10am for the younger children and from 12.00-12.30pm for the older children. A snack at 2.00pm of yogurt, carrot and courgette bread and breadsticks, followed by a tea of soup and brown bread at 4.00pm. Alternative snacks and meals were available to the children if required with extra portions offered if needed. Children were offered water at meals and between meals.
- Staff were observed engaging with the children in a positive and friendly manner. The adults provided children with comfort when they became upset, holding them and speaking to them in soft tones.
- Nappy changing was completed on a set schedule and as needed to ensure the children's comfort.
- Children were settled to sleep when they showed signs of tiredness and had outer clothing removed to ensure their comfort needs were facilitated. Staff provided the children with reassurance and comfort where required when they were settling them to sleep, speaking gently to them.
- All the children enjoyed outdoor play during the inspection with appropriate clothing and footwear made available.
- The children were observed to be relaxed and free to move from activity to activity with supervision and support provided when needed.
- At sleep time in the cot room and Toddler room the rooms were conducive to sleep with quiet music and dimmed lighting.

Supporting relationships

- Staff were observed helping children solve minor issues and learn about turn taking. Staff listened to the children's requests and were clear and concise in giving instructions and guidance.
- Children's first names were used when staff were chatting with them and when they were asking the children to prepare for outdoor play.

Physical and material environment:

Toddler room, Montessori Blue room and Senior Montessori.

- Areas within the rooms were available and accessible with materials available to include a home area, construction space, small world, tabletop games, puzzles, arts and crafts. All equipment and materials in the care rooms were appropriate to the age and development of the children.
- Tables and chairs used by the children were appropriate to their age and were available throughout the day to enable the children to carry out tabletop activities between snacks and meals.
- Rest areas were available in the care rooms to enable children to rest and take a break from activities, they consisted of soft matting, cushions, and soft toys.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

1. It was observed in the Tweenie room that children were not encouraged or prompted to remove their soothers before and after sleeping and when appearing settled in the care room. Overuse of soothers can limit a child's oral and speech development.

Supporting Relationships:

2. In the Tweenie room, while it is acknowledged that staff reported they gave a verbal account of each child's day to their parent on collection, the additional care provided to a child during the day was not recorded or documented by staff to ensure that a consistent approach to the child's care needs was maintained.

3. The transition of four children from the Toddler room that didn't sleep into the Tweenie room at 11.22am was not managed in a co-ordinated and smooth manner. For example.

- The children from the Tweenie room who were still eating when the children arrived did not have the full attention and assistance from staff during this time.

- The atmosphere in the care room during this time became busy and chaotic with the children from the Toddler room emptying boxes of toys and games.

Physical and material environment:

4. The Tweenie room lacked well equipped age-appropriate defined areas of interest to enable the children to explore and develop their skills. For example.

- Areas of interest such as play kitchens and home areas were poorly resourced with supporting equipment to enhance and assist with the development of the children's play opportunities.
- Cause and effect battery toys and books were not operational which was observed causing frustration and disappointment for the children while they played.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. In response the service has stated that staff in Tweenie room re-read The Soothers Policy as a reminder to encourage children to limit or remove their soothers. A team meeting between Toddler staff and Tweenie staff has been planned to discuss the complications of overusing the soothers and how important it is to encourage children to use it for sleep time and as a comfort if needed only.
2. The Tweenie room main carer contacted parents and informed them about their child's condition on the day of inspection. A planned team meeting with discuss with staff the importance of sharing information with the parents daily.
3. In response management now supervise the transitions between the rooms to make sure that they are smooth for all children. A team meeting is planned with all staff to help review the sleep time routine and encourage staff to collaborate with each other and make sure that the Tweenies are ready to accommodate Toddlers who do not sleep on the day.
4. To address all broken toys were removed and the designated corners in the room were reorganised to make the room for more interesting and inviting play. We put the new batteries in the toys.
We purchased multiple toys and kitchen/shop playset, baby dolls and accessories to equip home corner. We bought a tuff tray and sensory toys to equip sensory corner. We also bought big cushions to make the cosy corner more welcoming. Management will continue to give more guidance and advice to staff in the Tweenie room on

how to create nurturing and inviting to play environments by sharing the links and materials with the resources about the environment as a third teacher.

The management carries out regular checks to make sure the Tweenie room always provides inviting and nurturing environment for children.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Scanned copy of Soother Policy signed by staff member in the Tweenie room. Meeting agenda.
2. Evidence of communication with parent and meeting agenda.
3. Meeting agenda.
4. Receipts of new equipment.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 19 has been adequately 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

General Safety:

- The premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises, with the entrance doors leading into the premises and the gates leading into the outdoor play area fitted with latches and locks positioned out of the reach of pre-school children.
- Cleaning agents were safely stored on high shelving out of the reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children during the inspection.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available at all wash hand basins used by the staff and children in the sanitary facilities. Active mechanical ventilation was provided in the nappy changing facility used by the children.
- The children in the Toddler room and Senior Montessori room were facilitated to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Tables were wiped down before and after mealtimes.
- Adequate space of at least 50cm was maintained between cots and low beds while children slept.
- The service was observed to be clean and well maintained with completed cleaning schedules in place within the care rooms inspected.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored safely out of the reach of children.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff maintained ten-minute sleep checks on all sleeping children to include colour, breathing and position. The temperature of the sleep room and the Toddler care room was recorded and maintained between the recommended temperature of 18-22°C while children slept. Children were suitably dressed at sleep time with any excess clothing removed.
- Two children under the age of two years that slept on low contour beds at sleep time had documentation available to demonstrate that the service had engaged with each child's parent and completed an individualised sleeping plan which included the parents written consent.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits within the service were observed to be clear of any obstructions during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Nappy changing was not completed in accordance with best practice guidelines and the service policy for example.

- Gloves and aprons were not removed at the correct time and staff wore the apron while returning to the care room.
- Children's hands were not consistently washed after their nappy was changed and staff did not remove children's soothers and other belongings while in the sanitary facility.
- The door into the nappy changing room was propped open throughout the inspection which increased the potential risk of cross infection and the movement of stale air.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. In response the service has stated that staff re-read the Changing Nappy policy as a reminder of the best practise when changing a nappy. An updated Nappy Changing Routine sign is displayed in both changing rooms. We have displayed a sign informing staff about the door being closed at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Photos of the Nappy Changing Routine sign in both changing rooms.
A photo of a sign on the door to changing room.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on the next inspection.