

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS025
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Name of Service:	Curiosity House Creche & Montessori Ltd
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Address of Service:	Old Court Centre, Firhouse, Dublin 24
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Eircode:	D24 CX83
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Name of Registered Provider:	Liz Turner
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	34
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland
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).

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Description of service

Curiosity House Creche & Montessori Ltd is a private full day; part time and sessional service located in Firhouse Dublin 24. The service operates Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm, providing care and education to preschool children aged 0 to 6 years.

The setting is based on the ground floor of a purposely adapted two storey building located in a business centre. Children are allocated to one of three rooms according to their age. Facilities include a dedicated sleep room, sanitary facilities and a fully enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are currently 19 staff employed to work in the service including the registered provider, the person in charge, 14 early years educators ,2 cooks and a domestic assistant. On the day of the inspection there were 15 adults present including the person in charge ,11 early years educators, 2 cooks and a domestic assistant.

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 and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15 Record of pre-school child.

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.

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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 a deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection.

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(b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspector arrived unannounced at the service. A review of the staff roster showed that a designated person was on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.

(c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2) Following a discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that two adults commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 30 January 2025. Documentation required under Regulation 9 (2), (3), (4) was reviewed in respect of the two adults as detailed below. The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) relating to Garda vetting were reviewed for 15 adults employed to work in the service.

(a) Four written and verified references were available from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 15 adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was available in respect of one adult who had lived outside of the State for a period longer than six months as an adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed showed that the procedures specified above under Regulation 9(2) had been carried out before the two adults commenced employment in the service.

(4) Documentation was available to show that one adult 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. One adult did not require a qualification

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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 adequate staff available to meet the needs of the children in all of the care rooms.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained on the day of inspection. There were 34 children present in the service, supervised by 11 adults. The person in charge was available to provide support when required.
- (8) (a) The roster provided to the inspector by the person in charge showed that a minimum of two staff members were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

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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.*

Compliance Information

A sample of 10 children's files were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a)-(i) was maintained for each child.

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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

The registered provider ensured appropriate and suitable care practices were in place in the service as follows:

Staff reported that all of the children's meals were provided by the service. The service had a healthy eating policy and meals observed during the inspection were regular, varied and appropriate to the ages of the children. Staff supported children during mealtimes, encouraging independence where appropriate. For example, younger children were supported to feed themselves. Bibs were provided to help maintain children's clothing during meals. A nappy changing schedule was in place. Staff reported that nappies were changed routinely in accordance with the schedule and additionally outside of the scheduled times where required. This practice was observed during the inspection. Staff were observed to be warm and respectful while carrying out this care practice. Older children were observed to use the toilet independently with staff remaining close by to provide support if required.

Children slept at a designated time after lunch and staff reported that flexibility was maintained to accommodate individual sleep needs, with opportunities to rest outside the scheduled sleep period where required. Each of the care rooms had an area with soft matting and cushions for children to take a rest during the day if needed.

Transitions throughout the day were observed to be calm and well managed. Children moved smoothly from one routine to the next, including from play to mealtimes, and from lunch to the rest period. Children were observed to move freely around the care room, independently choosing whether to participate in activities and accessing available resources in accordance with their interests.

Interactions between staff and children were warm and friendly, and staff were observed to respond promptly and sensitively to children who required reassurance or emotional support. The service uses an online application to share information with parents regarding their child's day, including mealtimes, sleep periods, nappy changes and photographs of children engaged in activities. Staff also described informal opportunities for communication with parents during arrival and collection times.

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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 entrance door to the service was adequately secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering and to ensure children could not exit unsupervised. Access was controlled through a keypad entry system for staff and parents/guardians, while visitors were required to be admitted by a staff member.
- The internal doors were appropriately secured and prevented children accessing unsafe areas.
- Cleaning agents were stored on high shelves and were inaccessible to the children.
- Electrical flexes appeared to be in good condition and were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were in use in the sanitary areas to support the safe disposal of waste.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- The care rooms were visibly clean and well maintained. Cleaning schedules were available for review outlining cleaning tasks.
- Children's soothers were labelled and stored in individual containers and staff reported that they were sterilised daily and as required.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes.
- The temperature of the rooms where children slept were maintained at the required temperature range.
- A sleep log was available for review, detailing the room temperature, breathing pattern, colour and position of the child.

Fire Safety:

- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire.
- The designated fire escape routes were clearly marked and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

Outing:

- The service had an outings policy, which outlined the procedures to be followed when taking children for outings off the premises.

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- Records, including signed parental consent and risk assessments for the most recent trip taken were available for review.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for one staff member. However, the vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
- A sharp screw was observed protruding from a wooden flower planter in the outdoor area at a height accessible to children posing a risk of injury to a child.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing and nappy changing practices were not sufficient to control the spread of infection as follows:
 - Children's hands were not washed before snack in the Baby room. Staff were observed to use wet face cloths to clean children's hands before their meal.
 - Staff in the Baby room were observed to use wipes to clean children's hands following nappy changing.
 - Children in the Playgroup room were not provided with the opportunity to wash their hands before their lunch.
 - A staff member was observed to clean a soiled changing mat and did not wash their hands after.
 - A staff member did not remove the gloves worn during nappy changing when redressing the children. In addition, the staff member was observed wearing gloves used to change a child's nappy while supporting the child to wash their hands.
- Individual bedding was not available for children in the Playgroup room. The inspector observed that children's blankets were stored together on a shelf when removed from their beds following sleep. The above practices pose a risk of cross contamination and the spread of infection and were at variance with the services infection control policy.

Administration of Medication:

- The service did not ensure that a record of medication given in the service was maintained. There was medication in the service for one child and staff informed the inspector that the medication had been administered; however, no administration of medication record was available for review. This practice

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was at variance with the services administration of medication policy. The absence of medication records increases the risk of medication errors and poses a safety risk to the child.

Safe Sleep:

6. There were no sleep plans available for four children under the age of 24 months sleeping on floor beds in the Baby room and the Playgroup room on the day of the inspection. There was no documented evidence to show that the service had considered the children's physical, emotional and cognitive indicators prior to transitioning them onto a floor bed. Staff in the Baby room reported that two of the children were on beds in preparation for the transition to the Playgroup room. Additionally, the service's safe sleep policy did not include clear guidance regarding how individual sleep plans and risk assessments are to be completed and reviewed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting has been renewed for the staff member. The person in charge has implemented a Garda Vetting monitoring checklist to ensure that all staff members vetting records are regularly reviewed and remain up to date in accordance with the required timelines.
2. The planter was removed from the outdoor area. The health and safety officer will continue to conduct weekly inspections of all areas within the crèche to ensure that health and safety standards are consistently maintained along with a corresponding checklist.

Infection Control:

3.
 - The handwashing/infection Control procedure has been reviewed and updated. It clearly states that children's handwashing must take place at the designated sink using running water and liquid soap. Handwashing practice will be included in routine room observations and supervision by the room leader and management team. The updated procedure will be discussed with staff and reinforced as part of induction for new team members.
 - The service will introduce a written nappy changing competency assessment for relevant staff. The nappy changing policy and associated infection-control procedures were formally reviewed with all staff.

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- The practice has been reviewed with the team and has been incorporated into the service's hand-hygiene monitoring arrangements and will be checked through periodic documented observations by management.
4. Individual storage is now in place for children's bedding; each identified with the child's name. Management will include bedding storage within routine infection-control/environmental observations to ensure that individual bedding continues to be appropriately identified and stored individually.

Administration of Medication:

5. The administration of medication policy has been reviewed with staff. To prevent recurrence, the service has introduced a medication authorisation and recording check. Medication will not be accepted for administration unless a current, fully completed parental consent form is in place for that specific medication.

Safe Sleep:

6. Individual sleep plans and risk assessments have now been completed for the children in consultation with their parents/guardians. The safe sleep policy has been revised to include a clear procedure for assessing and approving the use of a floor bed by a child under 24 months.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Evidence submitted

Infection Control:

Evidence submitted

Administration of Medication:

Evidence submitted

Safe Sleep:

Evidence submitted

Summary Comment

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