

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY252
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Name of Service:	Chestnut Daycare
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Address of Service:	1 Innismore, St Agnes Road, Crumlin Village, Dublin 12, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D12 DX66
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Name of Registered Provider:	Laura Higgins
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	19
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st Floor, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
Inspection undertaken by:	S Quigley
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

Chestnut Daycare is a privately owned service and is one of seven services currently operated by the registered provider. The service is registered to provide full day, part-time and sessional care to children aged 1-6 years and offers an Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme. The service operates from 8.00am to 18:00pm, Monday to Friday. The service is situated in an urban area of Crumlin in South County Dublin within a purposely adapted two storey premises. The service comprises of three care rooms for preschool children, all of which were in operation on the day of inspection. An enclosed outdoor play area is available adjacent to the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs nine staff members including a designated person in charge and a cook. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. On the day of inspection seven staff members were present in the service including the designated person in charge who arrived following the inspector's arrival.

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

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

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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, 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.*

(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

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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

(2)

Documentation required under regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of three adults who were employed in the service and who were not present when regulation 9 was last assessed on the 3 December 2024.

- (a) (b) There were two references each available for the adults which had been appropriately verified.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for each of the nine adults employed.
- (d) International police vetting was available for one of the adults who had lived outside the state for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) had been carried out prior to each of the adults commencing employment in the service.

(4)

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the three adults held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

An adequate number of adults were not working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection as the minimum ratio of adults to children was not maintained at all times as outlined below.

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(2)

The registered provider did not ensure that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service at all times. An insufficient number of adults were available to the children attending on a full day care basis when the inspector arrived at the service as follows:

- At 09:30am one adult was caring for nine preschool children aged 3 years and over who were attending on a full day care basis in the Monti Room. The correct adult to child ratio for this age of one adult to eight children was maintained when the centre manager, who was rostered to work at 10:00am, arrived at the service at 09:50am.

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider following the last inspection on the 3 December 2024.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service through all class numbers for the next year and spoke with the managers to confirm these. The manager on duty was trying to help a younger group get to the garden, the manager has re-read the ratio policy. The service all had a talk on this at the staff meeting the following week. The service addressed the non-compliance in the staff meeting 20th July 2026, went through policies with staff members to be aware of ratios.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance. The regulatory requirement has been met. The actions outlined will be assessed on the next inspection of the service.

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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:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1)(i)

A staffing roster was available in the service and was reflective of the staff present on the day of inspection.

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)

Some appropriate and suitable care practices were observed to be in place. Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the day. Drinking water was available to the children at all times. Mealtimes were relaxed and sociable and staff sat with children while they ate engaged in conversations. Staff ensured children's hands and faces were cleaned after eating.

Children's nappies were changed routinely and as needed, with staff using these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently. Staff addressed children by name and spoke to them in gentle positive tones. Children were comforted promptly if they became upset. Staff encouraged children to be independent in cleaning up after play and meals. The children were all observed to be happy and content throughout the inspection.

Younger children were given an opportunity to sleep at a designated time after lunch. The children were made comfortable for sleep, with staff removing their shoes and outer clothing. Rest areas were available in the care rooms for children to take a break from activities as needed. Children were all provided with the opportunity for outdoor play. Children were dressed appropriately with sun hats and light clothing and staff members applied suncream prior to them going outside.

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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

The inspector found through observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard the children attending:

General Safety:

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children. The entrances into the service were appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised access or a child exiting the service unsupervised.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff and children were observed to carry out consistent hand washing as appropriate. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy. Pedal operated bins were in place throughout the service for the disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Safe Sleep:

Sleep logs were maintained in the care rooms where children slept, and individual observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position every ten minutes. Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's ages and developmental needs.

Fire Safety:

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The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Trailing cables from portable fans were observed in reach of children in all three care rooms posing a risk of harm.

Infection Control:

2. A staff member was observed re-dressing a child wearing the soiled gloves used during the nappy change. This was at variance with the nappy changing procedure in place in the service and posed a risk of cross contamination.

Safe Sleep:

3. During sleep time the Wobbler and Toddler rooms were 22.5°Celsius while children aged one and two years were asleep exceeding the required temperature range of 18-22°Celsius posing a risk of over-heating. Staff members present did not remove heavy clothing the children were wearing prior to them being placed to sleep until they were prompted by the inspector.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The fan has been placed behind the shelf with the cable gathered with a cable tie.

Infection Control:

2. The service spoke about nappy changing in staff meetings, went over nappy assessments from previous months.

Safe Sleep:

3. The service has kept an eye on temperatures and have rented an air conditioner unit. The service spoke about removing heavy clothing if needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.