

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY303
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Name of Service:	Christchurch Creche & Montessori School
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Address of Service:	Dublin City Council, Civic Offices, Woodquay, Dublin 8
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Eircode:	D08 RF3F
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Name of Registered Provider:	Esther Brennan
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	30/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	22
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Area 1 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Nelson
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

Christchurch Creche and Montessori is a full-day care service located in the grounds of the Dublin City Council Civic offices in Dublin city centre. The service is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 40 children aged 0 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday.

Christchurch Creche and Montessori operates from a single-story purpose-built premises and has three care rooms to include the Baby Room (12 to 24 months old), Toddler room (2 to 3 years old) and Montessori room (3 to 5 years old). There are sanitary facilities located off the main hallway, and a cot room located off the Baby room. Further sanitary facilities are available for staff. A fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the front of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 10 staff to work in the service, including a deputy person in charge, seven staff who work directly with the children and two kitchen staff members. The registered provider works in the service, providing oversight and provides cover in rooms as needed. There were eight staff present on the day of the inspection including the registered provider and a kitchen staff.

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

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

- Regulation 19 (1)(b)-Health, Welfare and Development of child
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby and Toddler rooms, and the outdoor play area did not include the Montessori room. Regulation 11 was assessed across all rooms.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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) The registered provider ensured that;

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.**
- (b) Observation on the day, discussion with staff and a review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.**
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and this was displayed in the entrance hall.**

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- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that five new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection and four of these staff members worked directly with the children. In addition, Garda vetting for two staff members whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.
- The registered provider had completed the following checks:
- (a) Ten validated written references were available from recent past employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for seven staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Documentary evidence was available that established that five adults lived in a State other than Ireland for longer than six months and translated international police vetting was available from that state.
- (3) Documentary evidence available showed that all of the checks outlined in (2) had been carried out prior to any of the adults having contact with the children in the service.
- (4) The four staff who worked directly with children attending the service held a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

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.*

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Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs.
- There were seven staff available to 22 children present on the morning of the inspection.
 - There were seven staff available to 22 children present on the afternoon of the inspection.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection. The registered provider was available to provide cover for breaks.

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) Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed, as evidenced by the following:
- Practices such as nappy changing and toileting were observed to be timely, respectful and pleasant experiences for the children.
 - Documentary evidence showed meals provided were regular and varied, with a three-week menu plan available.
 - Drinks of water were available and accessible to the children in the care rooms throughout the day.
 - The staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. Appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication such as low tones, eye level contact, touch, descriptive language, questioning and other strategies were observed.
 - Children had the freedom to move throughout their care room and play with an activity of their choice.
 - The experiences and activities provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children. There was documentary evidence of planning, and the activities observed in the room and the artwork displayed on the walls reflected the plans.
 - Daily routines were available and were reflected in practice.

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- Daily transitions were indicated verbally, and staff prepared ahead to ensure the transition was smooth, such as that from mealtime to sleep. There was photographic and documentary evidence of planning for the transition to school which was displayed throughout the hallways of the premises.
- Engagement with families and parents was facilitated via the sharing of information in a daily information book, monthly newsletters and conversations at drop off and collections where parents were welcomed into the service.

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 service ensured there was adequate and suitable furniture and equipment available, for example:

- The furniture and equipment in the rooms and outdoor area was observed to be adequate for the number of children, it was appropriate for the age range and stage of development of the children, and was well maintained, durable and easy to clean.
- The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving, visible to the children, and were easily accessible.
- There was a variety of play materials and equipment available to the children according to their age and stage of development, which facilitated a range of play experiences.
- Images of the children and their families were displayed throughout the rooms, and children had labelled coat hooks and cubbies for their belongings.
- The outdoor environment was resourced with a range of equipment to promote gross motor play.

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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 following measures were observed to be in place to safeguard children:

General Safety:

- Finger protectors were securely fitted to all internal doors.
- The external gate to the premises was secured by a magnetic door release system which was monitored and managed by staff.
- Window restrictors were fitted on all openable windows, and visibility strips were in place on all low-level glass panels.
- Shelving units were observed to be secured to the walls.
- The temperatures in the care rooms were maintained within the recommended ambient temperature of 18-22 °C. Discussion with staff and a review of documentation showed there has been planning for the procedures to support safe practice in warm weather.

Infection Control:

- The premises were in a clean and hygienic condition and documented up to date cleaning records were available and displayed in the premises.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and single use hand towels were available at all wash hand basins used by the children and the staff members.
- Staff were observed to support children to hand wash after outdoor play and before meals.
- The nappy changing procedure was observed to be in line with safe infection control practice; with staff wearing appropriate disposable protective gloves and apron.

Administration of Medication:

- A documented care plan clearly outlining the procedures was available for a child on a particular medication, and staff reported being familiar with these procedures.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to complete physical checks on the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children every ten minutes, and a log was maintained of these checks.
- Suitable cots were available for all children under the age of two years.

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Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed.
- A review of the attendance log showed all children present had been accurately accounted for on the day.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Medication was observed to be stored in a low-level unsecured press in a care room which was potentially accessible to children. This posed a risk to the safety of children.

Infection Control:

2. The mattresses in two of the seven cots were not wipeable and there was no effective water proof cover in place on these cots. This increased the potential risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider reports that medication is now stored up high out of reach of children and that staff were informed of the storage procedure.

Infection Control:

2. The registered provider reports that the two cots are now fitted with waterproof covers and staff were reminded to ensure all mattresses are fitted with the waterproof covers.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence

Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

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

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) The service provided documentary evidence that a person trained in First Aid Responder training was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.

(2) The registered provider ensured that:

(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored in the care rooms and the nappy changing room and there were signs displayed indicating this.

(b) The first aid boxes were easily accessible and readily available.