

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC085
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Name of Service:	Riverside House Montessori
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Address of Service:	Riverside House, Doneraile, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P51 KT93
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carol Doyle
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	20/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square, Mallow, Cork.
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Inspection undertaken by:	F. Collins & B. Fraher
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Title:	Early Years Inspectors
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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	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Description of service

Riverside House Montessori is a privately run sessional service located in the village of Doneraile.

This sessional service caters for children aged from 2 to 6 years and facilitates the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE).

The premises is a single-story converted room to the rear of the registered provider's home.

There is one care room, two children's toilets and associated wash hand basins, an adult toilet facility, storage and an enclosed outdoor play area.

The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09.30 and 12.30 hours for 38 weeks of the year.

Staffing

There are two adults working in the service both staff were present on the day of inspection and both were working directly with the children inclusive of the registered provider who was the person in charge.

Both adults held appropriate qualifications.

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.

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, 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

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider was the named person in charge. The registered provider was in the service when the inspectors arrived and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(b) The roster indicated that the registered provider was onsite during the operation of the service.

(2) There were two staff employed in the service. Both staff files were assessed.

(a) Four references were required and all four references were available from past employers. References were validated as required.

(b) Not applicable as all references were available from past employers.

(c) Garda Vetting was available for both staff; these vetting's had been updated within the last three years.

(d) Not applicable as no staff member had resided outside of Ireland in any one country for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) Both staff were appropriately qualified between Level 5 and Level 7 on the National Qualifications Framework. Both staff had obtained the Leadership for Inclusion Level 6 special award.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

- (1) The person in charge ensured that there were adequate staff working in the service at all times to meet the needs of the children in attendance.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained. There were two adults working directly with seven children attending the sessional service on the day of inspection.

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.

(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) There were eight children enrolled in the service of which seven children were attending the service on the day of the inspection. Seven enrolment records of the children in attendance on the day of inspection were reviewed.

(a) –(i) The enrolment forms were complete and up with date with all details as outlined with parents/guardians and the registered providers signatures recorded on the enrolment forms for all children.

(3) (c) The records as outlined above were available and open for inspection by the early years inspector.

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:

(g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

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

Compliance Information

(1)

(g) The policies and procedures for the service were available for review as required.

(h) The details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis was maintained sign in/out records.

Previous records were also available.

(i) The details of staff rosters were maintained and the staff worked the same hours weekly.

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

Basic Needs:

- The service promoted healthy eating and the children ate their snack together and each group of children had an adult supporting them who sat with them during their snack.
- Cutlery was provided if required for snack time.
- No child in the service required nappy changing on the day of inspection. Children were able to go to the toilet independently.
- Any child who required assistance with hand washing was supported with same.
- Sleep was not provided for in the service and children were not observed to ask for a rest and did not require to opt out of activities during the session.
- Children were allowed to choose their activities inclusive of art activities, tabletop activities and activities that allowed for imaginary play by using the kitchen and 'making pizza and cake'. The staff moved about to support the children but allowed them to choose and play with whom and what they wished.
- The children's mobility was not hindered at any time and the children could move about freely.
- A child who required additional assistance was provided with this support as needed.

Supporting Relationships Around Children

- The children were noted to be familiar with the adults who worked in the service daily and the children were comfortable with them and sought out their assistance as required.
- The staff had a plan for managing emotions in the service and had many resources developed to ensure children could learn these skills. The service has commenced an emotions project with 'The colour monster' to assist children manage their emotions. A staff member was observed to sit with a child who was upset sharing toys but the reasons for sharing were explained easily and the child was seen to respond to this.
- The adults were relaxed when speaking with the children and there were no raised voices noted during the inspection.

- The staff team appeared to work well together.
- Staff operated in partnership with parents as demonstrated with the conversation at drop off and collection.

Physical And Material Environment:

- The indoor environment consisted of one care room. The room had child height tables and chairs where the children were observed to eat and do their arts and crafts and other tabletop activities. There were open shelving units that were accessible to the children and at their height which allowed the children to be independent in their activities.
- There was a supply of varied equipment such as arts and crafts, Montessori equipment and shape sorters as an example for fine motor development, Imaginary games with kitchens and a selection of dolls with wheelchairs, walking frames and other equipment to ensure the inclusion of all members of society are incorporated into the daily lives of the children.
- At the end of the room the children had access to the quieter area, a couch and to books should they require a rest or wish to opt out of activities.
- The service demonstrated a language rich environment with stories being told, and children being spoken to in small groups and individually.
- The materials and equipment were easily accessible to the children and the artwork previously completed by the children was displayed in the service.
- The service has engaged in the 'Little Pea Project' over the last 2 years where the service grew vegetables and read books about growing food to ensure children were aware of where food comes from.

The Outdoor Environment:

The outdoor environment was developed at the side of the premises and was secured by a gate and fence, with the service and a high wall to the other sides. The area mimicked a forest with natural woodland covering, some stone paths and an area covered with bark mulch and a rubber mat at the end of the slide. The area had a quiet corner, an area where there were fairy doors and little toys, a large climbing frame, a music wall, a mirrored walls and a climbing structure. The main yard was used for ride on toys. The area was used to develop the senses of the children and to encourage risk taking and physically demanding tasks of climbing and digging.

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 service was secured by a high gate to the front which would be closed if the children were accessing the yard
- The main door into the service was secured with an appropriate lock. This prevented unauthorised exit by any of the children to the yard and prevented unauthorised access to the children by any adult.
- The windows were at a height that could not be reached by the children.
- There was no staircase in the service.
- All toys and equipment observed on the day of inspection were in good condition and free from any pinch or crush points.
- There was no heavy furniture at a height that could tip over on to the children observed.
- The electric flexes observed were in good condition and out of reach of the children.
- The storage facilities were inaccessible to the children.
- There were no hot drinks consumed in the service.
- There was no kettle available in the service.

Infection Control:

- The children were observed to wash their hands on arrival, after playing with playdough before snack time and after using the toilet.
- The paper towels used following hand washing were disposed of in lidded bins that were pedal operated.
- There was hot water accessible in all of the sinks that was thermostatically controlled. The hot water in the children's toilets was recorded at 34.8°C. in the care room was recorded at 31.6°C. There was liquid hand soap and paper towels available at all sinks.
- The snacks provided to the service were stored in the fridge following arrival and before snack time preventing the growth of bacteria on perishable items.
- The tables where the children were eating were cleaned with appropriate disinfectant prior to the children having their snack.
- School bags were stored off the ground on a trolley preventing contamination.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit door was unobstructed throughout the inspection. Tables were an adequate distance away from the door so as not to block it.
- The firefighting equipment was safely tethered to the wall.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) There were two staff trained in first aid responder (FAR) who were immediately available to the children should the need arise.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-*
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The fire drills that took place in the service were all recorded and the last fire drill took place on the 30.08.2024 with evidence that drills take place monthly observed.
- (b) The firefighting equipment (Fire extinguishers) were last serviced in March 2024. The smoke detection system was last serviced in March 2024.
- (4) The procedure to follow in the event of a fire was displayed near the exit door.