

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:	13/12/2023
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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 Co Cork, P51DD5Y
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Inspection undertaken by:	F Collins
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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	N/A
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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 ½ years to 5 years for sessional childcare 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. The premise consists of 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 available to work in the service both staff were present on the day of inspection and of these, 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 inspector wishes 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) There was a named person in charge who was the registered provider, in the service when the inspector 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 2 staff employed in the service.

Both staff files were assessed

(a) All four references required 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.

(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 6 on the National Qualifications Framework.

One adult had obtained the Leadership for Inclusion Level 6 special award and the second member of staff was working towards achieving this (LINC) award.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider had all policies and statements as listed in Schedule 5 of the Regulations.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The policy on Authorisation to collect was not comprehensive and did not include the procedures to follow should a parent/guardian arrive to the service not fit to collect their child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The policy on authorisation to collect has been updated and now includes the process to follow child a child is not collected or an attempt to collect them by an adult not fit to collect has been included in the policy. The registered provider has committed to updating the services policies annually.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. The updated policy has been received.

Summary Comment

The requirements for this Regulation have been met.

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 registered provider 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 12 children enrolled in the service of which seven children were attending the service on the day of the inspection. All 12 enrolment records were available. Six of the enrolment records for the children who were in attendance were reviewed.
- (a) – (i) The enrolment forms were complete and up with date with all details as outlined above and with parents and registered providers signatures recorded on the enrolment forms for all children.
- (2) (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:

- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in 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;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (c) The adult child ratios for the service on a daily basis could be assessed by using the sign in records for both children and staff. The adult child ratios on the previous two weeks were assessed and were in compliance with the Regulations.
- (g) The service had a copy of the policies and these were available for assessment and were available to the parents.
- (h) The sign in records for each child daily was maintained by the service, this included sign in and sign out times for each child.

(i) The staff roster was available; the staff worked the same hours daily and no breaks were scheduled during the operation of the three-hour service.

(k) The incident and accident books were reviewed, there were 4 incidents recorded and these were signed by both staff and parents/guardians.

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 food observed in the snacks brought to the service evidenced the healthy eating policy.
- Children had access to their drinks of water throughout the session and a jug of water was also available on the window ledge throughout the session.
- Cutlery and crockery were provided as appropriate for snack time and when asked for by the children. Staff were on hand to support the children's eating and drinking.
- No child in the service required nappy changing on the day of inspection. Any child who required who required assistance with hand washing was supported with same.
- The children's personal cleanliness was cared for and the children were noted to have their noses cleaned as needed and reminded to wash hands after this.
- Sleep was not provided for in the service and children who chose to opt out and rest could be facilitated to do so in the quiet area at the end of the care room, no child was observed to opt out of activities on the day of the inspection.
- Children were allowed to choose their activities inclusive of art activities, tabletop activities and story time.
- The children's mobility was not hindered at any time and the children could move about freely.
- No concerns with behaviour were noted on the day of inspection. A child who required assistance with integration into the group and additional assistance was provided with this support as needed. This child had an access and inclusion plan to ensure their needs were met.

Supporting Relationships Around Children

- The same adults have worked in the service for the last number of years and the children were observed to be comfortable with them and sought out their assistance as required.
- The adults demonstrated sensitivity to the children and 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 and also when planning the care for individual children.

Physical And Material Environment:

- The indoor environment consisted of one care room. The room had child height tables and chairs. There were open shelving units that were accessible to the children and at their height. The children could access tabletop activities such as Montessori equipment, jigsaws and shape sorters.
- At the end of the room the children had access to the quieter area and to books. This area was also used when children needed to reduce stimulation when they were becoming overwhelmed. The use of this area was explained by the registered provider. Appropriate toys and resources were available to assist these children.
- The service demonstrated a language rich environment with stories being told, books being read and good interactions being noted with the children. The children were supported with their language development and were spoken to on a one-to-one basis as required.
- The materials and equipment were easily accessible to the children and the artwork previously completed by the children was displayed in the service.
- The outdoor environment was extensive and had various surfaces inclusive of pebbles, bark mulch and tarmacadam. The area was developed with climbing frames, slides swings, a fairy garden and musical activities. The outdoor area was not being used on the day of inspection as a fence had been broken by the storm and was awaiting repair.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The snacks served in the service were provided by parents/guardians. The food provided by the parents/guardians consumed was in keeping with healthy food choices and included fruit/vegetables, sandwiches, crackers, pasta and yogurts. Water was the only drink available in the service.

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 which opened to allow the children into the service at 9.30 and was closed after this. The door into the service was secured with an appropriate latch lock. This prevented unauthorised exit by any of the children to the main road 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 not secured.
- The electric flexes observed were in good condition and out of reach of the children.
- The storage facilities were inaccessible to the children. The storage facilities were adjacent to the staff toilet in the garage.
- There were no hot drinks consumed in the service.
- There was no kettle available to the service.

Infection Control:

- The children were observed to wash their hands as appropriate on arrival to the service after messy play, after using the toilet and before snack time.
- The service was cleaned daily and a record of the cleaning completed was available for inspection.
- 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 30.2 °C, was recorded at 28.6°C in the care room and the hot water in the adults' toilets was recorded at 29.4°C. There was liquid hand soap available at all sinks. The radiator temperatures were safe and were recorded at 49.9°C or below preventing a contact burn for the children.
- 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.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not routinely given to the children in the service as the children were sent home should they be displaying any signs of illness.

Safe Sleep:

- Children do not sleep during the three-hour sessional services provided.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit door was unobstructed throughout the inspection.
- 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.

(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 registered provider insured that both staff were trained in first aid responder (FAR) and were immediately available to the children.

(2) (a) There was a first aid box stored on a shelf in the corridor to the children's toilets.

(b) This first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school at all times.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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 07.12.2023 with evidence that drills take place monthly observed.
- (b) The firefighting equipment (Fire extinguishers) were last serviced in March 2023. The smoke detection system was last serviced on 23.03.2023.
- (2) (c) The records as referred to above were available for assessment by the early years inspector on the day of inspection.
- (4) The procedure to follow in the event of a fire was displayed near the exit door.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The service was insured as a sessional service. The expiry date of the insurance was 27.11.2024.