

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC239		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Stars Montessori Pre-School		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	14 Bradfields, Dunderrow, Kinsale, Co. Cork		
<b>Eircode:</b>	P17 XY32		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Katherine Kelly, Helen Forde		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	25/10/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM 6
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Admin Building, St Marys Health Campus, Cork, T23x440		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C Stokes		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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).			
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A		

### Description of service

This preschool was established in 2013 as a private sessional/part-time day care service. It is registered to provide sessional (ECCE) provision and part time day care from 9.00am-14.00, Monday to Friday. The service is a play-based Montessori influenced provision. It is registered to provide a service to children aged 2 to 6 years and currently caters for children aged 2 and a half to 5 years. According to the Mission Statement of the service, it offers 'inclusive, high quality, rights-based and child led, affordable play-based education and care within a safe, secure and caring environment' It provides a play-based approach to learning with some Montessori influences.

### Staffing

The two registered providers are service based. These two adults work directly with the children in the service and have a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education

### 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 providers 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*
- (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.*

*(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 has a designated person in charge and a named person who can deputise i.e. the two registered providers.
- (b) At all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the deputy person in charge are on the premises.
- (c) There is a clear management structure as the setting was jointly run by these two registered providers.
- (2) There were no new staff since the previous inspection of October 2021, the staff are the two registered providers whose staff files were found to be compliant on the previous inspection.
- (4) Both registered providers hold a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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.*

### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered providers ensured that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) On the day of inspection there were 2 adults with 18 children in the morning and 2 adults with 6 children in the afternoon.

### 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:

- Adults were observed to sit with the children and chat to make the snack time a social occasion.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop independence regarding personal care, particularly, with hand washing prior to meals.
- The children were largely trained using the toilet and were supported appropriately by the adults to use the toilet. A small number of children were in pull-up nappies and the service had a sensitive practice of dealing with these children.
- There was a cosy corner in the home area to provide for the children's need for rest and relaxation during the day and a sleep mat and cellular blankets were available if any child needed rest/sleep.
- Children's need for mobility was met with both the indoor and outdoor play area being used on the day of inspection.
- The adults were observed to support the children to interact positively with each other. There was a calm and positive approach to managing behaviour. The adults modelled speaking in low tones and supportive interactions.
- No child in the setting had an individual care plan.

##### SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The registered provider advised the inspector that the service operated in partnership with parents, with a parental partnership policy and an open-door approach.
- The adults described that regular observations on the children are maintained monthly in learning journals and shared each term with parents.
- The adults were observed to show positive regard for the children on the day of inspection, with encouragement and praise for specific tasks in a warm and caring manner for example during tidy up/transition times and mealtimes where nurturing and enthusiastic interactions were observed.

- Positive sibling interactions were encouraged and facilitated within the daily life in the setting particularly with free outdoor play time for sets of twins attending.
- The setting is integrated into the local community, particularly with the school community across the road.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The indoor environment of the playroom was child friendly and bright and was laid out in defined interest areas, including Montessori materials, a home area/ cozy area, arts/crafts, dolls, role play, small world, transport, construction area, sand play, playhouse dolls and puzzles were available in addition to the special interest materials. The adults advised that materials were rotated to create new and exciting experiences for the children, for example a potion making area, linked to the Halloween theme.
- There was open shelving with play materials and items laid out so that the children could identify and access them easily and independently. Materials were selected based on the monthly themes.
- Children's artwork was on display at an appropriate level for children. The artwork was linked to the themes of the week/month, for example, Halloween.
- The outdoors comprised of various interest areas including ride on toys, slide, wooden climbing frame, chalk boards, castle, painting easel, kitchen, sandpit, and vegetable plot.
- The emphasis on children having access to the outdoor area on a twice daily basis was supported by a large and well-equipped outdoor space to accommodate the learning and development needs of the children.

### Programme of Activities

- The service offered a play-based curriculum and playful opportunities were supported throughout the early learning and care programme.
- Children had autonomy and an appropriate level of choice in enabling children to initiate activities, inviting others to join in and to make decisions and plan activities outside the pre-planned programme, particularly autonomy and independent play was observed in the outdoors.
- Language development was encouraged with songs and books. Language development and physical activity were combined for song time and each child was offered an opportunity to participate in small groups.

### 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

- A Healthy eating policy was in place and the snacks /lunch observed were suitable, adequate, and varied.
- Water was readily available to the children with snacks and between snack/lunchtime from the children's own drinking bottles.
- Parents provided all snacks/lunches and plates were provided.

### 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:

- Internal and external doors were secured on the day of inspection.
- Emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- Storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- No cables were within reach of children on the day of inspection.
- The outdoor area was suitably enclosed and secured without any observed hazards.

##### Infection Control:

- Adults cleaned down the tables prior to and after snack/lunchtime.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before eating.
- There was a supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, and paper towels available in the children's sanitary area.

##### Administration of Medication:

- The administration of medication was not observed at the time of inspection.

##### Safe Sleep:

- No child was observed to sleep in the service, and the two registered providers advised that those children staying for parttime care do not have a sleep routine in the setting but that the facilities and policies to support this were in place.

### Fire Safety:

- No fire safety issues were observed on the day of inspection, fire doors were unobstructed.

### Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection.

## 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 providers ensured that a person trained in first aid for children is, always, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service as both had FAR training.

(2) The registered providers ensured that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

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

(b) It was available to the children attending the pre-school service always.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance for 21 children attending parttime care valid until March 2024.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

## Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-  
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

### Compliance Information

e ) There were 2 children's sinks and 2 toilets on the premises. This can accommodate 22 toilet-trained early years children as the ratio is 1 to 11. There was 1 adult toilet and 1 sink for the 2 adults in the service.