

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC247
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Wonders Montessori Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Chapel St., Charleville, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P56 EA89
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Marie Tangney
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	29/01/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Second Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F Collins
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<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Little Wonders Montessori Pre-school it is sessional service located in Charleville town. The service is located off the main street at the side of the community centre. The service operates from 09:00 to 12:30 daily for 38 weeks of the year and offers the Early Childhood Care and Education programme.

A service is provided to children aged between two and six years.

The premises is part of the community centre and there is direct access to the service at the side of the building.

There are two care rooms in the service, a hallway where the sanitary accommodation for the children is accessible and the service has use of the community hall downstairs. The adults have access to the toilets in the community centre. The storage room for the outdoor toys is located across in the main hall of the community centre.

There is an outdoor area located directly outside the front of the service, this is secured by a high gate.

### Staffing

Three adults work in the service. There were two adults present on the day of inspection, one of whom was the registered provider, both staff were working directly with the children.

### 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,*

*(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 the named person in charge. The person in charge was the registered provider and was in the service when the inspector arrived and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2) There were three staff employed in the service. All three staff files were assessed.

(a) Of the six validated references required five were available from past employers.

(b) Of the six references required, one validated reference was available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) All three staff held in date Garda vetting. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff.

(d) Not applicable as no staff member had resided outside the country for greater than six consecutive months.

(4) All three staff were qualified between level 6 and level 8 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.*

*(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 nineteen children attending the sessional service 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-

(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. Parents/guardians provided the snack daily and the food demonstrated compliance with the services policy on healthy eating. The staff sat with the children to support them during snack time opening packages and chopping fruit.
- No child in the service required nappy changing on the day of inspection. Children were able to go to the toilet independently and where they requested assistance, staff provided same.
- Any child who required assistance with hand washing was supported with same and it was observed where staff reminded the children to wash hands after using the toilet.
- Sleep was not provided for in the service and children were not observed to ask for a rest.
- The children's mobility was not hindered at any time, and the children could move about freely.
- The room temperatures were recorded at 17.5 and 17.6°C in the small and big care rooms respectively at 10am. At 11.30am the room temperatures were recorded at 18.3 and 18.2°C in the small and big care rooms.

##### Supporting Relationships Around Children

- The children were familiar with the adults who worked in the service daily and the children were comfortable with them, called them by name when talking to them and sought their assistance as required.
- 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 collection. Parents also received newsletters frequently and these informed the parents of the activities in the service and indicated what the children were learning.

### Physical And Material Environment:

- The indoor environment consisted of one large care room and a smaller room where the sand tray and the rest area were located. Children were noted to use this space when they needed to take a break from the larger group and could play supported by a member of staff. The main care 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.
- Children were allowed to choose their activities inclusive of art activities, tabletop activities and activities that allowed for imaginary play by playing 'birthday party' and playing 'witch'. Sensory play was facilitated with the sand tray and sand toys. Fine motor play with jigsaws and shape sorters and gross motor play when using the large community hall where the children used scooters, slides, balance buckets and ran around. The staff moved about to support the children but allowed them to choose and play with whom and what they wished.
- The service demonstrated a language rich environment and had circle time scheduled twice where stories were told and song were sung and during the second session where stories were told and the children got to participate in identifying objects from the story.
- The materials and equipment were easily accessible to the children. And some children were observed pull out mats of roads and towns and played with cars and trucks driving on the pretend roads.

### Programme of Activities

- The registered provider had a programme of activities planned on the whiteboard and recorded activities on the weekly monthly planner. This ensured the staff were aware of the plans for the week/month.
- Parents were also made aware of the plans so they could continue at home with the activities.

### The Outdoor Environment:

The outdoor environment consisted of a concrete yard. This area was not used on the day of inspection due to the poor weather. The area was partially covered.

### 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 registered provider ensured that the children received adequate and suitable nutritious food. The welcome letter for new parents to the service and the healthy eating policy indicated the suitable foods for children's snacks daily. Parents/guardians followed the guidance given by the service when providing foods and drinks for snack time.

### 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 was closed when the children were outside.
- The door into the service was closed with a secure lock that the children could not access. This prevented unauthorised exit by any of the children to the front of the building and prevented unauthorised access to the children by any adult.
- The doors within the service to the community hall and to the store area were secured by key locks and were inaccessible to the children.
- The windows were at a height that could not be reached by the children.
- There was no staircase accessible to the children 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.
- There were no hot drinks consumed in the service.
- There was no kettle accessible to the children in the service.

- The electric storage heater was protected on all sides by safety guard preventing children from accessing the hot surface.

### Infection Control:

- The children were observed to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack time children used hand sanitiser.
- Staff were also observed to wash their hands frequently especially if observed to help children to blow their nose, hands were sanitised after disposing of the tissue.
- The paper towels used following hand washing were disposed of in lidded bins that were pedal operated.
- There was hot water accessible in all the sinks that was thermostatically controlled. The hot water in the children's toilets was recorded at 20.8 and 20.9°C respectively. In the adults' toilets the hot water was recorded at 17.8°C. There was liquid hand soap and paper towels available at all sinks.
- The perishable items contained in 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 and after the children having their snack.
- School bags were stored off the ground on a shelving unit preventing contamination.

### Administration of Medication:

- No medication was administered in the service during the inspection.

### 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.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. A trampoline was used in the service that had not been prescribed by a health professional. The children were observed to use this without direct supervision. Using a trampoline could increase the risk of an accident and potentially injure a child.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. The trampoline has been removed permanently from the service.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. The assurance given by the registered provider on the corrective and preventive action form is accepted as proof that the trampoline has been removed.

### Summary Comment

the requirements for this regulation have been met following the corrective and preventive action process.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that all children were signed in on arrival with the time of arrival recorded.

The time of departure was also recorded for each child. The staff were responsible for signing the children in and out of the service and the record for this was observed.

(3) (a) The registered provider ensured that no person other than the staff and children could enter the premises without their entry being approved by a staff member.

(b) A visitor book where the visitors to the service signed in was in use and the inspector signed into the service on arrival. Evidence of previous visitors to the service signing in was available.

### 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-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
  - (b) an employee, and
  - (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) A record of all fire drills was maintained in the service, the last recorded fire drill that took place was on 08.12.2025.
- (b) The fire extinguishers were last serviced in May 2025. The fire alarms were last serviced on 30.05.2025.
- (4) The notice of the fire procedures to follow were displayed.

### Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

#### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured they had a complaints policy for the service to follow in the event they received a complaint. The policy compliance with (a), (b) and (c).