

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC261
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Name of Service:	Maryborough Montessori School
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Address of Service:	5 Lislee Rd., Maryborough Estate, Douglas, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	T12 AP02
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Name of Registered Provider:	Karen Lynch
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	15/12/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Admin Building, St Marys Health Campus, Cork, T23x440
Inspection undertaken by:	C Stokes
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).

Conditions if applicable	N/A
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Description of service

Maryborough Montessori School is a long-established service registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years for sessional care from 8.30 to 12 noon daily Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. The pedagogical approach of the service is both play and Montessori-based.

Staffing

The service is run single handedly by the registered provider who has major awards in Early childhood Care and Education at level 7 & 8 on the National Qualification Framework.

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. 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 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 a named person in charge (PIC) of operating the service.

- (b) In addition, there was an emergency person available as required.
- (2) The staff recruitment files were examined as part of this inspection.
- (b) When the recruitment file of the registered provider was reviewed two written references were available in respect of 2 sources other than past employers.
- (c) A completed record of Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau was available for the registered provider.
- (d) Police vetting was not required
- (4) A certificate of a major award in Early Childhood care and education at QQI level 7 and 8, on the National Qualification framework was on file for the registered provider.

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 worked directly with the children at all times.
- (3) On the day of inspection, the registered provider was working with 5 children, aged 3-4 years.

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 morning snacks were served at 10.45am and water was observed to be readily available. Plastic plates were available for snack-time. The registered provider was observed to sit and interact with the children during snack times to make it a social occasion.
- The children in the preschool room were independent using the toilet and the registered provider supported these children appropriately, with gentle reminders for handwashing.
- A quiet area in the preschool room was available for rest, and a monks bench was available beside the library in the lobby for children who might like a break from the preschool room to relax.
- Children had access to the outdoor area for mobility and fresh air.
- There was a calm and engaging atmosphere in the room. The registered provider interacted in a caring manner with the children and supported them appropriately in their tasks and play.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

Compliance Information

(a) Having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there were adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and outdoors, during the day. The care room had multiple interest areas including a home corner, train/transport area, animal/farm area, open shelving with puzzles, jigsaws, magnets and shapes and other tabletop activities, an arts and craft table. There were child sized tables and chairs. In the outdoor area there was a kitchen,

planting area, sandbox, picnic bench, playhouse, goals and a slide. Children had outdoor puddle suits for water play in the outdoors.

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:

- Blind cords were observed to be secured.
- The front door was secured.
- Storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- No cables were within reach of children on the day of inspection.
- The outdoor area was observed to be free of safety concerns or hazards.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing with thermostatically controlled hot water, soap and paper towels for drying was observed on the day of inspection.
- Lidded pedal operated bins were available in the children's toilets for paper towel disposal.

Administration of Medication:

- The administration of medication was not observed at the time of inspection, and the registered provider advised that there were no children requiring medication in the setting this year.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were not obstructed.

Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. While there was a fridge in place in the setting, it was not plugged in or in use for the storage of children's lunches. This inadequate food storage may increase the risk of food spoilage.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & evidence submitted

Infection Control:

1. The registered provider advised on 24 January 2024 that the fridge will be plugged in, and lunches stored in it. The assurance from the registered provider was accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider adequately addresses the issue of noncompliance under this regulation.

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 ensured that a person trained in first aid for children is, always, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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

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

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

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 registered provider ensured that a record was kept of the fire drills, the most recent drill was dated 7 December 2023.
- (b) The registered provider ensured that a record was kept of the firefighting equipment. The service record indicated the fire extinguishers were maintained in January 2023 and the fire alarm was most recently serviced on 2 October 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was on display at the fire point in the room.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) On the day of inspection, there was no wired smoke alarm in the setting. The smoke alarm was battery operated.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting documentation submitted

The response from the registered provider via CAPA received on 24 January 2024 details that the registered provider was seeking quotes for the work to be carried out. The registered provider informed the inspectorate on 20 February 2024, that the work may be completed within 10 days. CAPA 2 was received on 13 March 2023 with evidence that the wired smoke alarm was fitted on 7 and 8 March 2024.

Summary Comment

The wired fire alarm in Maryborough Montessori School was addressed and suitable evidence of same was furnished, and regulatory compliance has been reached on this issue.

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 10 children attending on a sessional basis valid until 27 November 2024