

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC364
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Shining Stars Montessori
-------------------------	--------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ouvane, Rochestown, Cork, Co. Cork
----------------------------	------------------------------------

<b>Eircode:</b>	T12 A32V
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Aiveen Casey
-------------------------------------	--------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional, Childminder
----------------------	------------------------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	25/04/2024
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	15	PM	4
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	---

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D Prendergast
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

### Description of service

Shining Stars Montessori is a privately owned early years service, that is registered to cater for children aged two to six years. Following a fit for purpose inspection on 18 April 2023, the registered provider was approved to offer a childminding service in the afternoons, in addition to the existing sessional service, which operates from 9.00am to 12.00pm, with the option of an additional half hour until 12.30pm. Children attending the childminding service are accommodated from 12.30pm to 2.00pm. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated over a 38-week annual period.

Located in a rural area of Rochestown in Cork, the service is provided from a room beside the registered provider's own residence. Adjoining sanitary facilities are available for the children's use and there are two outdoor play spaces on site.

### Staffing

The childcare service employs three adults, each of whom works directly with the children and holds a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education. This includes the registered provider and one adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) support scheme.

### 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) The registered provider was the person in charge at the early years setting. A deputy person in charge/emergency person had also been assigned.
- (b) The registered provider was working at the service when the inspector arrived and remained to facilitate the inspection process.
- (2) Recruitment records in respect of the three adults attached to the service were assessed and the following was established:
- (a) Two of the six required written references were from past employers.
- (b) There were two written and validated references in place from sources other than previous employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was held for one of the adults, who had resided in another jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months, while over the age of 18.
- (4) All three adults held a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications and written evidence was available to this effect.

## Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and validated references were unavailable for one of the adults.

Records of reference validation were not available for the references in respect of a second staff member.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

The written response stated that the references for the staff were in another file and are now available.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Two written references in respect of one staff member and a staff vetting information record/checklist were forwarded.

## Summary Comment

Based on the statement from and evidence submitted by the registered provider, regulatory compliance is determined to have been met.

## 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 service's policies on Healthy Eating and Behaviour Management were reviewed and deemed satisfactory.

### 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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency,*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were consistently available to the children.
- (3) In the morning, a sessional category service was provided for children and the correct adult to child ratio was maintained; there were 3 adults working directly with 15 children, who were aged 3 to 5 years. Four of these children remained to attend the childminding service in the afternoon, which was operated by the registered provider.
- (8)
- (b) A second adult, who worked at the setting in the mornings, was available to attend the childminding service in the event of an emergency and provide assistance.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

- (a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,
- (b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and
- (c) there is a working telephone on the premises.

(2) A childminder may have more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time where all such children are siblings of each other.

#### Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) There were four children in the care of the registered provider in the afternoon.
  - (b) None of the children were aged under 15 months, as per the service's registered age range of children.
  - (c) A working mobile phone was available for use.
- (2) Not applicable, as children under the age of two were not in attendance.

### 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

(1)(a)

##### Basic needs:

- A mid-morning snack was facilitated at 10.35am and the registered provider advised that children who remained to attend the childminding service had a second snack, later in the afternoon. The morning meal break was observed to be a relaxed and social occasion; the adults chatted to the children and sufficient time was afforded for eating and drinking.

- Drinking water was accessible to the children, as needed; their reusable water bottles were stored in the fridge, in the entrance area.
- The children’s independent use of the sanitary facilities was encouraged, with verbal prompts and reminders provided by the adults, as needed.
- Children’s need for rest and relaxation was met through the provision of an appropriately furnished cosy area, within the main care room.
- While engaging in free play activities indoors, the children were observed to have adequate space to move freely and explore their chosen materials. An extended period of outdoor play was also facilitated, during which time the children had opportunities to partake in more active play, such as climbing and digging.

### 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 offered to the children were supplied by the children’s parents or guardians and were observed to be varied and nutritionally well balanced. Examples included sandwiches, crackers, rice cakes, yogurts, cheese, carrot sticks and fruit such as blueberries, chopped grapes, oranges and apples, with water to drink.
- As none of the children attended the service for longer than five hours daily, the provision of a hot meal was not required.
- The inspector was advised that the children did not have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.
- The registered provider confirmed that the service was flexible in relation to the timing of meal breaks and that if a child became hungry outside of the allocated mealtimes, they were free to have a snack from their lunch box. This practice was in keeping with the service’s Healthy Eating policy.

## 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 entrance gate that provided access to the service was appropriately secured, which reduced the risk of unauthorised access and also reduced the likelihood of a child exiting, while unsupervised.
- Enclosures of fencing and gates were in place surrounding the outdoor play areas.
- Safe storage of cleaning agents was ensured; high level shelves were used for this purpose.
- A cupboard located at child height was noted to be secured, which minimised the risk of a child accessing harmful materials.
- There were no blind cords in the care room.

##### Infection Control:

- The children were observed to wash their hands before and after the mid-morning snack.
- Wall hooks were in use to store the children's coats and bags and the children's wellies were maintained on a shelving unit.
- Perishables snacks were stored in a refrigerator before the mid-morning meal break.

##### Administration of Medication:

- The administration of medication was not observed. Further to this, the inspector was advised that none of the children were in receipt of medication.

##### Safe Sleep:

- No child was observed to sleep on the day of inspection.

##### Outings:

- An outing was not conducted during the inspection period.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Infection Control:

Warm running water was unavailable at the children's wash hand basins upon the inspector's arrival. Temperature readings of 13.7°C and 13.8°C were taken . Cold water temperatures may impede effective handwashing.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

In her written reply, the registered provider advised that she had forgotten to turn on the hot water on the day of the inspection. It was switched on during the morning and warm water was then available for the children to wash their hands. Warm running water will always be available for the children.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

The statement from the registered provider is accepted as evidence.

#### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was deemed to meet regulatory compliance with regulation 23.

### 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) Evidence was available to demonstrate that two of the adults had completed First Aid Response (FAR) training and said training was up to date.
- (2)
- (a) An adequately stocked first aid box was stored in the care room.
  - (b) The first aid box was readily available throughout the hours of operation.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The insurance certificate that related to the sessional service outlined that sufficient cover was in place and this was valid until 27 March 2025. A separate record of insurance was available for the childminding service, with an expiry date of 18 July 2024.