

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC422
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	The Wendy House Montessori School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Rospico, Ashdale Drive, Terrysland, Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	T45 HP40
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Wendy O'Leary
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	09/11/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	N/A
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<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
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### Description of service

The Wendy House Montessori School is a sessional early years service, that caters for children aged two to six years. Montessori pedagogy and play based learning and exploration are implemented at the setting. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated over a 38-week annual period. Registered opening hours are from 9.00am to 12.00pm and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm, however, current hours of operation are from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.10pm to 3.10pm.

The premises from which the service operates is located near the village of Carrigtwohill in Co. Cork. It consists of one operational classroom, on the ground floor of the registered provider's private residence. The children have access to a designated outdoor play space at the side of the building.

### Staffing

The four adults employed at the early years service are all involved in the direct care of the children. This includes the registered provider. Each of the four adults has attained a recognised 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 the 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 designated person in charge of operating the service was the registered provider and a named deputy had also been assigned, to deputise as required.
- (b) The inspection was facilitated by the registered provider, who remained present throughout.
- (2) Recruitment records in respect of the four adults who worked at the service were reviewed. The following information was obtained:
- (a) A total of eight written and validated references were required and four of these had been provided by past employers.
- (b) A further four written and validated references were from sources other than previous employers.
- (c) Garda vetting was in place for the four adults.
- (d) Police vetting was required for one of the adults and a copy of the relevant documentation was maintained on file.
- (4) Copies of major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications, were available in respect of all four staff members.

### 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 an adequate number of adults were consistently available to the children.
- (3) The adult child ratio exceeded the requirements of the regulation. There were 14 children, aged 3 to 4 years, present on the morning of inspection, with 2 adults working directly with these children. The registered provider was also available.

### 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 meal break was facilitated at 10.45am. During this time, the children sat at low-level tables and ate their snacks in an unhurried environment, that promoted social interaction with peers and with the adults.
- When using the sanitary facilities, the children were supported by the adults, who used prompts and reminders, where necessary.

- The children appeared confident in their environment and responded positively to the structure and routine provided. For example, the children readily participated in helper tasks and tidied up after snack time.
- A box of tissues was positioned at child height in the classroom. This encouraged the children to attend to their own personal hygiene and children were observed to retrieve tissues, as required.
- A cosy corner was included within the classroom, for any child who may wish to opt out of scheduled activities or take some time to relax.
- The children were encouraged to move about freely in the classroom and engaged in various activities, which included an obstacle course. Outdoor play and games were also facilitated on the morning of the inspection, with appropriate clothing and footwear provided for the children.

### 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

- It was confirmed that the children’s parents or guardians, who supplied the food for the children’s daily snack time, were provided with copies of the service’s Healthy Eating policy, at the beginning of the school year.
- The promotion of nutritious snacks was evident during the mid-morning meal break. Food which had been provided for the children included sandwiches, bread rolls, crackers, yogurt and fruit such as sliced grapes, apples, bananas, strawberries and oranges, with water to drink.
- The registered provider advised that if a child became hungry outside of the allocated mealtime, they were free to choose a snack from their lunch box.
- The inspector was informed that none of the children had any specific dietary requirements or food allergies.

## 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 door which led directly into the classroom, was secured when the unannounced inspection commenced. This practice prevented unauthorised access and reduced the likelihood of a child exiting, while unsupervised.
- A combination of high-level fencing, walls and secured gates enclosed the outdoor play area.
- A wooden partition was in place at the entrance to the kitchenette, in order to deter the children from accessing this area.
- The blind cord on the main entrance door was appropriately secured.
- Firefighting equipment in the classroom was safely tethered.

##### Infection Control:

- The wash hand basins in the service were equipped to facilitate hygienic handwashing; warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels were in place. Supervised handwashing was observed before the mid-morning snack.
- The classroom and sanitary facilities appeared clean and well maintained.
- Windows in the classroom were open throughout the morning, which ensured a supply of fresh air.
- Suitable storage, above floor level, was in use to store the children's coats and bags.

##### Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered at the time of inspection. The inspector was also advised that none of the children were in receipt of medication.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Not applicable, as none of the children were observed to sleep during the sessional service.

##### Outings:

- The registered provider confirmed that outings from the service were undertaken and a suitable Outings policy was noted to be in place.

## 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) Two of the staff members who worked at the service held current First Aid Responder (FAR) certification.
- (2)
- (a) A first aid box was accessible to adults, while out of reach of the children.
  - (b) The first aid box was consistently available, should the need for its use arise.

## 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 firefighting 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) A record of the fire drills carried out at the service was available on file. The most recently undertaken fire drill was dated 25 October 2023.
  - (b) Maintenance records demonstrated that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 14 November 2022 and the wired smoke alarm was tested on 16 November 2022.
- (4) A fire evacuation notice was displayed in the classroom.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

A record of insurance cover for an early years sessional service was available, with an expiration date of 27 November 2024.