

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CW001				
Name of Service:	Anne's Montessori				
Address of Service:	Lisanne, Hacketstown, Co. Carlow				
Eircode:	R93 T925				
Name of Registered Provider:	Michael Murray				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	15/10/2024				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>16</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	16	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child & Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow.				
Inspection undertaken by:	Norma Thornton				
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	Not Applicable.
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Description of service

Anne's Montessori is a sessional early childhood care and education (ECCE) service in Lisanne, Hackettstown, in north county Carlow. The service provides an ECCE session for children aged 2 to 6 years , between the hours of 09:15 to 12:15 Monday to Friday, for 38 weeks of the year, September to June.

The service operates from a purpose-built annex on the registered provider's private residence and is comprised of one classroom and two outdoor areas, one at the rear of the building and one at the front of the building.

Staffing

There are four staff members employed in the service. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. The staff who as part of the remit in the service is to work directly with the children in attendance all hold qualifications in early childhood care and education ranging from Level 5 to Level 6 on the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) 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/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following regulations.

Regulation 10-Policies, Procedures, etc. of Pre-School Service,

Regulation 15- Record of a Preschool Child,

Regulation 21-Equipment and Materials,

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of child,

Regulation 25 - First Aid,

Regulation 26 - Fire Safety Measures,

Regulation 28 - Insurance.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the classroom and front outdoor play area that was used on the day of inspection.

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, person in charge, 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
- (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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a second named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) The deputy designated person in charge were onsite to facilitate the inspection.

(c) The inspector observed that there was a clear management structure in place in the service, on observation of the staff in practice on the day. The staff informed the inspector that the registered provider met with them frequently and was supportive to the team in the management of and maintenance of the service.

(2) The registered provider's file and staff files for four staff members employed to work directly with the children as part of their role in the service were reviewed by the inspector and the following observations found.

(a)(b) There were two validated references available for the registered provider and for each staff member on file, from either a past employer or reputable source in the case of a person who had no past employers.

(c) Garda Vetting certificates were available on file for the registered provider and for each staff member working directly with the children. The registered provider demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) No staff member employed to work directly with the children had lived outside of the State for a period of six months or longer.

(4) Certificates of accredited qualifications were available in each of the four staff members' files demonstrating that each staff member held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the national framework of qualifications.

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

On review of documentation the inspector observed that the written policies, procedures and statements required under schedule 5 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 were available in the service and open for inspection. The service policies were specific to the service and their contents adequate.

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) On review of the staff roster, the registered provider and designated person in charge ensured that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children in their care.

(3) There were 16 early years children aged 3 to 5 years of age, present with 4 staff members directly supervising them.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*

(f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;

(g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;

(h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;

(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (j) On review of a sample of six records of pre-school children, the inspector observed that records of the particulars (a) to (i) were maintained for each preschool child.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The inspector observed that suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials were provided in all areas of the service, in the classroom and in both outdoor areas. Children had access to age appropriate and clear identifiable areas of interest, which included a home/kitchen area, rest and reading area, construction area art and creativity area and sensory play area within the classroom. Outdoors in the front outdoor play area, areas of interest included a mud kitchen, construction area and equipment to physically challenge the children such as balance beams. Materials in the service included a combination of natural and manufactured and were all accessible to the children on appropriate low- level shelves.

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 to the front area of the service was appropriately secured with a gate system, where staff greeted parents / visitors therefore ensuring that no person could enter the service without staff authorisation and helping to prevent any child exiting the service unsupervised.

The main entrance door had a high lock which was secured, when the children remained indoors, in the classroom.

Cleaning materials and equipment were stored appropriately in a secure storage area inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

Staff and children were observed to adhere to the service's infection control policy with handwashing observed after toileting, messy play and outdoor play and prior to snack time.

Cleaning schedules demonstrated that staff carried out regular cleaning and maintenance of the physical environment and play equipment.

Administration of Medication:

The staff informed the inspector that medications were not generally required to be administered in the service, however there was an adequate administration of medication policy in place, in the event that a child required administration of an anti-febrile medication or in the instance where a child in attendance at the service required child centred medication plan, for the administration of a specific medication.

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) On review of staff files the inspector observed that there were two staff members employed in the service with current first aid responder (FAR) training. These two staff members were rostered to be present daily with the children in attendance in the service.

(2)(a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available stored on a window shelf in the classroom and was always available to the children in attendance in the 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) On review of fire drill records maintained, the inspector observed that fire drills were carried out monthly in the service.

(b) Records were also available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the service were last serviced in September 2024.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed at the main entrance.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

On review of the service's current insurance certificate, the inspector observed that the insurance certificate detailed cover for a sessional childcare service for 22 children which was active until the 27 March 2025.