

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR035
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Name of Service:	Ballinteer Montessori School
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Address of Service:	Unit 7, Block C, Nutgrove Office Park, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D16 WP29
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Name of Registered Provider:	Teresa Duggan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	18/04/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	47	PM	32
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty and S Quigley
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

Ballinteer Montessori School operates from a purpose built crèche facility located in an office park in Rathfarnham, Dublin 16. There are four care rooms in the service, on the day of inspection there were three in operation. The service operates a sessional service from 9.00am to 12.30pm in the Montessori 1 and 2 rooms and 9.30am to 1.00pm in the Pre-Montessori room. The service also offers a full time and part time service in addition to the ECCE sessional service.

A large enclosed outdoor area is located to the front of the building.

Staffing

On the day of inspection there were ten adults present including a cook. Nine adults were working directly with the children including the registered provider.

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, information and records, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

- Regulation 9 Management and recruitment
- Regulation 11 Staffing levels
- Regulation 16 Record in relation to pre-school service
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child
- Regulation 27 Supervision
- Regulation 32 Complaints

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation (number and name of regulation) ...As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms name rooms...

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.

Additional Information

This inspection was triggered following receipt of information to the inspectorate on 3 April 2024.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, staff and the registered provider 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,

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

- (2)
- The files of eleven adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a)(b) Of the twenty two references that were required, fifteen were available from a past employer and three were available from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the eleven adults.
- Garda vetting disclosures from all staff were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Garda vetting which was dated within the last three years was available for two staff, however, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice.
- Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d)
- International Police vetting was available for five staff members who had lived outside of the State for a period exceeding 6 months.
- (3)
- The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to six adults commencing employment with the service.
- (4)
- Records were available evidencing that ten staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. One of these staff members held a qualification recognition letter from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

Non-Compliance Information

(9)

(2)(a)(b)

There were no references at all on file for one adult. A second reference was not available for a second adult. A second reference for one adult could not be accepted as it could not be determined who the source of the reference was.

(3)

The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were not carried out in prior to four adults commencing employment in the service as follows:

- Four references for three adults had not been sought or verified prior to them commencing employment in the service.

(7)(a)

The registered provider did not demonstrate that they had taken all reasonable measures to ensure that all employees were appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information and training to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending the service and to comply with the regulations as follows:

- The registered provider was unable to provide completed training and induction records for three staff members who had recently commenced employment in the service. Staff stated during discussions with inspectors that they had not received appropriate training as set out in the policies and procedures of the service prior to commencement of employment.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) (3)

Regarding references I had sought References from both these adults but due to time constraints and pressure as outlined above I did not follow through as I was constantly covering for and recruiting new staff and doing all the administration myself. I have been working weekends and late nights to keep on top of everything. Apologies but these were an oversight. I have employed a Deputy Manager, but she has not completed her training.

Appointed a Deputy Manager to support me with administration.

Planning, Staff Roles, and Responsibilities.

(7)(a)

I speak to each new member of staff on a regular basis and am always available if they need additional training or support. I send training memos on a regular basis and discuss them with staff.

Prior to commencement all new staff members are issued with copies of the following: 'The Principles and Ethos of Ballinteer Montessori School, Individual Roles and Responsibilities, Policies and Procedures 2024 and a memo on Behavioural Management. During Induction I provide ongoing training, combined with memos covering Time Management, Theme Planning, Roles, and Responsibilities. Duty Manager for support with administration. I use these training memos in class whilst inducting new staff identifying areas such as Time Management, Theme

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b) – Outstanding references received.

(7)(a)

Induction records submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance found under Regulation 9.

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.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were forty seven children attending the service being supervised by nine adults on the day of inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
 - (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
 - (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
 - (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (h)
Accurate attendance records of children were recorded on a software application.
- (j)
A sample of medication administration records were reviewed and all contained the required information and signatures.

Non-Compliance Information

- (i)
There was no staff roster available to reflect the staffing levels on the day of inspection.
- (k)
A sample of four accident and incident records were reviewed. Only one had been signed by a parent. Failure to pass on details of an accident or incident can affect the continuity of care a child receives.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(i)
Staff rosters are on the Teach Kloud App, I did not have hard copies outside each class as there had been so many new staff over the previous 4 months, I omitted to update the hard copies.

(k)
I have told Team Leaders to ensure all accident incident reports have parents' signatures, and to inform me when the report is done so I can check the signatures. I have also informed parents that when they receive an Accident Incident report, they must sign them.

Supporting documentation submitted

(i) Rosters
(k) Screenshot of accident/incident report.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documentation submitted by the registered provider was reviewed by the inspector and is deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 16.

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-
(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and the manager reported that two snacks are provided by the parents of the children, a hot meal is provided by the service to children attending on a full time basis. Children had access to water at all times throughout the day.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's noses as required. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including cleaning up after their play. Older children were encouraged to use the toilet independently. There were rest areas available should a child need to take a break from activities throughout the day.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff supported the children to wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the inspection. Play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led. Children were observed exploring their environment, engaged in activities and playing with each other and the staff. Staff were observed discussing topical subjects which included the Irish flag and a pot of gold.

Staff described how they communicate with parents regarding their child's day on an online software application where parents had real time access to information. Staff described how they record information about each child's day on this software application.

Care rooms were arranged to provide a range of play materials and equipment providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Materials available included small world toys, construction toys, musical instruments, home corners and materials from the Montessori method of education.

The care rooms provided developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children. The materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was located to the front of the premises and had mixed surfacing. The area was divided into two separate play spaces. All children accessed the outdoor area during the course of the inspection.

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:

- Entry to the service was safely secure to prevent unauthorised access and children from leaving the area unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Fire exits were unobstructed.
- All toys and play equipment used by the children appeared to be in good condition

Infection Control:

- Children's hands were washed at required times including before eating and after using the toilet.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take when giving medicine to children, including obtaining written parent/guardian consent. Records were available detailing medicines given. These included the signature of the staff member who gave the medicine and the staff who witnessed the medicine being given. The records had been signed by parents indicating the information had been shared.

Fire Safety:

- Staff reported regular fire drills took place and all fire exits were kept clear.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. While Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff, two were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Infection Control:

2. The lacquered MDF surfacing behind the children’s toilet bowls on the 1st floor was missing and worn which could not be cleaned effectively.
3. The nappy bin in the changing area downstairs was not pedal operated.
4. The water temperature in the taps in the upstairs sanitary accommodation was recorded as 13.3°C. This temperature was too cold to facilitate effective handwashing.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Deputy Manager responsible for checking renewal of Garda Vetting.

Infection Control:

2. and 4. Have appointed a tradesman to replace surfacing behind children’s toilet and to increase water temperatures to 43 degrees. Tradesman will come every month to check premises for necessary repairs.
3. We have replaced the nappy bin in the changing area with a pedal bin.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Renewed Garda vetting disclosures.

Infection Control:

- 2, 4. Quotation from maintenance contractor.
3. Photo of pedal bin.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documentation submitted by the registered provider was reviewed by the inspector and is deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

On the day of inspection all children attending the service were supervised at all times.

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.*
- (2) *A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*
- (3) *A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-*
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*
- (4) *A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with.*

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
The complaints policy of the service did not contain any of the information required in the Regulation above under (a)(b) (c).
- (2)
(a) The registered provider confirmed a complaint had been made to the service however, no record was available for inspection.
(b) The policy did not contain the required steps for dealing with the complaint and there was no evidence that the complaint followed the service complaints policy as there was no documented evidence available.
- (3)
(a)(b)
There was no record in writing available detailing the nature of the complaint, how it was dealt with and it was not available for inspection.
- (4)
There was no record available of the complaint received.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Deputy Manager to support with administration. Deputy Manager responsible for documenting in detail all complaints.

Supporting documentation submitted

A detailed complaints policy.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documentation submitted by the registered provider was reviewed by the inspector and is deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 32.