

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DR062
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Fontanelles Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Mount Merrion Community Centre, North Avenue, Mount Merrion, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A94 R2Y4
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Emma Behan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	15/11/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	20	PM	n/a
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R. Brien
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Fontanelles Montessori is registered to provide sessional care for children from 2 to 6 years of age from 09:00 to 12:30, Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a single room located on the lower ground floor of Mount Merrion Community Centre in a residential area of south Dublin. The service has use of the community centre hall and an enclosed outdoor play area adjacent to the building.

### Staffing

The service currently employs four staff including the registered provider. There were three staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection.

### 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 and welfare and development of child and 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, 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*

*(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,*
- (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)(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 four adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a) Eight references were available from a past employer in respect of the four adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for four adults.
- (d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (4) Records were available evidencing that the four staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent.

## 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)-*

*(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

### Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(3) The minimum ratio of adults to children for sessional care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twenty children attending the service being supervised by three adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(c) Not applicable, the service is not operated single-handedly.

## 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

(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

(1)(a)(b)

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that children bring in their own lunch from home. Lunch took place at 11:10 and children were given a drink with their meal. The children sat together when eating, engaging in conversation with each other and staff.

Children were given responsibility appropriate to their age and were encouraged and supported to be independent. The inspector observed the children using the toilet as they needed, cleaning up after their lunch and play and putting on and taking off their own coats. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes.

Staff displayed warmth and sensitivity during all interactions with the children throughout the inspection. Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour policy. Children's choices were respected with children given the opportunity to choose their own play equipment and activities.

Children were given notice of the transition from one activity to another, and children appeared to be familiar with the daily routine. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed.

Staff described how they communicate with parents daily about their child at arrival and collection time.

The care room was arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included Montessori equipment, a sand tray, sensory play materials, construction toys, jigsaws and a library. The care room provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and was adequately resourced with a variety of materials. The children's artwork was displayed throughout the care room.

The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving and low level hooks were provided for coats. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care room.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was available to the side of the premises with grass surfacing. All children accessed the outdoor area on the day of inspection. Staff brought a bag of outdoor play equipment to the outdoor area and children were observed playing with this equipment. Children were observed engaging in energetic and imaginative play in the outdoor area.

### 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

The inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

#### General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.
- Hand sanitisers and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.

#### Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and before meals.
- An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. The premises, equipment and materials appeared clean and maintained in good condition.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Infection Control:

1. Two bins in use by the service were not pedal operated posing a risk of transmission of infection. The bins had open tops and were observed with waste inside.

#### Administration of Medication:

2. Documentation, procedures and practices in place for children attending the service requiring emergency medication were inadequate, posing a potential risk to the health and safety of children. There was no documented care plan available for one child attending the service who required emergency medication.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Infection Control:

1. Two pedal bins now in place.

#### Administration of Medication:

2. Care plan procedure now in place.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Infection Control:

Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

#### Administration of Medication:

Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these non-compliances.

### 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) A person trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service.

(b) A first aid box was available to the adults and children in the service at all times.

### 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) A written record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had been recorded as undertaken on the 20 October 2023.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the fire equipment were dated 11 July 2023 and 11 September 2023 for the smoke alarms.
- (4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.