

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR072
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Name of Service:	Cedar Montessori School
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Address of Service:	Applewood Cottage, Leopardstown Road, Leopardstown, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D18 N1N8
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sharon McCready
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	R Duff
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

Cedar Montessori childcare service was established in 2009 by the current registered provider. Sessional care and education is provided for children aged 2-6 years of age. The service operates two sessions daily from 9am to 12.30pm and 1pm to 4.30pm Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year.

The service is located in two rooms within the registered provider's domestic dwelling in a residential area of south county Dublin; a purpose-built structure in the garden accommodates another room for pre-school children. The children have access to a large, enclosed garden area which is located to the rear of the domestic dwelling.

Staffing

The service currently employs four staff members including the registered provider who works directly with the children. On the day of inspection four staff members were present and working directly with the children.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child, information and records and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2)(3)(4) Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels.

Regulation 19 (1)(b) Health, welfare and development of child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of child.

Regulation 25 First aid

Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures

Regulation 28 Insurance

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

(2)

The inspection included a review of the required documentation for one staff member employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 10 October 2023. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for each of the four staff members employed in the service. The following documentation was available;

(a)(b) Of the two written and validated references that were required, two were available from a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for four staff members employed to work in the service. Garda vetting disclosures from all staff members were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for one adult employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 10 October 2023 who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) had been carried out prior to one adult commencing employment in the service since the last inspection on 10 October 2023.

(4) Records were available evidencing that one staff member employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 10 October 2023 who was employed to work directly with the children held at least the required award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 sessional services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 21 children attending the service being supervised by 4 staff members.

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 inspector observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection. Staff members were attentive and responsive to the needs of the children throughout the morning and were observed to respond to children in a calm and relaxed manner throughout the inspection. The staff provided children with comfort when needed. Staff were observed to support children during conflict resolution or in completion of tasks.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to the outdoors and to alert them of mealtimes. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment. Children brought lunch from home which was closely monitored by staff for choking hazards. Meals times were social occasions with children and adults sitting together having the opportunity to chat about the upcoming Christmas show, staff provided children with help when needed. Drinks were readily available within the care room.

Children were encouraged to clean up after themselves and assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times.

Child sized tables and chairs allowed the children to eat and engage in tabletop activities. There was evidence that equipment and materials provided were based on the children's individual needs and emergent interests. The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving units and accessible to children. The care rooms had cushions and floor mats to facilitate rest or provide a place for children to take a break from activities.

Children spent time outdoors throughout the morning and were dressed appropriate to the weather, wearing wellington boots and outdoor suits. The large outdoor area was equipped with a range of toys and materials to support play experiences. A sheltered area also offered a space for children to take part in alternative activities while outside. Children were observed to make choices about moving to a different room to spend additional time indoors or outdoors. On the day of inspection, the children took part in an outdoor drumming class using bongo drums. All children were afforded the opportunity to take part as a larger group, and staff were observed to actively join in.

Engagement with families and parents is facilitated by the daily sharing of information on the child's day. This is shared through conversations at drop off and collection and supported by electronic means. On the day of

inspection transitions from preschool to home were observed to be friendly, informative and engaging to parents or guardians collecting children.

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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorized persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. In addition, the outdoor play area was enclosed, restricting unauthorized persons from gaining access to this area and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Medication and cleaning agents to include disinfectant sprays and liquids were stored in a locked cupboard or on a high shelf out of reach of children.
- Toys and equipment in the indoors environment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- The outdoor area was observed to be suitable, safe and secure with domestic bins stored out of children's reach and all outdoor play materials maintained and in good condition free from hazards.

Infection Control:

- The indoor and outdoor environments were maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, paper towel, liquid soap, and pedal operated bin.
- The children were supported by staff members to wash their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection
- Children's lunch boxes containing perishable items which had been taken in from home were refrigerated.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of procedures to safeguard children when administering medicine. This included getting written consent from parents or guardians, having a second staff member present as a witness during administration, and maintaining detailed records shared with parents or guardians upon collection. Care plans were available for children who required emergency medication.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.
- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire and evacuation procedures were on display in the 3 care rooms.

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) The service provided evidence that an adult trained in First Aid Response was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.

(2)(a) and (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous positions 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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drill was carried out on 18 December 2025.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors were serviced on 12 September 2025.
- (2)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- 4) Procedures detailing the steps to take in the event of a fire were displayed on the wall in the care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the sessional service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for the 33 children and an expiry date of 27 March 2026.