

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR191
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Name of Service:	Mount Anville Montessori Junior School
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Address of Service:	Mount Anville Road, Goatstown, Dublin 14,
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Eircode:	D14 A8P3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Luci O'Donohoe
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	01/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	60	PM	31
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland, R Duff
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

Mount Anville Montessori Junior School is a private early years service located on the grounds of the Mount Anville Campus with Mount Anville Secondary School in a residential area in Goatstown, South County Dublin. The service offers full day and part time care and education to children aged two to six years and opens from 8:00am to 17:00pm Monday to Friday 34 weeks of the year. The preschool children are accommodated in a purpose-built premises comprising of four Montessori classrooms, a communal play space, sanitary facilities and office space. Children attending junior and senior infant classes are also accommodated within the same building. Two large outdoor play areas are available to the children to the front of the premises with artificial grass and natural bark surfacing.

Staffing

There are currently 13 staff employed to work directly with the children in the service. The registered provider does not work in the service. The principal and deputy principal of the school facilitated the 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, welfare and development of child, safety and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 (1) (a-c), (2) (a-d), (3), (4) Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1), (2) Staffing Levels

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

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25(1), (2) (a-b) First Aid

Regulation 27 Supervision

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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) The service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise.
 - (b) The person in charge and the deputy person in charge were on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure and adults demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the lines of authority within the service. Detailed records of the roles of staff members were on display outside the classrooms and in the entrance hallway to the service.

(2) Conversation with the person in charge confirmed that three new adults commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 16 November 2022. Documentation required under Regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of the adults as detailed below. The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) relating to Garda Vetting was reviewed for all adults.

- (a) Six written and verified references were available from past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 15 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was available in respect of two adults who had lived outside of the State for a period longer than six months as an adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidenced the procedures specified above had been carried out prior to the adults commencing employment in the service.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the adults held at least a major 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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children to meet their care needs.
- (2) The service maintained appropriate adult to child ratios for the duration of the inspection. There were 10 adults available to 66 children in the morning and 4 adults available to 31 children in the afternoon.

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

A sample of 12 children’s files were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a)-(i) was maintained for each child.

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,

Compliance Information

Upon arrival, the inspectors experienced a calm and welcoming atmosphere within the service. Children were relaxed and appeared happy and settled in their surroundings. The lunchtime routine was well organised and children played an active role, independently retrieving their lunch boxes, managing their personal belongings and tidying up afterwards. Staff provided support and encouragement, fostering children's independence and self-help skills. Staff reported that parents provide children's lunch and the service provides a hot meal for children attending on a fulltime basis. Drinking water was available and accessible to children for the duration of the inspection. During discussions with the inspectors staff explained that the service holds an induction evening for parents during which they provide information on healthy eating. Children were observed to use the toilet independently and staff provided immediate support when children asked for help. Cosy areas with child size chairs were available for children should they wish to take a break from activities. All children had the opportunity to engage in outdoor play during the inspection and were appropriately dressed for the weather.

Warm positive relationships were evident between staff and children. The inspectors observed that the service takes a child centred approach to children's care and education, allowing children time and space to learn at their own pace. Staff spoke to children in calm gentle tones, using eye contact and dropping to their level in a respectful manner. Children's language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection. Children were observed to be familiar with the routine, which was evident in the smooth transition from one activity to the next. Staff explained the service provides weekly updates to parents on the activities children are participating in and offer opportunities for informal communication during drop off and collection times.

The indoor environments were organised and laid out to allow children to lead their own learning. Materials and furnishings were child sized and accessible, encouraging curiosity, freedom of movement and choice. For example, children were observed engaging with Montessori materials across the areas of practical life, sensorial, language, science and mathematics. A birthday wall and displays of children's artwork were observed in the care rooms

supporting children’s sense of identity and belonging. The outdoor environments supported children’s physical development and provided opportunity for safe risk and challenge.

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 service was suitably secured to prevent unauthorised access or the children leaving unsupervised.
- Restrictors were in place to ensure low level windows were safe.
- Cleaning products and medication were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Care plans were available for children requiring emergency medication.

Infection Control:

- The service was visibly clean and documented cleaning schedules were available for review.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- Pedal operated bins were in use in the care rooms, sanitary areas and outdoor area.
- Children were supported to wash their hands after toileting and before mealtimes.
- Perishable lunch items brought from home were appropriately stored in the fridge.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated awareness of the services procedure for the safe administration of medication and documentation was available for review.

Fire Safety:

- Staff reported that fire drills were carried out on a regular basis.
- The fire exits in the service were unobstructed during the inspection.
- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire.
- Fire evacuation procedures were on display in the care rooms and communal area.

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) There were records available to show that eight adults hold certification in First Aid Responder training, seven of which were available to the children for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

(a) Two suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and stored safely in an easily accessible and prominent position in the communal area and the hallway.

(b) The first aid boxes were observed to be readily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

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

Compliance Information

The inspectors observed that appropriate supervision of children was maintained for the duration of the inspection. Children were adequately supervised during toileting, activities, outdoor play and transition periods.