

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS099
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Name of Service:	Ashling Nursery and Montessori
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Address of Service:	4 Main Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24 F8C2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Vincent Traynor
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	16/10/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	26
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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. Brien & O. Quill
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

Ashling Nursery and Montessori is registered to provide full time care for children from 0 to 6 years of age. The service is registered to operate from 07:00 to 18:30, Monday to Friday. On the day of inspection, the service was operating from 07:30 to 17:30.

The service is located in a purposely adapted, two storey residential property in Tallaght, south Dublin. There are three preschool rooms in the service. The Toddler room caters for children from 1 to 3 years of age. The Honeybees Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) room caters for children from 3 to 4 years of age. These rooms are located on the ground floor and children attend on a full-time basis. The Ladybirds ECCE room is located on the first floor and operates on a sessional and full day care basis and caters for children from 3 to 4 years of age. There is also a dedicated sleep room. The children have access to a large, fully enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 9 staff including a manager. There were 8 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider does not work directly with the children and was not present 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/ 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 the following regulations:

- 8(1)(3) Notification of change in circumstances.
- 9(1)(a)(b),(2),(4) Management and Recruitment,
- 11(1),(2),(8)(a) Staffing Levels,
- 16 (h),(i),(j),(k) Record in relation to pre-school service,
- 19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
- 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,
- 26(1)(4) Fire Safety Measures.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Compliance Information

(1)(3)

The registered provider notified the Agency in advance of implementing changes to the service's registered details. The registered provider submitted a change in circumstances form detailing updated information for the person in charge.

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,*

(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

(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)

Following a discussion with the manager it was confirmed that one adult commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 19 March 2024. Documentation was reviewed in respect of this adult and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b)

One reference from a past employer and one reference from a reputable source was available for this adult.

(c)

A Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána was available for the staff member. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4)

A record was available evidencing that the staff member who was employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent.

The inspection included a review of previous non-compliance with regard to staff qualifications for one adult. A record was available evidencing that the adult who was 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.

(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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

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 thirty-one children attending the service being supervised by eight adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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*

Compliance Information

(h)

Details of the attendance of each child were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

(i)

The staff roster was available and reflected the adults working in the service on the day of inspection.

(j)

A sample of sixteen medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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 the service provides regular meals for the children. Children attending on a sessional basis in the Ladybirds ECCE room bring in their own lunch from home. Dinner took place at 11:15. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day and children were given water with their meals. Younger children were provided with bibs for dinnertime and children were encouraged to feed themselves. Staff were observed assisting younger children in the Toddler room with their meal as required. Children were given time to eat their meal and additional servings of dinner were available and were given to children who requested more.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's faces after dinner and cleaning children's noses as required. Older children were encouraged to clean their own faces after their dinner. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including cleaning up after their play. Children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care.

Children's sleep needs were observed to be met on the day of inspection. There was a designated nap time in the Toddler room. Children attending the Toddler room who do not have a nap during the designated nap time day were provided with alternative activities during this time.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care. Children were comforted promptly when they became upset. Staff were observed holding children and speaking to them softly. Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's policy on behaviour management policy. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes. Children's choices were respected with children given the opportunity to choose their own activities during free play.

Staff described how they communicate with parents regarding their child's day at arrival and collection times and parents were observed in the service during these times. Staff in the Toddler room described how they record information about each child's day detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities in a booklet.

Care rooms were arranged to provide a range of play materials and areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Areas of interest included small world toys, construction toys, jigsaws, mark making stations, home corners and dress up materials. These rooms provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials. Family photos, birthday displays, children's photos and children's artwork were displayed in the care rooms. 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. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was available to the rear of the premises with a mix of artificial grass, real grass and bark surfacing. The outdoor area was well resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment. Children from the Honeybees, Ladybirds ECCE and Toddler groups accessed the outdoor area on the day of inspection and were observed engaging in energetic and imaginary play.

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 inspectors 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.
- Medicines, hand sanitisers and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.

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 nappy changing, after using the toilet and before meals.

- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.
- All mattresses in use had waterproof covers.
- Individual bed linen was provided for children. Staff stated that bed linen is laundered weekly or as required.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated, through discussion, that they were familiar with the procedures and practices in place for the administration of medication in line with the services policy on medication administration.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were documented. Discussion with staff demonstrated that staff were familiar with safe sleep guidelines.
- An adult remained in the room at all times where children were sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A sample of twenty-five accident and incident records were reviewed. Some of these records were incomplete, contrary to the service's accident and incident policy, as follows:
 - Seventeen of these records were not signed by the person in charge.
 - One record was not signed by a parent.

Failure to adequately complete accident and incident records and to ensure that parents have been informed of an injury to their child may pose a risk to the continuity of care of the child.

Infection Control:

2. Nappy changing practices observed during the inspection were inadequate for infection control purposes and at variance with the service's nappy changing procedure as follows;
 - Staff were observed to redress children with the same used gloves following nappy changes.
 - Staff hands were not washed between nappy changes.
3. Staff were observed lifting the lid of the two pedal bins in the nappy changing area to dispose of waste.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. In the absence of the Manager, the deputy manager or designated person in charge is to sign all accident & incident reports and also to ensure Parents signatures on reports are received. Accident & Incident procedures were discussed at the staff meeting. Staff reminded to review their policies handouts regularly to keep updated on current procedures.

Infection Control:

2. Procedures were discussed with staff and a copy was issued to them. Also, a copy posted on door of Nappy Changing room. Manager to do observation checks on staff while nappy changing to ensure compliance with policies. Hygiene Procedures were discussed at the staff meeting.
3. Staff reminded to review their policies handouts regularly to keep updated on current procedures. Manager to do observation checks on staff while nappy changing to ensure compliance with policies. Hygiene Procedures were discussed at the staff meeting.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

No supporting documentation submitted.

Infection Control:

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. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection.

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 24 September 2024.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. There was a record to show that fire fighting equipment had been serviced 09 January 2024 and that maintenance of the smoke alarm system had taken place on 05 May 2024.
- (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.