

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS100
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Name of Service:	Eager Beavers Montessori
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Address of Service:	3 Beverly Downs, Knocklyon, Dublin 16, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D16 C2R7
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Name of Registered Provider:	Patricia Robinson
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	n/a
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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:	E. Finnegan Hayes
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

Eager Beavers is a privately owned sessional service which operates from purposely adapted rooms in the registered provider's home in South Dublin. The service operates the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9-12:30pm Monday to Friday 38 weeks of the year. The service consists of one care room with sanitary facilities, a kitchen, and a secure outdoor area.

Staffing

The registered provider operates the service single handed. An additional adult assists in the service as required in a supernumerary capacity and is available in the event of an emergency.

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 an examination of compliance under Regulation 9; (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4), Regulation 11; (1), (3), Regulation 23, Regulation 24; (1), (3)(a)(b), (4), Regulation 25; (1), (2)(a)(b), Regulation 26; (1)(a)(b), (4). These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,

Regulation 24- Checking in and out and record of attendance,
Regulation 25- First aid,
Regulation 26 Fire Safety.

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment was assessed in relation to all adults in the service and Regulation 11- Staffing Levels was assessed in relation to all children in attendance.

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.

(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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to assist when required. The designated person in charge was present in the service when the inspector arrived and remained there for the duration of the inspection.

(2) Discussion with the registered provider showed that they operate the service single handed with another adult available to provide assistance as required. The files of both adults were reviewed.

(a) Two written and verified references were available from a past employer in relation to 2 adults.

(b) Two written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer in relation to 2 adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in relation to both adults.

(d) Evidence showed that neither adult required police vetting.

(4) Evidence was available to show that the registered provider who worked directly with the children held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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) There were 11 preschool children being cared for by 1 adult on the morning of inspection. An additional adult was available to offer support in a supernumerary position.

(3) Ratios were maintained during the inspection. One adult was caring for 11 children aged 2years 8 months to 5 years.

(8)(c) The registered provider ensured that a second person who was familiar with the service was available to assist in an emergency. This person was available in the service on the day of 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:

- The door to the service was secure on arrival. Staff attend the door to allow access to visitors and a second door prevents unauthorised persons accessing the care room without staff knowledge.
- An internal door inside the main entrance was secured throughout the inspection. This prevented children from leaving the service unsupervised.
- The outdoor area was secured with high fencing.
- Furniture toys and equipment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- Rooms which were not used as part of the service were secured and a safety gate was in place on the stairs to prevent children accessing unsafe areas.
- Perishable items were removed from children's schoolbags on arrival to the service and stored safely in the fridge until lunchtime.
- A risk assessment was completed before children accessed the garden.
- A storage shed in the play area was adequately secured to prevent access by the children.

Infection Control:

- The care room window was open to allow fresh air to circulate.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water and dispensed soap and handtowels were available to support hand hygiene.
- The service was maintained in a clean condition and cleaning records were available and complete to date.
- Pedal operated bins in the care room and sanitary area allowed hygienic disposal of contaminated items such as tissues.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed.
- Staff were knowledgeable of the process of evacuation in a fire emergency and advised that two routes; one to the front of the service and one to the rear are practiced with the children to ensure safe evacuation regardless of the fire location.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1) Staff greet children at the door on arrival and each child's attendance is logged in the daily attendance book promptly.

(3)(a)(b) Staff attend the door to allow access to visitors and a record book is maintained which records all necessary details of visitors to the service.

(4) Visitor records were observed to date back more than 1 year.

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) Evidence was available to show that the registered provider who works directly with the children holds a valid First Aid Responder (FAR) certificate.

(2)(a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was stored safely on a high shelf in the care room; visible and easily accessible to staff at all times as needed.

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 firefighting 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 record of monthly fire drills was available in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on 17th April 2023.

(b) A record detailing the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises was available on the premises. The record showed that the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm was last serviced during August 2022.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire emergency were available in the entrance hall and care room of the service.