

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D.: TU2015DS103

Name of Service Montessori Matters

Address of Service: 108 Esker Manor, Lucan, Co Dublin, K78 AE93

Email Address: info@montessorimatters.ie

Name of Registered Provider: Sharon Smyth

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed change: Change in the maximum number of children accommodated from 52 to 53.

Proposed Number of Children: 53

Recommended Change Following Inspection: Increase in number of children accommodated from 52 to 53 on a sessional basis and a maximum of 40 on a part-time or full day care basis.

Registered change: Change in number of children from 52 to 53 (Max 40 full day/part-time) children

Date of Inspection:

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Inspection undertaken by: Sarah Quigley

Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: 1st Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co Wicklow.

Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 53(Max 40 Full Day/Part-Time) Children
Date of Registration	22 nd August 2025

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Montessori Matters is a privately owned early years service which was established in 2004 by the current registered provider. Care and education are provided to children aged two to six years on a full day, part time and sessional basis. The programme of care is facilitated through a blend of a Montessori and play-based curriculum. The service is located in a residential area in Lucan, South County Dublin and is open from 09:00 to 17:00 each weekday.
Premises	The service operates from a purpose built premises and consists of three care rooms, a kitchen, an office space, and sanitary accommodation. An outdoor play area is available on the premises.
Staffing	There is a designated person in charge in the service and a named person to deputise. The registered provider stated eight staff members are employed to work directly in the care rooms once the school year commences.
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider who was 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.

Requirement met:

The requirement of Regulation 9 (1) (a) has been met. The registered provider is the designated person in charge is available in the service and a named person to deputise is available if required.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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.*
- (8) *Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—*
- (b) *a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and*
- (c) *a registered provider of a sessional pre-school 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.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The person in charge has identified that a minimum of two staff members will be on the premises at all times and evidenced this with the staffing roster in place for the service.

(8)(b) Not applicable as the proposed service is not a childminding service.

(c) Not applicable as this is not a sessional service that operates single headedly.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

- (1) *Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—*
- (a) *having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*
 - (b) *there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*
- (2) *A registered provider—*
- (b) *of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016, shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—*
- (a) *a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises or*
 - (b) *where no such space is provided, the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis to an outdoor service*
- (4) *Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.*
- (5) *Where pre-school children attending a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre have access to an outdoor space other than such a space specified in paragraph 4, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) Adequate and suitable facilities were provided for children to play indoors and outdoors. The care rooms were bright and spacious and well laid out with various Montessori equipment and play materials on open, low level shelving units.

(1)(b) Adequate and suitable rest facilities were available for preschool children to rest during the day in each room if required. A rest area is provided in each care room.

(2)(a) The service has use of a designated, secure outdoor play area to the rear of the premises. The area is fully enclosed and equipped with a range of play materials.

(3)(a)(b)

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	Not applicable. (4) Not applicable. (5) Not applicable.
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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>A separate kitchen was available in the service with facilities for storing perishable foods and for the preparation of a rotating menu for meals and afternoon snacks was in place. A healthy eating policy was available. The registered provider stated a hot meal is provided to children attending on a part time or full day care basis from an external catering company which is re-constituted on site. Lunch is provided by the parents/guardians of the children in attendance and stored in fridges in each care room prior to consumption. The registered provider stated drinking water will be available in each care room.</p>
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TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

External doors were adequately secure to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.

The entrance door was equipped with a bell system.

Facilities were available for the safe and secure storage of cleaning agents and equipment, and alcohol-based sanitisers out of reach of children.

There was provision for the appropriate storage and disposal of waste including foot pedal operated bins in the care rooms and sanitary area.

Mechanisms were in place to ensure the kitchen is inaccessible to children.

The outdoor play area was appropriately secured.

The registered provider stated an infection control policy was in place to inform practice and cleaning schedules were available and in use to ensure care rooms and sanitary accommodation are regularly cleaned. Warm water, soap, and paper towels were available to facilitate handwashing.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Certification was available to evidence that a person trained as a first aid responder (FAR) was available to the children at all times in the service.

(2) A suitably equipped first aid box was available in each care room and stored in a conspicuous location.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)

(a) The registered provider indicated that fire drills take place monthly in the service and appropriate documentation was in place to record them.

(b) There was a record available to indicate the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in various conspicuous locations within the premises.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service is adequately insured for the proposed increase in children.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

- (a) The care rooms appeared to be of sound and stable structure.
- (b) The entrance door to the service which was appropriately safe and secure with a bell system. The outdoor area was secured to prevent a child exiting the area unsupervised and prevent unauthorised access.
- (c) The care rooms all benefited from an abundance of natural light via windows around the care rooms and all other areas of the premises. Ventilation was in place through an openable windows in all care rooms. There was a convectional gas central heating system in place.
- (d) Cleaning schedules were in place in the service. The premises and surrounding environments were clean and maintained as required.
- (e) The service was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities. There was one toilet and one wash hand basin designated for use by staff working in the service. There were 5 toilets and 5 wash hand basins designated for use in the

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

children's sanitary areas. A nappy changing unit was available if required.
Thermostatically controlled hot and cold water was available in the hand wash sinks.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.
- (3) A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.
- (4) Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides—
(a) a sessional pre-school service, and
(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).
- (5) A registered provider of a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a minimum of 2 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) (2)

The care rooms had adequate clear floor space to provide for the proposed increase of children from 52 to 53 maximum aged 2 – 6 years on a sessional basis, and 40 part-time and full day care basis maximum, as detailed below:

Room	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
Clear floor space	39.26sqm	35.69sqm	21.39sqm
Proposed age range	2 - 6 years	2 - 6 years	2 - 6 years
Proposed max number of children	21 sessional Or 16 part-time/FDC	20 sessional Or 15 part-time/FDC	12 sessional Or 9 part-time/FDC

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	<p>(3) Not applicable.</p> <p>(4) There was adequate floor space to accommodate children whom will attend a concurrent sessional service.</p> <p>(5) Not applicable.</p>
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