

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS122
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Name of Service:	Mini Marvels Montessori
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Address of Service:	16 Ferncourt Green, Firhouse, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24 FR53
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Name of Registered Provider:	Melissa Murphy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	21/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	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

Mini Marvels is a privately operated sessional service located in Firhouse, Dublin 24. The service is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 9:30am and 12:30pm and operates from a single storey building to the rear of the registered providers domestic dwelling. One care room available to the children. The programme of care is facilitated through a blend of a Montessori and play based curriculum. An outdoor play area is located to the front of the property.

Staffing

One the day of inspection, the registered provider worked alone with the children. An additional contact person is available to the registered provider if needed, in an emergency situation.

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 15 Record of a pre-school child.

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

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

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 and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

Documentation was reviewed for the registered provider and the adult available to assist in the event of an emergency. The following documents were available;

(2)

(a) (b) References were available from two sources for each of the two adults.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure from The National Vetting Bureau was available for the two adults.

(d) International police vetting was not required for either of the adults.

(4) There was evidence that one adult had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications. The second adult did not require a qualification.

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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (3)
The minimum ratio of adults to children for sessional services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were five children attending the service being supervised by one staff member on the day of inspection.
- (8)
The registered provider ensured that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist in the event of an emergency

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The registered provider ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

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

Compliance Information

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

A calm and welcoming atmosphere was evident on arrival at the service. The registered provider and seven children were engaged in a range of table-top and floor activities. The registered provider was attentive and responsive to the needs of the children throughout the day and was observed to respond to children in a calm and timely manner throughout the inspection. Circle time was interactive with all children having an opportunity to take part.

Identity and belonging were promoted in the classroom with children's photos displayed above coat hangers, children's names were included on traffic lights. Various artwork displays on the walls included children's handprints and were visible to children. A wall displaying emotion pictures and a mirror was at children's eye level and observed to be used by children. Children appeared comfortable using conflict resolution strategies and used emotion cards and a breathing technique to support peers when upset.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to new activity and for lunch time. Children brought in their lunch from home. Children had the opportunity to hand out lunch and drinks to their peers. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment.

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. Suitable toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and accessible to children. Children were observed to choose play materials and return them when finished. The outdoor areas was well equipped with a range of toys and materials to support play experiences. 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. On the day of inspection transitions from preschool to home were observed to be friendly and informative 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 the registered provider 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.
- Toys and equipment in the care room and outdoors were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored in a locked press or out of reach of children.

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.

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider demonstrated a clear understanding of procedures to safeguard children when administering medicine. This included getting written consent from parents or guardians, calling parents prior to administering medication and maintaining detailed records shared with parents or guardians upon collection. The registered provider explained that medication has not been administered to children since the term began.

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. In the children's care room two electrical cables from a speaker and a radiator were observed trailing onto the floor. The cables were in reach of children during the inspection; this poses a potential risk of injury to a child.

Infection Control:

- Throughout the inspection, appropriate infection control measures were not taken, children were observed to wipe their nose with tissue, without washing their hands. This poses a potential risk of cross contamination to children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider has stated that the cables are now covered and are no longer trailing. Cables will be included in the daily check list.

Infection Control:

The registered provider has stated that they spoke to the children about handwashing including handwashing following wiping their nose. A poster prompting handwashing has been placed in a prominent position in the room.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Infection Control:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances.

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 11 children and an expiry date of 27 March 2026.