

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY012
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Name of Service:	Artane Montessori Circle
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Address of Service:	Artane/Beaumont Recreation Centre, Kilmore Road, Dublin 5
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Eircode:	D05 W603
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Name of Registered Provider:	Joanne Kane
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	02/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	50	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 7th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Finnegan Hayes & 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

Artane Montessori Circle is a sessional service located in a residential area in Dublin 5. The service operates from rooms in a family resource centre; two care rooms are on the ground floor and one care room is on the first floor. Sanitary facilities are contained within the ground floor care room while the upstairs care room using sanitary facilities located across the hall from the room. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme from 9am-12pm 38 weeks of the year in line with the programme rules. The service also offers and additional 30 minutes care per day from 12pm-12:30pm. Two enclosed outdoor areas are available for use by the service accessible from the ground floor care rooms.

Staffing

The registered provider employs nine staff to work directly with the children in the service and also works in the service herself. The registered provider and eight staff were present in the service and working directly with the children on the day of inspection. A student was also present in the service.

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, safety and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials, Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of child and Regulation 29 Premises. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Room 1 and Room 2 on the ground floor and did not include Room 3 on the first floor.

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 registered provider, 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

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise when required.
 - (b) Discussion with management showed that the designated person in charge or the deputy was rostered to be on the premises during the opening hours of the service.
- (2) A review of the roster and discussion with management showed that there are currently ten adults employed in the service including the registered provider. The files of all staff members were reviewed as part of the inspection. The file of a student who was present on the day of inspection was also reviewed.
- (a) (b) Twenty-two written and verified references were available for 11 adults currently employed in the service.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for ten staff members employed in the service and the student who was present on the day of inspection. The service has also adhered to the re-vetting

timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) There was no evidence to suggest police vetting was required for any of the 11 adults.

(4) Evidence was available to show that ten staff members who work directly with the children held 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.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were 50 preschool children being cared for by nine adults on the day of inspection.

(3) Ratios were maintained during the inspection. The following was observed:

- In Room 1 sixteen children aged 2.5-4 years were being cared for by three adults.
- In Room 2 fifteen children aged 2.5-3.5 years were being cared for by three adults.
- In Room 3 nineteen children aged 3-4 years were being cared for by three adults.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that a supply of suitable materials and equipment were available to the children in the service. The following was observed;

- The furniture and equipment in the care rooms were observed to be well maintained, durable, easy to clean, and suitable for the age and stage of the children attending.
- A selection of toys were available including some montessori work, cars, a kitchen with supporting equipment, animals and books. Additional toys and equipment were present in the care room but had not yet been made available for 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

General Safety:

- Radiator covers were secured over the radiators to prevent injury to the children.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and dispensed handtowels were available in the sanitary facilities.
- Children lunches which were brought from home were refrigerated to prevent spoiling of perishable items.
- Pedal operated bins were available for disposal of contaminated items.
- Windows were open to provide adequate ventilation in the care rooms.

Fire Safety:

- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation routes were maintained clear and free of hazards.
- Staff were knowledgeable of the evacuation plan in the event of a fire emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Adequate handwashing practices were not observed to be in place in the service for example in Room 1 children were observed to use hand sanitiser in place of handwashing before eating snack at 10:20am. This is contrary to the HPSC guide for infection control which states warm running water and soap should be used for handwashing.
2. A basket containing handtowels was present between the sinks in the sanitary area in Room 1 and drops of water were visible on the handtowels. This posed a risk of cross contamination. It is acknowledged that a hand towel dispenser was present, accessible to the children and available for use on the day of inspection.
3. A number of items were observed to be stored in the children's sanitary area such as mops, buckets and play equipment. This posed an infection control risk to the children.
4. The flooring in the sanitary area in room 1 and two was worn which prevented adequate cleaning and posed an infection control risk.
5. Two sofas in Room 2 were observed to be torn which prevented adequate cleaning and posed an infection control risk.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The hand washing policy has been given to each staff member as a reminder of the policy in place. Children's hands will be washed using our portable hand sinks and dried with paper towels. The portable hand sinks will be filled each day on arrival with warm running water and soap is available to be used for hand washing as per our Hand Washing Policy.
2. The basket has been removed and the hand towel dispenser is being used which is accessible and available to the children.
3. The mops, bucket and water tray have been removed from the bathroom to a new storage area. A bathroom checklist has been displayed in the bathroom area.

4. Approval was sought from the building management committee to carry out the work re: changing the floor and has been approved. Work will commence shortly.
5. The sofa edges have been recovered. As part of infection control any damaged items should be replaced.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photos in relation to above have been received.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed points 1,2,3 and 5 and is in the process of addressing point 4. The non-compliance under point 4 will remain outstanding until the work has been completed.

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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff trained in First Aid Response (FAR) were present in the service during the opening hours. A review of FAR certificates showed that two staff are trained and rostered to be present in the service during the opening hours.
- (2) (a)(b) The registered provider ensured that a suitably equipped first aid box was available in each care room accessible to staff and out of reach of the children.

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) The registered provider ensured that the following records were maintained;
- (a) A record of monthly fire drills showed that the last fire drill had taken place on 5th June 2024.
 - (b) A record of servicing and maintenance for the firefighting equipment showed that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 11th December 2023 while a commissioning certificate for the smoke alarms showed that a new system had been installed on 16th September 2023.
 - (4) Notices detailing the steps to take in the event of a fire were displayed in both care rooms.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (b) safe and secure,
 - (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

- (b)
- The building is manned by a receptionist who greets visitors and allows access. The care room doors were secured, and staff greeted visitors at the care room entrance. This prevented unknown persons entering the premises.
 - A low-level gate was present at both ends of the entrance corridors preventing children from leaving the care rooms unsupervised.
 - The outdoor play areas were adequately secured with low level fencing.
- (d)
- The care rooms appeared clean and well maintained. Cleaning records were available for review.