

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY084
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Grace Park Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	74 Grace Park Heights, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D09 E0A5
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jozefa Chrobak
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/06/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	16	PM	13
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8   D08 X01F
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Griffin
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Grace Park Montessori is located on the ground floor of the registered provider's home in a Dublin City suburb. The service provides sessional care and education to children aged 2-6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service is registered to operate a morning session from 09:00am to 12:00pm and an afternoon session from 12:45pm to 3:45pm Monday to Friday during term time only. The service consists of one care room which is divided into two sections, a kitchen and an outdoor play area. There is access to staff and children's sanitary facilities on site.

### Staffing

The registered provider works directly with children in the service and employs one adult to work daily in the service. On the morning of the inspection the registered provider and one adult employed were present.

### 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, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2) and (4)-Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11(1) and (3)-Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15(1) and 3(c) 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 25 First Aid (1) and (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26(1)(a)(b), (2)(c) and (4) Fire Safety Measures.

Regulation 28 Insurance.

Regulation 32 Complaints (1), (2) and (3).

However, on inspection an additional non-compliance was identified under Regulation 8(1) Notification of Change in Circumstances. The findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15 (1) (a-i) and (3)(c) Record of a Preschool Child, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of child and Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.

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, deputy person in charge 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.*

### Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not notify Tusla of a change in operation hours of the morning session and were found to be operating outside of their registration. The service is registered to operate between 9am to 12pm Monday to Friday. However, a review of paperwork and discussion with management showed that the service had been operating between 8.30am to 12pm Monday to Friday.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

(1) This was applied for, and the hours were approved using the Tusla Change of Circumstances Form. The registered provider has taken note and made sure that the service opening hours are up to date on all platforms.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Documentary evidence of the change of hours approved.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider through the corrective and preventive actions taken has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 8.

## 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) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
  - (b) The person in charge and the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
  - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and both adults reported being aware of this.
- (2) A review of paperwork and conversation with the registered person confirmed there is currently one adult employed by the registered provider to work in the service. The staff files of the registered provider and one adult employed were reviewed as part of the inspection process. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) There were two written and validated references available from past employers in relation to the staff member employed
  - (b) There were two written references available from a source other than a past employer in relation to the registered provider.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for both adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (4) There was documentary evidence available that the registered provider and one adult who worked directly with children attending the service held a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (d) Documentary evidence showed that one adult had lived in two different jurisdictions other than Ireland for more than six months as an adult. International police vetting was not available for one of the two jurisdictions.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

- (2) (d) The adult has contacted the embassy to find out next steps to apply for the police vetting clearance and provided an affidavit document. The registered provider is now aware of the policies and procedures for working in other jurisdictions and will ensure compliance in the future.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

- Documentary evidence to show the adult has contacted the embassy to enquire about police vetting.
- Documentary evidence of affidavit document.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider has attempted to address the non-compliance under (2)(d) however as police vetting has not been obtained this will remain outstanding. The registered provider must provide evidence of police vetting to the inspectorate when it is received.

### 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 was an adequate number of adults working with the children. During the morning there were two adults caring for 16 children aged 3-5 years old. During the afternoon there were two adults caring for 13 children aged 3-5 years old.
- (3) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children.

### 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 sample of ten children's registration records were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured a full record (1)(a-i) was maintained for each child.

(3) (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

## 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

#### Basic Needs:

- The service provided a morning snack which was prepared onsite. Children were observed to be served sausages and bread. Staff discussed how there was an alternative option of fruit, cheese and crackers available if required.
- Snack time was observed to be a sociable event and staff chatted amicably with the children.
- A rest area was available to the children in the care room. This area included child sized furniture, a soft blanket and books providing the children with a comfortable place to rest or engage in quiet activities. In addition, there was a playhouse in the outdoor play area with seating and a table providing children with a place to rest and relax during outdoor play time.
- Children's sense of identity was promoted throughout the care room. For example, there was a 'Family Wall' display at the children's level and the children's artwork was displayed.

- The presence of a visual daily routine on display provided the children with a sense of stability, security, and predictability. In addition, staff were observed to give children verbal reminders in advance of moving from one activity to the next activity.

### Supporting Relationships:

- Staff spoke to each other in a respectful and professional manner, demonstrating to children, positive interactions and there was a calm atmosphere throughout the inspection.
- Children were observed to have the freedom to move freely in their care room and independently choose their activities and play experiences.
- Staff were observed to interact continuously with the children. For example, during tabletop activity time and Montessori time the staff sat beside the children and offered encouragement and support when required.
- Language, literacy and mathematics were supported in the care rooms through discussion, songs and stories. In addition, staff were observed to ask the children open ended questions and children were encouraged to sing songs in the Irish language.
- There was evidence to show the service promoted links to nature. There was a hen and egg corner which provided the children with a visual display which included a nest, an egg and a toy hen and it outlined the life cycle of a chicken.
- Staff reported that information about the child's day such as photographs of group activities and the following week's plan are shared with parents via an electronic communication application. Conversations were also held at drop off and collection times. These updates keep parents informed about the daily life of their child.

### Equipment and Materials:

- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children, providing a comfortable area to eat snacks and take part in tabletop activities.
- The care room had defined areas of interest with supporting equipment. Areas of interest included a home corner with a kitchen including supporting props, a shapes corner, a fine motor skill area and an art area which was accessible at all times to the children. Toys and materials were themed and labelled which provided for spontaneous play opportunities. Montessori learning approach materials supporting the areas of practical life, sensorial, language, maths and culture were also present.

- An outdoor play area was available for the children with a soft ground surface. Part of the outdoor play area was sheltered. This provided children with shelter and protected them from harsh weather conditions such as rain and direct sunlight. Equipment and toys available included a playhouse, a slide, tyres, small world animals, transport vehicles, building blocks, a chalk board, music chimes and a mud kitchen with supporting props providing lots of learning opportunities for 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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspector, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The outdoor play area was securely walled reducing the risk of children from exiting unsupervised.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in the care room throughout the inspection.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of the reach of the children.
- There were visibility strips on the glass door leading out the outdoor play area.

##### Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included warm water, soap and hygienically disposed paper towels.
- Foot pedal operated bins were available in the care room and sanitary areas to allow hygienic disposal of contaminated materials.
- Windows in the care room were observed to be open which allowed for circulation of air and reduced the risk of cross infection.

### Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed throughout the inspection. The children's attendance book was monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present in the care room. This ensured a safe evacuation of the children in the event of an emergency evacuation.

### 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) There was evidence to show that one adult holds certification in First Aid Response training. This adult was rostered to work morning and afternoons daily and was available during the duration of the inspection.

(2) (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on a shelf in the care room.

(b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

### 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.*

*(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*

*(c) an authorised person.*

*(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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drills took place on 7 May 2025 for the morning session and 8 May 2025 for the afternoon session.
  - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced in July 2024. Smoke alarms were serviced on 10 July 2024.
- (2) (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the hallway and on the wall in the care room.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance for a maximum of 22 children attending the service on a sessional care basis with an expiry date of 27 November 2025.

### Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

#### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) *A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (2) *A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
  - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*
- (3) *A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-*
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
  - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*

## Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

(1) There was a complaints policy maintained which outlined the following:

- (a) The procedures to be followed when making a complaint.
- (b) The way complaints would be dealt with.
- (c) The procedures for keeping the complainant informed on how the complaint is being dealt with.

(2)

- (a) A record in writing of complaints was maintained.
- (b) That complaints were handled in line with the service policy.

(3) A review of records referred to in (2)(a):

- (a) The registered provider advised there had been no other complaints besides one complaint which had been received, reviewed and closed off since the last inspection in February 2022.
- (b) A complaint record form for submitting a concern was made available for review by the inspector this included the required information.