

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY130
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Name of Service:	Lorcan Montessori
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Address of Service:	121a Lorcan Avenue, Lorcan Avenue, Santry, Dublin 9, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D09 KR82
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Name of Registered Provider:	Donna Rossi
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	16/10/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne & L Jameson
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

Lorcan Montessori is a privately owned preschool was established in 2000. It offers two daily sessional services for children from the age of 2 to 6 years old, in the morning from 9.15am to 12.15pm and in the afternoon from 13.00pm to 4.00pm, Monday to Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The service operates from the registered providers residential home with an outdoor area to the rear of the premises. It consists of one classroom with one sanitary facility off the classroom and a second sanitary facility upstairs.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service and employs one staff member and two relief staff members. On the day of inspection, the registered provider, one staff member and one relief staff member 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations as follows:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3), (4).

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(3)(4)

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

Regulation 25 First Aid (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a)(b) (4)

however, on inspection additional regulations as below were added.

Regulation 29 Premises (e)

Regulation 30 Minimum space requirements (1) (3)(4)(a)

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

The scope of the inspection included the one classroom of the service and the sanitary facilities.

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, staff 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

The files of four adults were reviewed as part of the inspection, to include the registered provider who works in the service, one staff member and two relief staff members.

(2)(a)(b) The registered provider had two written references and ensured that two written and validated references were available in relation to two adults employed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for four adults. The service also demonstrated compliance, with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no adult had lived outside of the state for a period of more than 6 months.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the three adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) Two written and validated references were not available in relation to one adult employed.

(3) On review of documentation available for one adult present on the day of inspection it demonstrated that they had not been fully considered prior to commencement within the service, for example, a curriculum vitae and two written and validated references were not available.

(4) Documentation was not available to demonstrate that one adult who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (a) (b) The two references for the relief staff member have been validated. The registered provider acknowledged and will comply with having this requirement fulfilled. The exercise was completed for both permanent members of staff. While the written references for the relief staff member were present, it was an omission that these were not validated at this time. This is an administration lesson learnt to ensure this doesn't happen again.

(3) On the day of inspection, the registered provider was not present in the classroom but present on the premises. The regular relief worker was unavailable for this particular day, who has garda vetting and a Level 6 qualification. The option for cover in this particular emergency was the second relief adult who was garda vetted. The registered provider acknowledges and understands that anyone who helps has to have a level 5 qualification certificate or above, a CV and two written and validated references on file and garda vetting.

The registered provider has interviewed a new relief person for cover with the minimum level 5 qualification and required documentation will be on file prior to being the second relief person in the service when required.

(4) The registered provider has interviewed a new relief person for cover with the minimum level 5 qualification and understands that while still on the premises in the next room, this is not sufficient - two people with level 5 minimum qualification or above must be in the classroom.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic Evidence

Summary Comment

The non-compliances, outlined above, under Regulation 9, have been addressed.

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)(3) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection, as follows:

For the morning session,

- Two adults worked with 14 children, aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years old from 9.15 to 10.00am.
- Three adults worked with 14 children, aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years old, from 10am to 12.15pm.

For the afternoon session,

- Two adults worked with six children aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years old 1.00pm to 4.00pm.

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

- There was a wide range of play materials and equipment to include: a variety of Montessori materials, a home corner with a dresser and play phones, a play kitchen, a shop with cash register, a dolls house and a fire station both with supporting equipment, cars, trucks, small play people and animals, building blocks, plastic bricks, stickle bricks, magnetics, links, stickies, wooden puzzles, jigsaws, art materials including a black board with chalk and sand for sensory play. All of which were available and suitable to the age and stage of development of the children, promoting independence and developing their play opportunities. Children were observed to take activities of their choice which were accessible on low level shelving.
- Tables and chairs were of suitable size and available for eating lunch and for table-top activities.

- A cosy area with a child size couch, two child size armchairs and books for rest and relaxation were present.
- The outdoor area consisted of a concrete surface and provided opportunities for the children to play through a range of activities and play equipment to include a climb in wooden bus, slides, a sand pit, a playhouse, a castle playhouse with slide, ride in cars, balance bikes, scooters and a seesaw.

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:

- Entry to the service was managed and monitored by staff to restrict entry by unauthorised persons. Door latches were in place up high out of reach of children to prevent children from exiting unsupervised.
- Attendance records were present, completed and accurate.
- The play equipment and materials observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The temperature of the classroom was recorded as 21.7°C at 10.22am, within the recommended ambient temperature of 18 - 22 °C.
- Cleaning products were observed to be stored up high out of reach of children.
- The outdoor play area used by the children was observed to be fully enclosed.

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.
- Lidded pedal operated bins were available for disposal of paper towels and contaminated items.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Handwashing in the service was not in line with best practice to prevent the spread of infection for example before lunch a staff member confirmed that the hands of 14 children were cleaned with hand sanitiser. Warm water and soap are required for effective handwashing to prevent the spread of infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The registered provider had a chat with all the children during circle time explaining how we should wash our hands thoroughly with warm water and soap and a demonstration of how this is done was completed. The hand sanitisers have been removed from the classroom and warm water and soap is now being used at all times for effective hand washing.

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 23, the non- compliance outlined above has been addressed.

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 service provided evidence that two adults were trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and were available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2) (a) and (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the classroom.

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 fire drills was available on the premises with the last drill dated as having been carried out on the 27 September 2024.
 - (b) The number type and maintenance record for the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available. Firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms were last serviced in January 2024.
 - (4) Fire evacuation procedures were displayed on the wall of the classroom.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

- (e) The service was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities as follows:

Sanitary Facilities available	No. of Wash hand basin's	No. of Toilets
Downstairs off care room	1	1
Upstairs Bathroom	1	1
Upstairs 2 nd Bathroom for Staff	1	1

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.

(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

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).

Compliance Information

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider ensured that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the service.

Room Name	Floor space required per child	Floor space available as measured by inspectors
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sessional Care Service 1.818 square metres per child 2 – 6 Years	33.45 square metres

The space available is sufficient for the maximum of 18 children to attend the service per session .

(3) The registered provider of a sessional pre-school service has ensured that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.

(4)(a) The minimum clear floor space is available for the duration of the sessional service.