

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY163
Name of Service:	Pinewood Montessori School
Address of Service:	55 Pinewood Crescent, Glasnevin, Dublin 11, Co. Dublin
Eircode:	D11 CC67
Name of Registered Provider:	Orla Long
Service type:	Sessional
Dates of Inspection:	12/03/2024

No of pre-school children:	AM	15
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K	
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Nelson	
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

Pinewood Montessori School is a sessional service located in a residential area of Dublin 11 and is registered to provide sessional care for up to 16 children aged between 2 to 6 years old from 9.15am to 12.45pm for 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from a purpose-built ground floor extension to a residential premises. There are sanitary facilities available off the care room and access to an enclosed outdoor play space to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are two staff working in the service, including the registered provider and there is a third person available to provide cover when needed. The registered provider and a staff member were present on the day of the inspection.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9(1),(2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4) Management and Recruitment
- Regulation 11(1),(3),(8)(a) Staffing Levels

- Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Child
- Regulation 25 First Aid
- Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures

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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the 12 March 2024 in relation to Regulation 23- general safety. A response was received which was adequate to rectify the issues identified. Please see body of report for details.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes 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

(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 named person to deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge was present during the inspection.

The files of the two staff and relief staff member were reviewed and the registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (2)
- (a)(b) Six validated written references were available from recent past employers or from a source other than a past employer.

- (c) Completed Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the three adults, which had been dated within the previous 36 months which demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) A review of documentary evidence showed that no adults had lived outside of the state for six months or more as an adult.
- (4) The three staff 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, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

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)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

Compliance Information

- (1) (3) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service to meet their basic care needs. There were two staff available to the 15 children aged between 3 to 5 years old.
- (8)(a) A review of the staff attendance records provided for a minimum of two adults to be on the premises during the service's operational hours.

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 there was adequate and suitable furniture and equipment available, for example:

- The furniture and equipment in the rooms was observed to be adequate for the number of children in the room, it was appropriate for the age range and stage of development of the children in the room, and was well maintained, durable and easy to clean.
- The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving, visible to the children, and were grouped in themed areas of interest such as home, construction, role play and library areas. Themed areas of interest enable children to have a more focused engagement in their play experiences and low-level accessible shelving afford children the opportunity to freely engage in independent play which can facilitate independent decision making.
- Each of the themed interest areas were well resourced with a wide range of props, materials and accessories accessible to the children. This promoted extended play opportunities for children. For example; the books were displayed uncluttered and in good condition, in a pleasing manner which provided an inviting space to engage in reading. The registered provider reported that there are additional books available which are rotated according to emergent themes arising and interests of the children.
- There was a variety of play materials and equipment available to the children which facilitated a range of play experiences including creative, imaginative and language play and promoted exploration and curiosity. Sensory activities such as painting and play dough were readily available and accessible to the children.
- The layout of the room facilitated individual, paired and group play experiences. This promoted social interaction and development.
- Images of the children and their families were displayed throughout the room. The children were provided with an individual drawer for their artwork and belongings.
- The outdoor environment was sheltered in part allowing outdoor play in inclement weather. Equipment available included sand tray with props, large block activity and an outdoor sink for water 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

The following measures were observed to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children:

General Safety:

- The service had a doorbell entry system which was managed by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Childrens snacks provided by the parents containing perishable food were stored in the service fridge, and food such as grapes were cut down into bite size portions to reduce the risk of choking.
- The television in the room was securely mounted and the flex was secured out of reach of children.
- Hazardous equipment and cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- The outdoor play area was fully enclosed.

Infection Control:

- Children were observed to be supported to hand wash after using the toilet and before eating.
- Tables were wiped down before snack time.
- Liquid soap and paper towels were available at all hand wash basins used by the staff and children.

Administration of Medication:

- There was a detailed care plan available for a child who required a specific medication, and staff reported being aware of the administration procedures to administer the medication, which was stored in a safe, accessible location in the care room.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The water temperature in the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation used by the children exceeded the recommended temperature of 43°C. A temperature of 71°C in sink 1, and 71.3°C in sink 2 was recorded by the inspector at 10.02am. This posed a scald risk to the children.
2. The surface temperature of the radiator in the sanitary accommodation, which was not covered and accessible to the children was 60.8°C when recorded by the inspector at 10.05am. This posed a burn risk to the children.

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider for the risks identified in points 1 and 2. It is acknowledged that immediate steps were taken during the inspection to address these risks. The children were directed to use the wash hand basin in the care room for hand washing before snack time, and the thermostat control switch for the radiator was turned lower when brought to the attention of the registered provider.

3. The cords for the blinds by the door and the window in the rear care room were not secured and posed a risk of injury to the children.

Infection Control:

4. The nappy changing mat was torn leaving foam exposed. This increased the risk of cross contamination.

Fire Safety:

5. The frequency of fire drills was not adequate to support the safe evacuation of children in an emergency. Three fire drills had been completed since September. Regular fire drills, on at least a monthly basis, prepares children to know what will happen in the event of an emergency and to safely evacuate when required to do so.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Corrective action:

1. The service immediately contacted a plumber who arrived the afternoon of the inspection to review the works needed to rectify the problem. The service ensured they will use the sink in the front room and supervise children while they use the bathroom at all times. A plumber attended the service on the 14 March 2024 and new thermo-mixing valves were fitted on the sinks.
2. When brought to the attention of the registered provider, they lowered the temperature of the radiator by use of the thermostat on the radiator.
3. The blind cords were fitted with safety clips.

Preventive Action:

1. The service will do a risk assessment and check water temperature on a daily basis, so not to let this happen again in the future.
2. The service commit to check radiator temperature on a daily basis, so not to let this happen again.
3. Regular checks will be made to ensure the blind cords are secure.

Infection Control:

4. Corrective action: the nappy changing mat was replaced.
Preventive action: the condition of the mat will be checked on a daily basis.

Fire Safety:

5. Corrective action: a fire drill was carried out the day after the inspection.
Preventive action: the service commits to carrying out a fire drill every 3 to 4 weeks.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Receipt for plumber.
Photographic evidence.
2. No evidence submitted.
3. Photographic evidence.

Infection Control:

4. Receipt for nappy mat.
Photographic evidence.

Fire Safety:

5. No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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

(2)(a) and (b) There was a suitably equipped first aid box available and safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that a person trained to First Aid Responder level was available to the children attending the service. It is acknowledged that the registered provider has completed 2 days of a 3-day First Aid Responder level training course, with documentary evidence showing this will be completed on the 22 March 2024.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Corrective action: the First aid Responder course was completed as of Friday 22nd March. On the day of inspection, the service provider had completed the first two parts of the three part course, but had yet to complete the third module which is the practical. This has since been rectified and the service provider is now trained to First Aid Responder level.

Preventive action: Service Provider will now ensure that the First Aid Responder skills will be renewed and updated on time to ensure the further safety of the children using the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Email evidence of training completed.

Certificate of training.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 25 has been adequately addressed.

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)(a) A record of fire drills was available on the premises with the last drill dated as having been carried out on the 8 Jan 2024.
- (b) An up-to-date maintenance record was available for the Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers were serviced in November 2023 and the smoke alarms were maintained on the 20 February 2024.
- (4) A procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was on display in the care room.