

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY315
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Sandymount Green Montessori
-------------------------	-----------------------------

Address of Service:	Newgrove Avenue, Sandymount, Sandymount, Dublin 4, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------

Eircode:	D04 HP79
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Eithne Mc Leavey
-------------------------------------	------------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	10/04/2024
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	n/a
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien
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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Sandymount Green Montessori is a sessional service which provides care to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service is registered to operate from 09:00 to 12:30, Monday to Friday.

The service is located on the first floor within the Mount Tabor Church buildings in an urban area of Sandymount, south county Dublin. The service operates from one large, purposely adapted care room and has a fully enclosed outdoor play area adjacent to the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 3 staff including the registered provider. There were 3 staff working directly with the children on the day of 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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

9 (1)(a)(b),(2),(4) Management and Recruitment,

11 (1),(3),(8)(c) Staffing Levels,

19 (1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,

23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,
25 First Aid,
26 Fire Safety Measures.

However, on inspection additional non-compliance was identified under Regulation 29(e) Premises. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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, 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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) The files of three adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b) Of the six validated, written references that were required, four were available from a past employer and two were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for three 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 available for two adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4) Records were available evidencing that the three staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. One of these staff members held a letter of eligibility from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

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) 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 care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were fourteen children attending being supervised by three adults on the day of inspection.

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Staff reported that children bring in their lunch from home and lunch took place at 11:15. All children were given a drink with their meal. Staff sat and ate with children during their lunch. Children were observed engaging in conversation with staff and their peers during their meal and staff supported children who needed assistance with their lunch.

Children were given responsibility appropriate to their age and were encouraged and supported to be independent. The inspector observed children using the toilet as they needed, getting their own lunches, cleaning up after their lunch and play and putting on their own coats. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and lunch time.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff displayed warmth and sensitivity during all interactions with the children and were observed supporting children in their play. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour policy. Staff were observed acknowledging children's achievements and efforts positively.

Transitions within the service were managed with the use of a bell and children appeared to be familiar with the daily routine. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed. Children's choices were respected with children given the opportunity to choose their own play equipment and activities.

Staff described how they communicate with parents daily about their child at arrival and collection time.

The care room was bright and was arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included Montessori equipment, small world toys, construction toys, an art area and a rest area with books. The care room provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and was adequately resourced with a variety of materials. Children's artwork was displayed throughout the care room. Family photos were displayed at the children's level.

The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care room.

An enclosed outdoor play area was available adjacent to the service with shock absorbent surfacing. The outdoor area had a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment. Children were observed engaging in energetic and imaginative play in the outdoor area.

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 inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap and warm water were available to facilitate hand washing.
- A safety policy was in place to inform practice. The premises, equipment and materials appeared clean and maintained in good condition.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.
- Children's lunches were stored in the refrigerator.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A child was observed to have whole grapes in their lunch. Whole grapes are not suitable for young children as they increase the potential risk of choking. The person in charge cut the grapes when it was brought to their attention by the inspector.
2. The cupboard beneath the sink was not safely secured on the day of inspection. Two bottles of cleaning agents were accessible posing a safety risk if accessed by a child.

Infection Control:

3. The handwashing practices observed were at variance with the health and hygiene policy in place in the service. Three children did not wash their hands after using the toilet.
4. There was no paper towel in the dispensers in the sanitary area. A roll of kitchen towel was used for hand drying and staff were observed tearing pieces off the roll and placing them on a tray for children to access posing a risk of the transmission of infection.

Fire Safety:

5. Documentation reviewed evidenced that fire drills were not carried out on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill took place on 29 January 2024.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Staff made aware that grapes will be cut in half if necessary. Parents were informed by text on school communication group to cut the whole grapes in half once in children's lunch box.
2. The child safety cupboard lock was attached to the cupboard beneath the sink. Child safety locks will be checked on a monthly basis to ensure they are in proper working order. The staff were advised to keep all the cleaning agents in a high press out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

3. A lesson on the importance of handwashing was made. We were singing the Rufus Wash your hands song. Children will be observed more closely for handwashing after using the toilets.

4. A paper towel dispenser has been installed in the toilets. The paper towel dispenser will be checked on a daily basis to ensure that it is full.

Fire Safety:

5. Fire drill was carried out on 22/02 and 21/03 but wasn't recorded. The designated person in charge will regularly carry out the fire drills and record them monthly.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Fire Safety:

Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.

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) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service.

(b) A first aid box was available to the adults and children in the service at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There was no one immediately available to the children who was trained in First Aid Responder training. Two adults were trained in Paediatric First Aid.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) FAR training will be attended by a staff member on 4, 5 & 10 July 2024. The registered provider will ensure that there is always a person with the FAR training available in the service and make sure that it's updated every 2 years.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (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)(b) The number, type and maintenance record of the smoke alarms on the premises was available. There was a record to show that quarterly maintenance of the smoke alarm system had taken place on 14 March 2024.

(4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) Firefighting equipment was not serviced on an annual basis as is required. Records available indicated that this equipment was last serviced on 15 July 2021 which is outside this timeframe.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b) Firefighting equipment was serviced after the inspection. The manager was advised to check that the Firefighting equipment is serviced on an annual basis as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(e) The sanitary facilities available on the day of inspection were not suitable to the needs of the children attending. There was no toilet seat on one of the toilets in use by the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The toilet seat was attached to one of the toilets. The toilets seats will be checked regularly in order to make sure they are safe to use by children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.