

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY324
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Name of Service:	Minerva Montessori
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Address of Service:	North House, Dartry, Dublin 6, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D06 E030
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Name of Registered Provider:	Blanche Burke
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Service type:	Full Day Care
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Date(s) of Inspection:	03/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	56	PM	33
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla - Child and Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Bray, Co Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	Mary Redmond
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

This private childcare service was established in 2009 by the current registered provider. Care and education are provided for children aged two years and eight months to five and a half years of age between the hours of 8am and 2pm; a concurrent sessional service also operates from 9am until 12.30pm.

The service operates from an adapted listed building in a residential area of south county Dublin. Five rooms over three levels are provided for the care of children and a small enclosed outdoor space is also available.

Staffing

There were ten adults employed to work with pre-school children including the registered provider and a manager. Eight adults had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 5, 6 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications. One adult who did not have the required qualification had a Letter of Eligibility to practice which had been issued by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY).

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 areas of governance and safety. The inspection may focus on other areas as required.

The inspection plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

- Regulation 9 Management and recruitment
- Regulation 11 Staffing levels
- Regulation 15 Record of pre-school child
- Regulation 16 Record in relation to pre-school service
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of 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 reoccurring. 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 (IAN) was issued on the 3 May 2024 for one adult for whom a Garda vetting disclosure had not been received. The registered provider responded on the 7 May 2024 stating that the adult would not return to the service until a Garda vetting disclosure had been received.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the designated person in charge and staff members who facilitated the inspection 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.

(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 for ten adults who were employed by the registered provider were reviewed.

- (2)
- (a) There were written validated references available from previous employers for nine adults employed in the service.
 - (b) References from other sources were available for two adults who only had one previous employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting dated within the last three years was available for nine adults.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for two adults for whom it was required.

(4) Eight adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The qualification for one adult, which did not meet this criterion, had been assessed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and a letter of eligibility to practice had been issued for this adult.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) A reference which had been obtained for one adult had not been verified and there was no second reference available for this adult who was working in the service on the day of inspection.
 - (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was not available for this adult. An Immediate Action Notice (IAN) issued to the registered provider regarding this on the 3 May 2024.
- (4) There was no evidence that this adult had attained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

On the 7 May 2024 the registered provider confirmed that this adult would not be working in the service until a Garda vetting disclosure has been received.

22 May 2024

The reference has been verified and a second reference has been requested for this adult. A Garda vetting disclosure has been received. All files will be checked regularly to ensure they are up to date.

A qualification is not required as the adult provides relief cover.

Supporting documentation submitted

The CAPA document was received with no supporting documentation. The inspector requested this on the 23 May 2024 and a copy of the Garda vetting disclosure and the validation for one reference was submitted. The registered provider confirmed that a second reference for this adult had been requested but had not been received.

Summary Comment

On the 29 May 2024 correspondence issued to request the outstanding documentation for this adult. The registered provider confirmed that this has not yet been received.

The outstanding documentation was received on the 4 June 2024.

The regulatory requirement has now been met.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the service. There were eight adults working directly with fifty-six children on arrival of the inspector; six adults were available for the care of thirty-three children in the afternoon. The designated person in charge was also available.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) Records were reviewed for ten children who were attending the service. The records reviewed contained the following particulars:

- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
- (b) The date on which each child first attended the service.
- (c) There was an area on the registration form where the date when a child would cease to attend the service will be recorded.
- (d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service were also available.
- (e) Names and contact details of other adults who were authorised to collect children were available.
- (f) The documentation available supported the recording of specific illnesses, allergies, disabilities and dietary preferences for children.
- (g) The name, address and telephone number of each child's general practitioner (GP) was recorded.
- (h) Parents had indicated which immunisations their children had received.
- (i) There was written parental consent for medical treatment of children in the event of an emergency.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Details of children’s attendance was recorded in registers in each room.
 - (i) A staff roster was available.
 - (j) Records were available to demonstrate that parental consent was required prior to administering medication to a child, that administration of medication was witnessed, and that parents were informed following administration of medication.
 - (k) Details of accidents and incidents were recorded. Parents had signed records to acknowledge that they had been informed when an accident or incident involving their child had occurred.

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:

The entrance door to the service was secured to prevent unauthorised access or children exiting unsupervised. Toys and play equipment observed in use by children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children. Adults described safe procedures for the emergency evacuation of the premises in the event of a fire.

Infection Control:

Children's hands were washed before eating and after outdoor play. Good hygiene practices by adults were observed including handwashing before serving food to children and cleaning of tables before and after children ate from them. Foot pedal bins were used appropriately by adults and children.

Administration of Medication:

There were procedures in place to administer medication to children when required. Documentation was available to support the safe administration of temperature reducing medication and different documentation was available for prescribed medication.

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) All adults working in the service had qualifications in paediatric first aid and were available to children.

(2) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available.

(a) They were stored safely in conspicuous positions in the service.

(b) The first aid boxes were available to children at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There was no adult with valid First Aid Responder (FAR) training available to children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider and deputy manager attended a First Aid Responder (FAR) refresher course on 20 May 2024.

Supporting documentation submitted

No documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector requested supporting documentation and an email was received on the 4 June 2024 confirming that the RP and deputy manager had attended PHECC FAR training and are awaiting certificates.

The regulatory requirement is deemed to have been met.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A record was available for the following:

- (a) There was a record of fire drills that take place, and the last recorded fire drill was on the 27 March 2024.
- (b) A maintenance record was available to show that the firefighting equipment had been checked on the 17 January 2024 and quarterly servicing of the smoke detection system had taken place on the 29 March 2024.