

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY330
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Name of Service:	Little People's Montessori School
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Address of Service:	120 Greenlea Road, Terenure, Dublin 6W, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D6W YX61
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carla Caprani Russell
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Carysfort House, Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock, Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	L. Magee
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

Little People’s Montessori School was established in 2005 and taken over by the current registered provider in 2022. It provides a sessional service to children aged 2 to 6 years between 8:40 am – 12 midday, Monday to Friday, between the months of September to June. The Montessori room is an open plan preschool room, on the ground floor of a two-storey community hall in Terenure, county Dublin. An outdoor play area is not available to the children.

Staffing

Three adults including the registered provider are employed to work in the service. They all work directly with the children. When the inspector arrived at the service, two adults were present. The registered provider subsequently arrived at 10.15am.

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.

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

(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

- (2)
- Following a discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed one new staff member had been employed since the last inspection on 23 March 2023. The inspection focused on records for this staff member in relation to regulations 9(2)(a), (d) and (4). Regulation 9(2)(c) was inspected for this adult and a further two adults whose Garda vetting disclosure had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice.
- (a) A minimum of two references had been sourced for this adult from previous employers with records of verification checks carried out.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for three adults. Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International police vetting was not required.
- (4) This adult held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working with the children when the inspector arrived unannounced at the service. There were 2 staff members working directly with 19 children.
- (3) The minimum adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were two adults working directly with nineteen pre-school children on the day of inspection.
- (8) (c) Two adults were on the premises at all times.

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-*
- (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(b) The registered provider described how the children bring a light lunch in from home. Water was freely available to the children during the morning. Staff were observed sitting with children during their mealtime and engaged in conversation with them, promoting a relaxed atmosphere. Staff were observed caring for children in a respectful manner during the inspection. They demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They spoke kindly to them, listened to them and responded appropriately to their cues.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Non-Compliance Information

1 (b)

The rest area consisted of a small child size couch and two small cushions/stools. During the inspection two children were observed sitting on the couch. There was no room for any other child if they wanted to rest. The couch is in a corner beside the preschool tables and chairs. The layout of the preschool room and the rest area did not encourage any of the children to rest if required.

This was a non-compliance on the last inspection 23 March 2023, the corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have failed to address the non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Zips have been added to the couch so the covers can be removed weekly for cleaning and a new wipe down vinyl couch has been ordered. A second larger vinyl corner couch will be ordered in the coming months, which will replace the current velour fabric couch.

Supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. This regulation will be reassessed on the next inspection.

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 adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. Hand sanitisers, medicines and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children. Emergency exits were clear. No trailing flexes observed.

Infection Control:

Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal operated bins.

Administration of Medication:

Staff demonstrated, through discussion, that they were familiar with the procedures and practices in place for the administration of medication in line with the service's policy on medication administration.

Fire Safety:

The fire exit was clearly marked and unobstructed. The fire drill procedure and fire escape plan were displayed in the service. Staff demonstrated through discussion they were familiar with the fire drill procedure.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Handwashing was inconsistent. Between 10am and 10.10am, four children used the toilet, all four children left without washing their hands. Thirteen children were observed queuing to wash their hands prior to lunchtime, three of these children left the queue to play without washing their hands.
2. The fabric couch in the rest area was heavily stained. The registered provider confirmed the fabric covers could not be removed to be cleaned effectively.
3. The nappy changing mat was stored behind a pipe in the sanitary area. This was ripped and could not be cleaned effectively.
4. A fabric floor mat and fabric towel were both in use in the bathroom. These are a potential source of infection and cross-contamination between children and staff.
5. During the inspection, perishable items contained in the children's lunch boxes were not refrigerated prior to lunch time, posing the risk of gastrointestinal illness.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. A team meeting was held. The service have reverted back to table by table for hand washing and using hand washing songs while washing to help encourage the children to wash their hands.
2. A zip has been added to the couch for now so the covers can be removed weekly for cleaning or as needed and a new wipe down vinyl couch has been ordered. A second larger vinyl corner couch will be purchased in the coming months.
3. As per the policy of the service, all children are required to be potty trained, but help is given to them with this transition. The nappy mat has been removed from the service.
4. The non-slip floor mat has been removed. The service will not be using floor mats from now on.
5. All perishable items will be stored in a new fridge which will be purchased over the Christmas holidays.

Documentation was submitted to support this non-compliance.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider address the non-compliances. The regulatory requirement has been met. This regulation will be reassessed on the next inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Non-Compliance Information

(d) Throughout the premises, there was a heavy accumulation of dirt and dust, despite a cleaning schedule being in place. This was observed on walls, floors, shelving units and behind toys and in the sanitary facility.

This was a non-compliance on the last inspection 23 March 2023, the corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have failed to address the non-compliance.

(e) The registered provider confirmed the service does have sufficient sanitary facilities for the 22 children who attend the service, but the service only uses one toilet and sink as the second toilet and sink is located outside the main Montessori room. The registered provider confirmed the children have never used this 2nd sanitary facility as it has insufficient lighting for the children and is used by a community group when the service is closed.

Thirteen children were observed queuing to use the toilet and/or wash their hands, prior to lunchtime This took approximately fourteen minutes to complete. Children were observed leaving the queue during this time and did not return to wash their hands.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(d) The classroom is cleaned twice daily and deep cleaned every Monday, Wednesday and Friday-steamed mopped, disinfected, dusted etc. The service will continue to do this but unfortunately it is an old building so for

the amount of cleaning that is done it doesn't reflect. There is a possibility that renovation work will be conducted this summer or in the very near future, which will help greatly. The service will continue daily and deep cleaning and will schedule a meeting with the community group in the new year to discuss all.

(e) Maintenance of the entrance toilet will be carried out over the Christmas break. Handwashing has gone back to table by table, ensuring all children wash their hands and the task is carried out smoothly.

No supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider address the non-compliance. The regulatory requirement has been met. Regulation 29 d & e will be reassessed on the next inspection.