

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY379
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Hope Montessori & Autism Care Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Unit 6 Goldenbridge Industrial Estate, Tyrconnell Road, Inchicore Dublin 8, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D08 NVOA
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sherene Powell
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	20/02/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	30	PM	29
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Early Years Inspectorate- Tusla- Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, County Dublin.
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Olivia Quill and Jackie Mayock
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors
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### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Hope Montessori & Autism Care Centre is one of a multiple of five services operated across Ireland by the registered provider. The early years service is registered to provide full day care including part-time and sessional care and education for children aged from one to six years. The service operates from 8am until 6pm Monday to Friday.

The early years service is based in a purposely adapted premises which is located within an industrial estate in the centre of Inchicore village. Five care rooms were available for pre-school children on the first floor of the premises. Two of the five pre-school classes exclusively provide care for autistic children and offers a morning session from 9am until 1pm and an afternoon session from 2pm until 6pm. These rooms were closed for mid-term on the day of inspection. A designated sleep room was provided for children under two years. An outdoor play area for the children is located to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

In total twenty one staff are employed in the service including three staff employed for domestic duties. On the 20 February 2025 eight staff worked directly with the children. The designated person in charge and deputy manager were available to provide additional support to staff at break times and as required. The registered provider was present and attended the feedback meeting.

### 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

The inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Compliance was assessed under the following regulations:

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

11(1), (2), (8)(a) 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.

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, 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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (2) The inspection included a review of eleven files for new adults employed in the service since the last inspection on the 7 May 2024.
- (a) There were written validated references available from previous employers for adults employed in the service.
- (b) Suitable references from other sources were available for adults who did not have a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána was available all newly employed adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed in the service.

(4) Of the eleven files reviewed records were available evidencing that eight adults who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. Three staff did not work directly with the children and did not require a qualification.

### Non-Compliance Information

9 (4) Two staff members identified on last inspection as not having a completed childcare certificate are in the process of completing their QQI level 5 award in Early Childhood Care and Education. This is due to be completed by the end of February 2025. The registered provider provided evidence to demonstrate this.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

Both staff members have successfully completed their QQI Level 5 Award in Early Childhood Care and Education. They are currently awaiting the official certificates, which are expected to be received in April 2025. Once the certificates are issued, we will promptly forward them to you without delay. We will continue ensure that all staff qualifications are listed on the DCEDIY's published qualification list. Additionally, where applicable, we will ensure that prospective staff provides an eligibility letter from the DCEDIY as a mandatory requirement prior to employment, ensuring they meet the necessary criteria to work in the childcare sector.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Email evidenced provided from awarding college for both staff with evidence of provisional results.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions stated by the registered provider and supporting evidence submitted confirms the non-compliance has 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.*

*(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof 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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were thirty children attending the service being supervised by eight adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults 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 inspectors observed appropriate and suitable care practices within the service. Meals and snacks were offered at regular intervals throughout the day. Mealtime was not rushed children were given time to eat and additional servings of food were offered. Staff sat with children during this time and engaged in conversation. Drinks of water were available within the rooms and were offered when children were eating. The staff supported the children to manage their personal care. Younger children were provided with bibs to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating.

Children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Older children used the toilet independently while being closely supervised. The children moved freely in each care room independently choosing what activities they would like to engage in both alone and with staff members. Staff interacted warmly with the children and used gentle tones during conversations, addressing children by name and speaking to them at their level.

Staff explained how they communicate with parents regarding their child's day using an online computer application detailing information on activities, food, nappy changes and sleep. Staff also communicate with parents at arrival and collection times.

The service had a designated sleep time and staff reported children are placed to sleep when they are tired. Younger children were placed to sleep in the cot room while older children were provided with low-level beds to sleep in their care room. Staff remained with the children soothing them to sleep with reassuring words.

Outdoor play was included in the daily timetable. The outdoor area was equipped with a selection of suitable age-appropriate toys and play equipment.

### 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.
- Medicines and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to children.
- Blind cords were secured.

##### Infection Control:

- The environment was clean. Staff were observed cleaning their care room and a written cleaning schedule was maintained.
- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing.
- Pedal operated bins were provided in each care room and in the sanitary areas.
- Individual bed linen was provided for the children in the Lillies and Lotus room at sleep time. Staff stated that bed linen was laundered weekly.
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##### Administration of Medication:

- A care plan was available for a child with a specific medical condition and staff demonstrated they were knowledgeable about the plan when spoken to.
- Medication records were reviewed and forms were completed in line with the medication policy.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were documented every ten minutes. Discussion with staff demonstrated that staff were familiar with safe sleep guidelines.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clearly marked and unobstructed.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A person trained in first aid for children was, immediately available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Certificates were available to confirm five staff had up to date First aid responder training.

### 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 written record was available detailing all fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place on the 31 January 2025.
- (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment and the fire detection and alarm system had been serviced on the 21 January 2025.

(4)

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