

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY379		
Name of Service:	Hope Montessori & Autism Care Centre		
Address of Service:	Unit 6 Goldenbridge Industrial Estate, Tyrconnell Road, Inchicore, Dublin 8.		
Eircode:	D08 NVOA		
Name of Registered Provider:	Sherene Powell		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	07/05/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	37	PM 39
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown drive, County Dublin		
Inspection undertaken by:	O Quill and E Mulhern		
Title:	Early Years Inspectors		
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

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. 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

The service currently employs 17 staff including an adult employed for ancillary duties. There were 11 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The deputy person in charge and designated person in charge were not included in the adult: child ratio but provided additional support in the care rooms as required and relieved staff for their breaks. An additional adult who was on a student placement was also present.

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

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

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

Regulation 11(1),(2),(8)(a) Staffing levels

Regulation 19 (1)(a),(b) Health welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 (1)(a), (b). As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Lotus room.

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 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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The deputy Manager was in charge when the inspectors arrived and the designated person in charge arrived after the inspection commenced.
- (2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of staff employed and records were inspected for the student present on inspection. The regulatory requirement was met as follows:
- (a),(b) There were thirty four written validated references available from previous employers and suitable references from other sources were available for staff who did not have a previous employer.

(a) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting of An Garda Síochána were available for all adults working in the service. These were dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

(b) International police vetting was available for twelve adults who had lived outside the state for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4) Records were available evidencing that nine staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Two staff members working directly with the children did not have a recognised childcare qualification. It is acknowledged these were the same two staff identified on last inspection and were required to complete additional modules to achieve the QQI level 5 award. Evidence was shown to the inspectors to confirm these staff are enrolled to complete the QQI level 5 award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

(4) Evidence of the two staff members' enrolment and commencement date to complete the QQI level was shown to the inspectors on the inspection day.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has demonstrated two staff members are enrolled to complete the QQI level 5 award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The completed qualifications for the two staff remains outstanding. The Regulatory requirement has not been met. For review on next inspection.

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-seven children attending the service being supervised by eleven adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) Two adults were rostered to be on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

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)

Children's learning and development was facilitated through the provision of appropriate play materials. 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. Areas of interest included construction toys, jigsaws, dress up clothing, home corners, and books. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care room for meals and tabletop activities. Meals and snacks were offered to the children at regular times. Additional helpings were available as required. Drinking water was given at mealtime and freely accessible to children throughout the day.

Staff interacted warmly with the children in their care throughout the inspection. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour. Children's nappies were changed as required and staff supported and supervised children washing their hands. Children had the opportunity to sleep. Low level beds were provided in the Lotus room and children were offered blankets for comfort. Staff remained in the room with the children as they slept.

Children had the opportunity for outdoor play. A fully enclosed outdoor area was located to the rear of the premises and had shock absorbent surfacing. The area was divided into two separate play spaces. The outdoor area was well resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate 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.
- Cleaning agents and medication were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The kitchen was inaccessible.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and nappy changing, after outdoor play and before meals.
- Children's nappies were changed in line with the service's nappy changing policy to reduce the risk of the spread of infection.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the appropriate measures to be taken if a child required medication. Medication records reviewed were completed correctly including the name and dose of the medication given, written parental consent, the signature of the staff member who gave the medicine and the staff who witnessed the medicine being given.
- Care plans were available for children who required specific emergency medication. Staff were familiar with the care plans and this medication was clearly labelled and was stored safely.

Sleep:

- Children were placed to sleep in appropriate facilities including standard cots and low-level beds according to their age and stage of development.
- The sleep room was maintained at the required temperature for sleep.
- Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the safe sleep guidelines and maintained a record of the sleep checks completed.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clearly marked and unobstructed.

Outings:

- The manager confirmed the service do not do outings currently.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. In the nappy changing sanitary areas off the Lotus room and the area used by the Rosebud and Daffodils room. The nappy changing bin was broken the pedal function was not working. Staff were observed lifting the lid of the bin posing an infection control risk.
2. The sanitary area off the Lotus room was not adequately cleaned as evidenced by a large build-up of debris and dust on the floor and on the skirting boards. The cleaning schedule for the day had been signed by staff as completed contrary to the findings on inspection.
3. In the Lotus sanitary area unsuitable items were stored on the floor including a beanbag, and a broken piece of equipment. Bibs used for painting were also stored next to the sink posing an infection control risk.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The nappy changing bins in the sanitary areas in both Rosebud and Daffodils room have been replaced to avoid staff lifting the lids to prevent any infection. The onsite manager will check the sanitary area constantly to ensure that all sanitary equipment is in good condition. Any defective item must be removed and reported to the management for immediate replacement.
2. The sanitary area of Lotus room has been adequately cleaned. Deep cleaning has also been carried. on risk. The onsite manager must ensure that items are not stored on the floor, (including aprons for painting) in the Lotus sanitary area to prevent any risk of infection. This must be an ongoing check.

3. The unsuitable items stored on the floor, (including aprons for painting) in the Lotus sanitary area have been removed to prevent any risk of infection. The onsite manager must verify that cleaning has been done and that the checklist is correctly used. Manager must ensure that staff signs their initials on the checklist after each check is done.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The regulatory requirement has been met.