

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY380
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Name of Service:	St. Matthew's Primary School
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Address of Service:	Cranfield Place, Sandymount, Dublin 4, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D04 FK11
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Name of Registered Provider:	Naomi Rousseau
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	25 January 2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	n/a
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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
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Description of service

St. Matthew's Primary School is registered to provide sessional care for children from 3 to 6 years of age from 09:30 to 12:30, Monday to Friday.

The service is based in a classroom on the first floor of St. Matthew's Primary School in a residential area of Sandymount south Dublin. An outdoor play area is located within the grounds of the Primary School that children have access to on a daily basis.

Staffing

The service currently employs two adults, one for the daily operation of the service and a second adult available to provide relief cover if required. There was one staff member working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider is the principal of the primary school and does not work directly with the children.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 Record in relation to Pre-school service (j) and (k).

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 who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2)(4) The person in charge confirmed that no new staff members were employed in the service since the last inspection on 12 March 2020. Staff recruitment files were not examined as part of this 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.

(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 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 eleven children attending the service being supervised by one adult on the day of inspection.

(8)(c) The school principal was available to provide assistance 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;

(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

(h) Details of the attendance of each child in the service were recorded on a daily basis.

(j) A sample of medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

(k) A sample of accident and incident records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and the person in charge stated that parents are also given a copy.

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

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and the person in charge reported that children bring in their lunch from home. Lunch took place at 10:55. Children were given responsibility appropriate to their age and the helper and leader on the day were observed taking lunches and drinks from the fridge and setting out place mats. Children were encouraged to clean up after themselves following lunch. Children were observed engaging in conversation with their peers during their meal and the person in charge supported children who needed assistance with their lunch.

Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including using the toilet independently, cleaning their own noses, washing their hands and cleaning up after their lunches and play.

The person in charge demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. The interactions observed between the adult and children on the day of inspection were warm and the adult was observed supporting children in their play. The service had a behaviour management policy in place and the person in charge was observed using distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour. The children also had a number of sand timers ranging in time to support them to resolve disagreements. These were observed in use on the day of inspection and this process was supported by the person in charge. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed.

Transitions within the service were managed well and children appeared to be familiar with the daily routine.

The person in charge described how they communicate with parents daily about their child at arrival and collection time.

Children's language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection. Children's choices were respected with children given the opportunity to choose their own play equipment and activities throughout the inspection.

The care room was arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included Montessori equipment, an imaginary play area, arts and crafts materials, construction toys, jigsaws, a rest area with books and natural play materials. The care room provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and was adequately resourced with a variety of materials. The materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms. The children's artwork and photos were displayed throughout the care room.

A fully enclosed outdoor area was located on the school grounds which the children have daily access to. The area used by the service had shock absorbent surfacing.

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.
- Hand sanitisers, medicines and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- 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, 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 before meals.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.

Administration of Medication:

The service had an administration of medication policy in place. Practices in line with this policy were observed on the day of inspection. There were documented care plans available for two children attending the service who required emergency medication. The person in charge was aware of the treatment plans and demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the procedures to follow if the medication was required.

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) A person trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(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.

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 fire drills that had taken place in the service.

(b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the fire fighting equipment were dated 03 May 2022 and 29 August 2022 for the smoke alarms.

(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.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider had evidence of insurance cover valid until 06 October 2023. The insurance provides cover for a sessional service accommodating 11 children.