

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DY381

Name of Service: D2 Montessori

Address of Service: 6 Camden Street Upper, Dublin 2, Co. Dublin

Eircode: D02 KF53

Name of Registered Provider: Joyce Grant

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 29/01/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	37	PM	37

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne & E Hosford
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

D2 Montessori provides a full day care service and is located in Dublin City Centre. The service is open Monday to Friday between 8.00am and 6.00pm and provides a service to children aged between 1 to 5 years old. The service is based in a three-storey building. There are 4 care rooms in operation which are the Wobbler, Toddler, Pre-school room and Montessori rooms. There is an enclosed area to the rear of the property which allows children to access outdoor play.

Staffing

On the day of inspection there were 12 adults working in the service to include the person in charge, nine childcare staff working directly with the children and two staff employed under the Access and inclusion Model. The registered provider does not work in the service

Methodology

Tusla 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the regulations.

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

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

Regulation 16 Record in relation to Preschool service (i), (j), (k)
Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of child (1) (a)
Regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child,
Regulation 25 First Aid (1)(2)(a)(b)
Regulation 26 Fire Safety(1)(a)(b) (4)
Regulation 29 Premises (d),

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 Record in relation to Preschool service, Regulation 23 - Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child and Regulation 11- Staffing Levels was assessed across all of the rooms.

The scope of the inspection included all four rooms – Wobbler room, Toddler room, Preschool and Montessori 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 registered provider ensured there was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee.
- (2) It was confirmed by the designated person in charge that seven new staff members have been employed in the service since the last inspection.

The files of the seven adults were reviewed as part of the inspection.

(a) Two written and validated references were available for five adults from a past employer.

One written and validated reference was available for two adults from a past employer.

(b) One written and validated reference was available for two adults from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for seven adults. The service also demonstrated compliance, with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for seven staff who have lived outside the State for longer than six months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the seven adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

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) There was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as follows:

There were 11 adults working with 37 children in the morning and in the afternoon.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection as follows:

Wobbler Room - 2 adults to 4 children aged between 1 years to 2 years,

Toddler Room - 3 adults to 10 children aged between 2 years to 3 years,
Preschool Room - 2 adults to 11 children aged between 2 years 6 months to 4 years,
Montessori Room - 4 adults to 12 children aged between 3 years to 5 years,
The designated person in charge was present in a supportive role were required.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis was completed accurately in attendance record books.
 - (i) A staff roster was available demonstrating hours each staff worked.
 - (k) A review of 18 accident and incident records demonstrated that all the details were completed on each record.

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

Compliance Information

Basic Needs:

- The service had a weekly menu for dinner and snacks. It was displayed in the service. Children were offered meals and snacks at regular intervals throughout the day. Dinner was a hot meal for the children which was supplied by an external catering company. The inspectors observed the children in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms eating their dinner at 11am and in the Preschool and Montessori rooms having their morning snack at 11am; dinner was chicken vegetable pie with potatoes and morning snack was vegetable couscous. Different dietary requirements were catered for if required and additional food was observed to be available and offered.
- Water was available in each care room for the children to drink from their own individual labelled drinking bottles or cups.
- Mealtimes observed were relaxed and sociable events, with children given time to sit at low tables appropriate to their ages. Children were observed to self-feed, but staff were on hand to help as required, supporting independence and wellbeing.
- Nappy changing and toileting were respectful and positive experiences for the children, and staff were observed to encourage the children to be independent in managing their personal care such as handwashing.
- The transitions between activities such as nappy changes, sleep time, mealtimes, free play and outdoor play were observed to be calm and relaxed with staff available to care for the individual needs of the children.
- Children engaged in singing and interactive stories which supported language development.
- Children were observed to enjoy outdoor play during the inspection, in the outdoor play area.

Supporting relationships :

- Images of the children and their families were displayed on the wall at a height visible to the children in the care rooms supporting children's identity and belonging.
- The staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. The atmosphere within the service remained calm and pleasant throughout the inspection.
- Staff interacted playfully with the children, sitting at their level at the table during lunchtimes, tabletop activities of painting, magnetics, imaginative restaurant while chatting with the children. They were responsive to the children and were observed to give them choices regarding their play activities in the care rooms.
- Staff engaged in conversation with children and were responsive to the children's questions and needs. For example, in the Montessori room, through interactive story telling where children suggested the characters and the characters became part of the verbal interactive story told by staff with props which fully engaged the children and while waiting for morning snack with the children had a detailed discussion about birthdays, birthday parties, birthday cakes lead to a discussion of food likes and dislikes.
- Staff members supported each other in the provision of care to the children.

Physical and Material environment:

- All of the four care rooms were bright and inviting play spaces to enable children to explore their environment.
- The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and were visible and accessible to the children.
- A range of equipment and play based materials were organised, well-resourced and suitable to the age and stage of development of the number of children attending each room nurturing children's independence, ability to make decisions, enabling exploration and develop their play opportunities. For example:
 - Home corner areas with play kitchen, with supporting equipment such as play food, delph, pots pans and menus, dolls and play equipment, dress up clothes.
 - Construction toys for example magnetics, stickle bricks, waffles, building blocks and plastic building bricks, wooden puzzles and jigsaws,
 - range of toys for transporting such as cars and trains with tracks and small world play toys and animals.

- Sensory trays with sensory materials and play equipment
- Art materials, for example mark making equipment, paper, scissors, glue, paint, paint brushes and glitter.
- Montessori materials supporting the Montessori learning approach areas of practical life, sensorial, language, maths and culture.
- The furniture provided in each care room was low level, suitable and accessible to the needs and age of the children. There were sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in each care room.
- Sensory areas with soft sensory floor tiles and sensory toys were present in the Wobbler, Preschool and Montessori rooms.
- Comfortable and cosy areas with large soft mats, couches, soft cushions with books for rest and relaxation were present in each care room.
- The outdoor play environment to the rear of the premises was fully enclosed, the surface of which was a soft artificial tile surface. The outdoor toys were suitable and available included a climbing frame, a mud kitchen, large building bricks, cars and trucks.

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:

- On the inspectors unannounced arrival at the service, the service door was locked to prevent a child from exiting the service unsupervised and to prevent an unauthorised adult from entering.
- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition throughout, with the premises and equipment observed to be visually clean.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- The outdoor area was a safe and secure environment with play equipment and materials clean and suitable for use by the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored securely and out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Nappy changing was completed in accordance with the service policy and procedure.

- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap, and paper towels.
- Lidded Pedal bins were provided for the disposal of wastepaper in the sanitary facility.
- Handwashing was completed, before dinner and snack times, after messy play, nappy changing and toilet visits.
- Individual storage bags were available for the storage of sheets used by the children during sleep time.
- Mattresses in use were in good condition, and all had washable wipeable covers allowing for easy cleaning.
- In the Wobbler, Toddler and Preschool rooms, sleeper beds and low beds were positioned to be 50 cm apart at sleep time.

Safe Sleep:

- The temperature of the room was documented, and 10-minute sleep checks were completed on the children for colour, breathing, position while children slept.
- Shoes and outer clothing such as hooded tops were removed from children while they slept
- Five children under two years of age were observed to be sleeping on floor beds. Parents were included in the decision and parental consent was approved as Sleep Risk Assessments for these five children were completed by the service, this is in accordance with best practice sleep guidelines issued to the sector in September 2023.

Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the Toddler room, the temperature of a plug-in radiator, positioned away from children, was recorded at 59.2°C at 11.35am.
This exceeded the recommended temperature of 50°C and posed a risk of burning to the children. It is acknowledged that staff members took immediate action to address the non-compliance, and the radiator was turned off.
2. Trailing flexes were observed, leading to a risk of injury, as follows:
 - On the wall outside of the nappy changing room on the ground floor, there was a loose flex to an immersion switch accessible to the children.
 - In the Outdoor area, at 11.33am, there was trailing wires accessible to children.

- In the Wobbler room, one radiator cover was broken leading to a risk of injury.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- All plug in heaters have been removed from the room. All rooms to be checked for plug in heaters on the daily risk assessment for the office.
- The wire outside the changing room and the wire outside in the garden was fixed by maintenance. All wires are to be checked daily and have been added to the daily management risk assessment.
- The radiator cover in the room have been changed. All furnishings will be checked by management daily and this has been added to the management risk assessment.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographic Evidence
- Photographic Evidence
- Photographic evidence

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 23, the non-compliances outlined above have been addressed.

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

- The service provided evidence that two adults trained in First Aid Response were available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.
- (a) (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous positions in each care room.

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 reviewed by the inspector for fire drills completed and the last fire drill was recorded as being carried out on the 15 January 2025.
- (b) The number type and maintenance record for the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available. The Firefighting equipment was last serviced 8 August 2024 and the smoke alarms were last serviced on 5 November 2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were displayed in conspicuous positions on walls throughout the service.

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

Compliance Information

- Mechanical vents were clean and in good order which was effective for removal of stale air.
- The skirting boards and newly replaced carpet on the stairs of the service were observed to be visibly clean and in good repair.