

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL052
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Carnegie Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Lusk Community Hall, Chapel Green, Lusk, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	K45 EO90
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sylvie Crowe
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	23/10/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM	0
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S Taaffe
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

Carnegie Montessori is a privately-owned sessional early years service which was established by the registered provider in 2014. An early years service has been provided in these premises since the 1990's. The service operates from 9.00am to 12.00 midday for 38 weeks each year, facilitating eligible children to participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme each weekday. The service caters for a maximum of 22 pre-school children from 2 to 6 years of age. School aged children are not accommodated in the service.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs 5 staff members, all of whom work directly with the children in the service. Two of these staff members job-share in the role of service manager, one of whom is present daily. Another two of the five staff members also job-share, one of whom is present daily. The fifth staff member is employed in a post which is funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme. The registered provider is not present in the service on daily basis but manages administrative duties off-site and is available to work directly with the children in the service when necessary.

### 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. 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 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) One of the two job-sharing managers was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise as required.

(b) One job-sharing manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

The staff files for the registered provider and the 5 staff members were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b) There were 2 written references available for the registered provider and 2 written, validated references available for the 5 staff members.

(a) Of the 12 written references available, 8 were from past employers.

(b) Of the 12 written references available 4 were from sources other than a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and for the 5 staff members.

(d) Not applicable as following a review of the staff files there was no evidence that international police vetting was required for the registered provider or any staff member employed in the service.

(4) The registered provider and all 5 staff members employed in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 – 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) The adult to child ratio was correct in the service for the duration of the inspection with 3 staff members working directly with the 19 children present.
- (8)(c) Not applicable as there were at least 2 staff members working in the service on a daily basis.

### 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

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

#### Basic needs:

- Healthy snacks were provided for the children by their parents or guardians. Each of the three staff members sat with the children at the three separate low tables at snack time, encouraging conversation and extending interactions with the groups of children in a relaxed manner.
- The close proximity of the sanitary accommodation to the pre-school room facilitated children who were able to use the toilet independently, to do so. Discrete supervision and assistance was provided by the staff members when required. One child in the service was not yet toilet-trained and nappy changing was carried out promptly when necessary.
- The free movement of children was facilitated. The activities of the day ensured that children regularly changed position and moved around the spacious hall from where the service was conducted. The children were brought outdoors for energetic play during the morning.
- The staff members were observed to gently and calmly guide and support the children to behave appropriately, including the use of simple rules and positive reinforcement, encouragement and praise.

#### Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members were respectful and caring in their interactions with the children in the service. The staff members demonstrated knowledge of the children's individual personalities and a sensitivity to each child's individual needs and preferences.
- The children were supported in their choice of activities. The staff members were observed displaying anticipation and positive responsiveness when children chose to change or opt out of activities.

- Communication to and from the parents was facilitated electronically through a smartphone messenger application and on an application on a mobile tablet device. Notices were in place in the entrance hallway which provided parents with relevant general information regarding the service. Parents were greeted warmly and communicated with in an unhurried manner at collection time.

### Physical and material environment:

- The service was conducted from the spacious main hall in the community centre which was suitably resourced with play equipment and materials laid out to facilitate play opportunities and experiences for the children in attendance.
- The play materials are stored on low-level shelving which are accessible to the children in attendance. The established interest areas include a home corner and shop area, construction area, arts and crafts area, area with specialist Montessori equipment and a library. A tray top activity table filled with dried pasta, rice, conkers, a sieve, a colander and pots and pans supported the children to engage in sensory play.
- Family photographs were in place on a mobile display stand positioned in front of the stage which helped to bridge the gap between the service and home and which supported the children to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness in the service.
- After the session has ended each day, all play materials and equipment provided for the pre-school children attending the service are removed and placed in designated storerooms on the premises, to facilitate a range of classes and programmes to be delivered when the early years service is not in operation.
- An outdoor play area was provided to the side of the premises with gated fencing in place separating this space from another enclosed area to the front of the premises which could be used to extend the outdoor play area for the children. The surface was predominantly paved, with planting boxes provided on a soil surface along the edge. A low-level plastic climbing frame with slide attached; a digging box with soil and stones and shovels, trowels and diggers; a wooden tunnel with a climbing surface; a lidded sand pit and a range of ride-on toys were provided to facilitate outdoor play opportunities for the children attending the service.

### 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 premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and for the duration of the inspection. A doorbell was in place to allow parents or visitors notify staff members of their arrival to the service. The outdoor play area was fully enclosed by the service walls and boundary fencing.
- The attendance records were maintained on an electronic tablet device, and these were an accurate reflection of the children present. This facilitated children to be accurately accounted for in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- The water temperature in the sanitary accommodation in the service did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children in attendance. The inspector was informed that the warm water supply was thermostatically controlled.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children during the inspection.
- The steps leading up to the side of the stage in the community hall were inaccessible, enclosed behind a secured door, thereby reducing the risk of children gaining access to the stage and falling from a height.

##### Infection Control:

- There was running warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels provided for hand hygiene at the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation of the service. The children in the service were encouraged by staff to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and nappy changing, and after outdoor and messy play.
- A refrigerator was available in the kitchen and used to store lunch boxes provided by the parents for the children's snacks. This reduced the risk of bacteria growth in perishable food items.
- Documented up to date cleaning records were maintained in electronic format on the premises.
- The outdoor sand pit was fitted with a secure lid to prevent contamination by animals and birds.

### Administration of Medication:

- The computer application provided in the electronic tablet device facilitated staff members to compile a record of the details of any medication administered in the service, should the need arise, and to share this with parents or guardians.
- No children required medication to be administered on the day of inspection.

### 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 who held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service. This was evidenced in the FAR training records maintained for the registered provider and for the two job-sharing managers.

(2)(a)(b) The first aid box available in the service was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous location on the premises and this was available for the children in attendance, in the event of an emergency.

### 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 record was maintained of fire drills which had been completed in the service. Based on the records maintained and as reported by staff members, fire drills were carried out monthly.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) There was no up-to-date official maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises.

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

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been carried out:

##### Corrective Action

The registered provider contacted the person in charge of the Community Council to inform that the maintenance records for the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms were out of date. The person in charge of the Community Council scheduled to have the maintenance checks carried out and this has now been completed.

##### Preventive Action

The person in charge of the Community Council has asked the fire safety company to schedule annual checks for this premises in the company calendar.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

- Maintenance records for the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises, with both documents dated 03/11/2023.

#### Summary Comment

The corrective action implemented by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 26(1)(b).