

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D: TU2015FL122

Name of Service Little Scholars Montessori

Address of Service: Quickpenny Road, Lusk, Co. Dublin K45 DY75

Email Address: littlescholarsmontessori@mail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Fiona Gregan

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed change: To change to a full day care service
Increase numbers of staff from 3 to 4.

Proposed Number of Children: 19 (Max 15 Full Day/Part Time)

Recommended Change Following Inspection: All changes to be approved fully, the space available will permit a maximum number of 19 children attending the service on a sessional basis or 15 children attending on a part-time or full day care basis as per the findings of Regulation 30.

Registered change: Change in Service Type from Sessional to Full Day Care for 19 Children (Max 15 FDC/Part Time)

Date of Inspection:	0	5	1	2	2	0	2	3
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Inspection undertaken by: S. Taaffe

Title: Early years inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6

Rationale for Inspection: Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day Care Service for 19 Children (Max 15 FDC/Part Time)
Date of Registration	18 th December 2023

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Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Little Scholars Montessori is located on the outskirts of Lusk village in north Co Dublin. A sessional early years service has been in operation in this setting since the 1990s with the registered provider taking over ownership and operation of the service in August 2023. The service is currently registered to operate from 9.00am to 12.00midday. The registered provider proposes to provide a full day care service from 8.00am to 3.00pm throughout the year including school holidays, subject to demand.
Premises	The service is located in a single story premises adjoining a number of houses, all of which face inwards to a central courtyard in the village of Lusk, with one pre-school room, sanitary facilities, kitchen and store room provided. An outdoor play area is located to the side of the premises.
Staffing	Three staff members currently work directly with the children in the service on a daily basis. One of these three staff members is employed as the service manager whilst one staff member is employed to reduce the adult to child ratio and work directly with a child with additional needs in a post which is funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme. The registered provider and a second staff member would be present in the service each afternoon if the application to change from a sessional service to a full day care service is approved.
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>
Acknowledgements	The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider who was present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

Requirement met:

(1)(a) The requirement has been met.

A core staff member is the designated person in charge and the registered provider is available to deputise as required.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—

(b) (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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider is aware of the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in Part 1 of Schedule 6 and ensures that an adequate number of adults are present and working directly with the pre-school children at all times in the service. Three staff members are present and working directly with the children in the sessional service currently.

Subject to approval for the service to accommodate children on a full day care basis, the registered provider and a staff member would be present each afternoon which would adequately meet the staffing requirement based on the number of children currently seeking to attend on a full day care basis.

(8)(a) The registered provider is aware of the requirement to have at least 2 adults on the premises at all times when the service is in operation.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

- (1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises

Requirement met:

- (1)(a) The pre-school room is laid out in defined interest areas including a well-resourced home corner and library to facilitate play and learning opportunities for the children in attendance. A suitable range of play materials, specialist Montessori materials and books are provided and stored in open-fronted low-level shelving units which are accessible to the pre-school children. Further play materials, Montessori equipment and books are available in the store room and rotated into use in the pre-school room on a scheduled regular basis.
- A range of suitable equipment including a climbing frame with standing platform and slide attached, a wooden-framed covered sandpit, a tray-top activity table, wall-mounted guttering, balance beams, balls, skittles and child-sized tables and chairs are provided to support activity and play experiences in the outdoor play area.
- (b) A rest area is available in the pre-school room with a child-sized couch and soft matting provided to enable a child to rest and take a break from activities during the day if required. Two sleep mats are provided in the service which would be set up in the pre-school room in the event that a child may need or wish to sleep during their attendance in the service.
- (3)(a) The fully enclosed outdoor play area is located to the side of the premises and is suitable and safe. The front paved section is uncovered whilst a spacious area to the back has an artificial grass surface and is covered with transparent rigid plastic corrugated sheeting which provides shelter from sun and rain and which facilitates outdoor play in all weathers.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.
Parents provide the children’s snacks from home which are served during the session. The children’s water beakers are available for the children to take from low level shelving throughout the session, should they feel thirsty at any stage.

The registered provider proposes to provide children with breakfast on site and source dinners from a specialist catering company, subject to approval for the service to operate as a full day care service. The registered provider has engaged with the catering company and has been provided with a 4-week dinner menu with a selected range of dinners provided in bulk and stored frozen on the premises, in advance of use.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.
The inspector did not identify any hazards that would impact the health, safety or welfare of the children attending the service. It appears that appropriate measures have been undertaken in the service to ensure the safety of the children. These measures include the provision of thermostatically controlled warm water in the sanitary accommodation, the premises and outdoor play area being appropriately secured, the kitchenette made inaccessible to children and cleaning agents being stored safely out of the reach of children. Fencing is in place which provides a secure walkway along one side of the perimeter of the courtyard to the main door into the service, thereby reducing the risk of children or adults walking across the pathway of moving cars in the outer courtyard.

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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider and the service manager hold in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training, ensuring that a person with FAR training is immediately available at all times to children attending the service.

(2)(a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box is available on the premises which is stored conspicuously out of children’s reach in the kitchen.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) A record is available in the service showing that fire drills are carried out on a monthly basis, with the most recent fire drill recorded as having taken place on 29/11/2023.

(b) A record is maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The fire fighting equipment was last serviced in August 2023 and the smoke alarms on 03/08/2023.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire is displayed in the pre-school room in the service.

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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

An insurance certificate is available which shows that there is insurance cover in place for up to 20 pre-school children attending the service on a full day care basis from 06/11/2023 to 27/03/2024.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(a) The premises appears to be of sound and stable structure.

(b) The premises appears safe and secure.

(c) The premises is adequately lit by means of natural lighting supplemented by artificial lighting.

The premises is heated by means of oil-fired central heating in addition to passive heating from the large window in the pre-school room.

Ventilation in the pre-school room and sanitary accommodation is provided by means of openable windows and trickle vents.

(d) The premises is in a clean condition and in a good state of repair.

(e) Suitable and adequate sanitary accommodation are provided, with 2 separate toilets and 2 wash hand basins provided for children's use in the sanitary facilities adjoining the pre-school room. In addition, a separate toilet and wash hand basin are provided for staff members. The policy of the service is that all children must be toilet trained prior to commencement. However, in the event that a child with additional needs would require nappy changing, this would be facilitated if required, with a suitable mat available for this purpose.

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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

Requirement met:

- (2) The registered provider is aware of the minimum clear floor space requirements as specified in Schedule 7.
- The clear floor space in the pre-school room measured 35.2 square metres which meets the space requirement for a maximum number of 19 pre-school children attending the service on a sessional basis or 15 pre-school children aged 2 – 6 years attending on a part-time or full day care basis.