

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL132		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Kid-e-Winks Montessori		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	147 Glasmore Park, Swords, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	K67 HK53		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Patricia Young		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	16/05/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Cully		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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		

### Description of service

Kid-e-Winks Montessori is a privately owned sessional service located in an urban setting in North County Dublin. The sessional service is operated from 2 care rooms within the registered providers private residence. Kid-e-Winks Montessori is open Monday to Friday from 8.45am – 11.45am and 12.00pm – 3.00pm for 38 weeks of the year as it participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The services curriculum ethos is blend of the Montessori approach and emergent and inquiry-based teaching and learning. The service also has a well-developed outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

On the day of the inspection there were 3 adults working with the children, including the registered provider.

### 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, premises and facilities. 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 registered provider, 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person appointed to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection and was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

On the day of inspection a total of 3 staff files, including the registered providers file, were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) There were 2 written and validated references available for the 2 staff members and the registered provider whose files were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 3 adults whose files were reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was not required the 3 adults according to the documentary evidence available on review of staff files including curriculum vitae.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that 2 staff members and the registered provider who worked directly with the children in the preschool service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) There was an adequate number of staff working with the children on the day of the inspection.

(3) The adult to child ratio was correct when the inspector arrived for an unannounced inspection and was appropriately maintained in the service throughout the inspection.

There were 3 adults caring for 19 children aged 3 years 8 months to 4 years 4 months. A staff member was employed to reduce the adult to child ratio to support children with additional needs, when necessary, as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.

### 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 observations are examples on how each child's learning, development and well-being was observed being facilitated during the inspection:

#### Basic needs:

- There was a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the service. The registered provider and early years practitioners demonstrated consideration and care of children's well-being by introducing the children to the inspector and explaining to them the purpose of the visit in a child-friendly way.
- On the inspector's arrival to the care room the children were engaged in a relaxed and social snack time. They were chatting together and with the early years practitioners about activities that were planned for the day and upcoming events. The children's snacks from home consisted of foods be in-line with the services Healthy Eating policy. The service participates in a national programme to promote and maintain healthy lifestyle practices.
- The service provided practices that supported children to feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Parents were welcomed to remain in the service to settle children who found the transition from home to preschool difficult. Children's photographs, photographs of family and the local community were displayed throughout the care room offering a sense of identity and belonging.
- The early years practitioners were responsive in attending to children's personal care needs, assisting them to add or remove layers of clothing while playing outdoors, applying sunscreen and discreetly supervising children while toileting.
- The early year practitioners supported the children's development of social skills by guiding them in times of minor conflict to listen to each other and to think of solutions together. Appropriate language and tone of voice was used by the adults during these interactions.
- There was a sofa (indoor and outdoor), cushions and floor mats available for children who wished to rest or relax during the session.

- The children spent time outdoors where they had access to a range of learning experiences and space to move, climb and run. The children were provided with outdoor overalls and boots so they could freely engage in messy play.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- The registered provider and the early years practitioners were observed to provide the children with sensitive and nurturing interactions throughout the inspection. They were knowledgeable about children's interests and needs and planned the daily routine in ways that would support children's meaningful engagement in the preschool experience. The children were spoken about positively and respectfully and their efforts were acknowledged with encouraging feedback.
- The children appeared to feel safe, comfortable, and familiar with the practitioners and within the environment. This was evident as children called the adults by name, invited them to play, approached them with ease and enjoyed being around them. The children navigated their learning environments freely in the knowledge that their choices and interests would be supported.
- The service encourages partnership with parents. Monthly newsletters are sent by email to update families on current and upcoming events. Mobile messaging is used to share photographs or news about daily activities. The service also uses social media pages to keep families updated on current topics or events happening in the service.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

### Compliance Information

The service was equipped with adequate and suitable furniture and play equipment and materials to meet the needs of the children as evidenced in the following examples:

- The care rooms were laid out in defined interest areas and were well-resourced with a variety of equipment and play materials. The interest areas in the smaller care room included a well-resourced home corner with natural and real-life materials, Montessori practical life materials, space and materials

for reading and relaxing including a sofa, books, cushions and floor mats. In the bigger care room the themed areas to support learning and development included a writing station, literacy and numeracy, science, fine motor skill, construction and emotional literacy.

- Equipment and resources were available indoors to support children’s regulation including balance cushions, weights, wooden massage tools, peanut ball and kinetic sand.
- The visual resources on display in the room supported children’s meaningful participation in their daily routine. These included a visual routine, line leader board, ‘today’s helping hand’ board and emotions board.
- The play materials and equipment were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving which nurtured independence, facilitated choice, encouraged curiosity, child-led play and free movement.
- A variety of multi-sensory experiences were provided indoors and outdoors including access to sand, water, dried food, wooden materials, shells and other natural material such as plants, flowers and bark.
- The outdoor play area provided opportunity for outdoor learning and play. The paved area was part sheltered. Here there was a wooden ‘shop’ which was well-resourced with cash registers, phones, shopping baskets, toy food and money. There was an outdoor kitchen where children took water from the outdoor tank to the kitchen sinks to wash utensils and dolls. The kitchen was well-resourced with real world materials such as teapots, pots and pans, kitchen utensils, kettles and microwave. On the decking area of the garden, children had access to dolls, doll cribs, blankets, doll clothes and also a box of role play costumes and props. The lower end of the garden was covered with a soft bar surface. Here the children had access to a large sand pit, wooden climbing frame, wooden bridge, mud kitchen, tree stumps, writing wall and a number wall. There was also ‘Kid-e-Winks Kabin’ which was open for children to access where they could rest on a sofa or take extra equipment such as scooters and bikes. Throughout the garden there were large flowerpots with colourful plants and flowers in which the children showed great interest in.

### 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:

- External doors of the preschool service were appropriately secured to prevent an unauthorised person from gaining access to the children and prevent children from exiting the premises unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.
- The premises, play materials and equipment provided in the care room and outdoor area were observed to be in a state of good repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children during the inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.

##### Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled running warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were provided at the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation of the service to support effective handwashing.
- Children's snacks, which were provided by parents, were stored appropriately in the fridge.
- The equipment, play materials and facilities were in a clean and hygienic condition.

##### Administration of Medication:

- No children attending the morning session required a medical care plan. No medication was observed being administered on the day.

##### Fire Safety:

- The fire exits were clearly signposted and were unobstructed.

### 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.*

#### 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 1 staff member.

### 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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
  - (b) an employee, and
  - (c) an authorised person.
- (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) Records were available in the service to demonstrate that regular fire drills take place. The most recent fire drill was recorded to have been carried out 21/03/24.
- (b) There was a record available that detailed the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system was last checked and serviced by a registered professional on 06/06/23.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were on display in the care rooms and corridors of the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available to demonstrate the preschool service was adequately insured. The service is currently insured to accommodate 22 sessional preschool children, with an expiry date 27/11/2024.