

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015GY138		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Flower Montessori		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	92 Ashleigh Grove, Knocknacarra, Galway.		
<b>Eircode:</b>	H91 EF44		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Louise Hayden		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/04/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	16	PM N\A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulations Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Co. Galway.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Friel		
<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		
<b>TÚSLA</b> An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency	<b>Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</b> <b>QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2015GY138</b>		<b>1 of 10</b>

### Description of service

Little Flowers Montessori is a private sessional service, which has been in operation since 1991. While registered to accommodate children aged from 2 – 6 years the service currently caters for children aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years of age. The service operates from 09:00 to 12:30 and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is accommodated within these hours. The service is open from Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. It operates from a room at the rear of a private dwelling which is located in a residential housing estate in Knocknacarra, Galway city. It comprises of one playroom, adult and children’s sanitary accommodation and a kitchen. A secure outdoor play area is situated to the rear of the building.

### Staffing

There are four adults available to work in the service; two of whom were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider and relief person were not on the premises.

### 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 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 designated 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*

*(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 that there was a designated person in charge. A named person was also available, as required.
  - (b) The staff roster indicated that both the designated person in charge and named person were on the premises while the pre-school children were present.
- (2) Recruitment files of all four adults were reviewed:
- (a) Seven of the eight required validated references were from past employers.
  - (b) The remaining one of eight validated references was from a source other than a past employer.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the four adults which demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) Overseas police vetting was available for one adult, for whom it was required, who had lived outside the state as an adult for more than six consecutive months.
- (4) Staff files viewed on the day indicated that the four adults had obtained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, ranging from Levels 5 to Level 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the morning session.
- (3) The adult to child ratios were met. There were 2 adults working directly with 16 children in the morning session.

### 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:

- Children were observed bringing in their own healthy snacks in line with the service's healthy eating policy. Examples of which included a variety of bite sized pieces of fruit, filled sandwiches, cheese and wraps.
- Crockery and cutlery were available at the snack table.
- Water was available from individual water bottles with each child's name visible.
- A rest/quiet area was available, and children were observed throughout the morning reading while sitting on a two-seater sofa. A variety of books were accessible from a nearby basket.
- The sanitary area was located off the care room and children were noted to access the area independently, adults were nearby to provide reminders to wash and dry their hands after toileting.

- The adults in the care room were observed to be sensitive and responsive to the children’s needs. A staff member was observed listening to a child explain that their clothing was wet from spilling a drink at the snack table. They assisted the child to change their clothing in the sanitary area away from the main group of children, respecting the child’s need for privacy. In conversation, the staff member explained that each child had a spare set of clothes in their bag in case of such an event.

### Supporting children’s relationships:

- During meals and tabletop activities staff sitting with children were observed listening and engaging in social conversation which helped to promote a relaxed and happy atmosphere. Staff were heard using a range of strategies including modelling and demonstrating, explaining, open questioning and engaging the children in shared thinking and problem solving.
- Staff stated a range of communications methods were in use to communicate with parents/guardians. These include chatting to the parents/guardians at drop off and collection- as observed on the day by the inspector, and individual messaging applications.
- Meetings with the manager were stated as taking place daily and weekly. Minutes were recorded of topics discussed at the monthly meetings. Examples included recent first aid responder training, planning of activities and new children starting in the service.
- Children were supported to engage positively with one another when turn taking and sharing. Examples included a staff member intervening and role modelling to the children to ensure that all children were included in the game that was in progress.

### Physical and material environment:

The care room was laid out in clearly defined areas. A range of play based materials and Montessori equipment offered exploration and stimulated the imagination, which enhanced the learning needs of children across all developmental areas.

- Equipment and toys were laid out on low-level shelving which encouraged choice and promoted independence, which the children were observed exercising throughout the morning.
- The inspector observed seamless outdoor play with children able to move between the care room and the fully enclosed outdoor play area. A range of developmentally appropriate equipment which provided opportunities for the children to practice their gross motors of climbing, sliding and cycling.

### Programme of activities:

- Children’s language development was supported through one to one and group discussion, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection. Examples included staff heard engaging the children in the game of- What’s the time, Mr. Wolf.
- Activities were adult and child led. Children had the opportunity to express their views, take the lead and exercise their choice in relation to engagement in activities and in accessing play equipment. Examples included children choosing books to read, nursery rhymes to play along with, musical instruments and the choice of staying indoors or going outdoors to play.

### 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 main entrance door was secured on arrival ensuring unauthorised adults could not enter the service.
- Three blind cords on the windows were secured out of reach of the children.
- The lower glass panel on the main entrance door was decorated with an easter bunny mural to prevent children accidentally banging into it.
- The five window handles were inaccessible to the children, reducing the risk of accidents occurring.
- The cable from the radio was stored out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor play area perimeter was secured with high wooden fencing and a concrete block wall. There was a high wooden gate with a sliding bolt placed high up on the inside of the gate ensuring children could not leave the area unsupervised or that unauthorised adults could not gain entry.
- The ground surface under the slide and climbing stairs was covered in safety matting helping to minimise injuries and the impact of falls. A staff member supervised the slide ensuring the children’s safety.
- Supporting wooden beams under the wooden house were encased in foam preventing children from banging into them.
- Cleaning agents were located on high shelving in the care room, out of reach of the children.

#### Infection Control:

- Children were observed hanging their jackets on hooks and placing their bags on shelving, off the floor area.
- Tissues were available on an accessible shelf to facilitate children blowing their noses.
- The adults were observed sweeping the floors after snack and sanitising the tables before and after snack ensuring the area was kept clean and hygienic.
- Cleaning records located on the wall of the service were observed to be completed and up to date.
- Hand basins in use in the care room and sanitary areas, by the adults and children, were fitted with thermostatically controlled hot water, between 31.8°C and 33.4°C, dispensing foam soap and dispensing paper towels. Pedal operated bins were available for the disposal of paper waste.
- Handwashing was observed before and after snack, toileting and outdoor play.

### Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day.
- Temperature reducing medication was available on a high shelf in the kitchen.

### Safe Sleep:

- No children were observed sleeping in the service on the morning of inspection.

### Fire Safety:

- Fire extinguishers were observed to be anchored with brackets on the wall of the care room.
- Fire assembly point was visible on the wall of the outdoor play area.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The record keeping journal evidenced that each of the 16 children attending the service on the morning of inspection had been signed in after 09:00. Children attending the service the previous day had been signed in and out between the service's sessional hours of 09:00 to 12:30.

### 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) There were two adults on the premises who had completed first aid responder training. The staff roster indicated that both adults were available while the pre-school children were on the premises.

(2)

(a) (b) The well stocked first aid supplies were observed to be easily accessible to the adults, from a cabinet on the wall of the care room, while the pre-school children were on the premises.

### 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

*(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*

*(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) Written records of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service were furnished to the inspector. The last

date recorded was noted as 18 March 2025. Previous monthly drills were recorded as 12 February and 16 January 2025.

(b) Written records were available of the servicing of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms. The firefighting certificate was dated November 2024, and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 11 March 2025.

(2)

(c) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were available on the premises for review by the inspector.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the care room on the wall.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service was insured. Written records were furnished to the inspector which included the following details;

- The name, address and contact details of the insurance company
- The name and address of the service
- The number of children for whom the service is insured: 22
- The type of service: Montessori Sessional

Expiry date: 27 November 2025.