

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE201
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Name of Service:	An Scoil Bheag Montessori
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Address of Service:	Cluain Phadraig, Dublin Road, Clane, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W91 T327
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mari Glynn
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	12/12/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91X38W.
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	n/a
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Description of service

An Scoil Bheag Montessori was established in 2000 as a privately run childcare service for pre-school children aged 2 years to 6 years by Mari Glynn Registered Provider.

The service provides sessional childcare and education to preschool children from 08.45 -11.45am and 12.30 - 15.30hrs, Monday to Friday. It can accommodate fourteen children per session.

The service is located in the registered providers home in Clane. There is set down and parking available. The service consists of an open plan room. A secured outdoor play area is available at the rear and side of the service.

Parking and set down facilities are available.

Staffing

An Scoil Bheag Montessori employs four childcare staff excluding the Registered Provider.

The Registered Provider does not work directly with the preschool children and was not present on the day of the inspection. The adults working in the service have completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The named person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- Five staff records were reviewed.
- (2)
- (a) Two written and verified past employer references were available in respect of two adults and one written and verified past employer reference was available in respect of two adults whose records were reviewed.
- (b) Two written and verified reference from a reputable source other than a past employer were available in respect of one adult and one written and verified reference from a reputable source other than a past employer was available in respect of two adults whose records were reviewed
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults whose records were reviewed.
- (d) International police vetting was available for one adult who had resided outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) Four adults employed and working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher 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) There were ten children attending the service being supervised directly by four adults.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the morning.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

- (1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*
- (a) the name and date of birth of the child.*
 - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service.*
 - (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service.*
 - (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service.*
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child.*
 - (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention.*
 - (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner.*
 - (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child.*
 - (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

Seven records were assessed.

- (1)
 - (a) The name and date of birth was recorded on the records assessed.
 - (b) All records assessed had the date on which the child first attended.
 - (c) Not applicable, as none of the children had left the service.
 - (d) The name and address of a parent / guardian and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service was completed on all records assessed.
 - (e) Authorisation for the collection of the child was completed on all records assessed.

(f) Individualised care plans were available for children and based on information provided from parents in relation to their health and developmental needs.

(g) All records assessed had the contact details for the child's registered medical practitioner.

(i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency was available on the records assessed.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(h) Three of the seven records assessed did not have a record of immunisations.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(h) The three records are now on file. Going forward before children start to attend the pre-school their parents will be asked for this information when filling out the Child Record Form. When the forms are being checked before the pre-school starts, parents will be contacted if the information is missing and requested to provide it.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(h) Photograph of three records.

Summary Comment

The written response and photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 15.

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.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy in place.

The children were observed to have healthy snacks including sandwiches, crackers, cheese, fruit and yogurts. The children's drinks were accessible to them throughout the morning.

The service operated a rolling snack approach where the children ate their snack when they were ready rather than at a designated time. A staff member sat with the children and encouraged social interaction and conversation. The children were provided with plenty of time to enjoy their food.

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 entrance door to the service was secured and controlled by staff members to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access. The toys and equipment observed were in good condition and working order. Cleaning agents and equipment was stored out of reach of the children. The staff were familiar with the foods that were a potential choking hazard such as grapes and popcorn. It was observed that grapes, when served to the children for snack, were cut in half to mitigate the risk of a child potentially choking.

The staff completed indoor and outdoor environmental risk assessments daily and there was a system in place to manage maintenance issues when they arose.

Infection Control:

There was an infection control policy in place. Thermostatically controlled hot water and liquid hand soap were readily available for hygienic hand washing. The staff members supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues. Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environment which was observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Nappy changing facilities were available for any child who was not, yet toilet trained.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The staff members were familiar with required safe practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored. Written care plans were in place for children requiring medicine to be administered in an emergency.

Safe Sleep:

A comfortable rest area beside the reading area in the care room was available to any child who wished to take a break from activities or rest.

Fire Safety:

The staff members were familiar with the fire evacuation procedures from the service. Fire exits were not obstructed.

Outing:

The service conducts outings and operational procedures in place

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Rolls of paper towels were not placed in paper towel dispensers for the hygienic dispensing of paper towel in the sanitary area and the care room.

Fire Safety:

2. Fire drills were not carried out in the service on a monthly basis. The last fire drill completed for the morning service was 8 June 2023 and 9 June 2023 for the afternoon service. This creates a potential safety risk for the children attending the service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Corrective action was taken, and paper towel dispensers were purchased along with correct paper towels. These were then placed in the classroom and bathroom close to the sinks. Staff were instructed how to replace the paper. The children were shown how to take out the towels, dry their hands and place in the bins provided.

Fire Safety:

2. After the inspection a fire drill was undertaken with both the morning and afternoon classes. They were introduced to the universal sound of the fire warning and shown what happens next. Fire drills will now be undertaken in the first week of every month with the designated person in charge having responsibility to organise and document. The monthly fire drills are to be written in the pre-school diary in advance to ensure that they are carried out every month.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographs x 2 of paper towel dispensers

Fire Safety:

Fire drill record.

Summary Comment

The written response, documentary and photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 23.

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.
- (2) Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) no person other than-
 - (i) pre-school child attending the service,
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,
 - (iii) an employee, or
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a), (b) The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.
- (4) The registered provider confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

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) Persons were trained in in First Aid Response (FAR) for children and were immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2)
- (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the care room.
 - (b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available to the children attending the service.

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.
- (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)(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment were last serviced in Jan 2023 and the smoke alarm was serviced in December 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the care room.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(a) A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service; however, it was not up to date. The last recorded fire drills took place on 8 and 9 June 2023 for the morning and afternoon sessions respectively.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a) After the inspection, a fire drill was undertaken with both the morning and afternoon classes. Fire drills will now be undertaken in the first week of every month with the designated person in charge having responsibility to organise and document.

Supporting documentation submitted

Fire drill record

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 26.