

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK160
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Name of Service:	St. Paul's Montessori School
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Address of Service:	St. Paul's National School, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 R20T
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Tuohy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	18/04/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, 2nd Floor, Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

This privately operated sessional service was first established in 1999.

The service caters for children aged 2 – 6 years for 3 hours a day (08:45 – 11:45 hours), Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year, under the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) for eligible children.

The service is operated from designated rooms in the community centre on the grounds of St Paul’s National School, Dooradoyle, Co Limerick

The service comprises of a large and small playroom, sanitary facilities for the children and adults and outdoor play areas to the rear of the school premises.

Staffing

The registered provider and 2 staff members are working directly with the children each day. The staff all hold an award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11, 15, 19 ,23 and 25.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations in this report.

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,*

(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 present on the day of the inspection. There was a person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present, and the staff roster indicated that a person in charge was always available at the service.

(2) The three staff files were viewed on the day and the following were in place.

(a) Two written and validated references were available for all staff employed at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from reputable sources available.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff members employed at the service.

(d) Police vetting was not required as none of the staff had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction.

(3) All of the above documentation was furnished to the registered provider prior to each staff taking up employment at the facility.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) On the day of the inspection there were 18 pre-school children present with 3 staff members during the morning. The adult/child ratio was above the required ratios at all times throughout the morning.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that at all times the number of adults present in the service was in excess of the requirements of the regulations.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and
- (c) an authorised person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- A sample of eleven enrolment forms were viewed and these records adequately detailed the particulars required in section (a)-(i).
- (3) Childrens records were open to inspection on the premises by-
- (a) A parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of their child.
 - (b) An employee.
 - (c) An authorised person.
- (4) Staff were aware that records in writing must be retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

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:

Healthy eating was promoted in the service. Parents provided the children with healthy snacks for break times. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator if needed.

The sanitary accommodation was located next to the playroom and the children had unrestricted access to the toilets and don't have to wait to use the toilets. Change of clothing, outdoor coats and appropriate outdoor footwear was available for all children at the service.

The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence such as washing hands after outdoor play and before snacks, putting on their own outdoor coats with help if required.

Children had regular change of environment and had access to long periods exploring the outdoor environment, the sensory garden and going for long walks around the school, church and local area. This provided the children with opportunities and activities that were exclusive to outdoors.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

The service supported children to form and sustain positive relationships with their adult carers with the same staff present with the children each day. All staff throughout each room were observed being actively involved in children's play, where appropriate initiating games and joining in helping when invited by the children. Lots of social conversations between staff and children was evident in all areas of the service.

Parents were given time at drop off and at collection time to chat with staff about their child's day. Staff and parents shared knowledge and observations of the children's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life and any other relevant information. Personal journals that captured much of the children's learning were created and these were regularly sent home with the children.

Staff regularly held meetings and planned together the themes for learning at the service.

Staff regularly attended local and national events and workshops, talk, seminars and training events on Early Years Education and Care.

Physical and Material Environment:

The physical and the material environment of the two playrooms was carefully developed full of activities which were aimed at developing social, emotional, cognitive, physical and interaction skills. The environment was flexible and responsive to the emerging changing needs, preferences, and interests of the children.

A wide range of play-based activities and experiences both indoors and outdoors were available in all areas.

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 service was secured by a door and gated access. The outdoor area was secured by a high-level fence and gate.
- The building, materials and equipment within were maintained in good condition.

Infection Control:

- The care room and sanitary facilities were maintained in clean condition.
- Warm water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lined, lidded and sealed bins were available in the care room and two sanitary facilities.
- The staff and children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after play activities and using the toilet and prior to mealtime.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not administered during the inspection.

Fire Safety:

- A fire action notice was placed at the entrance to the service.
- All emergency exits and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- Completed fire drill records were available in the service.

Outing:

- No outing took place on the day but the staff and children have regularly gone on walks around their local church and residential area.
- The registered provider demonstrated a good knowledge of the outings policy.

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 staff on duty who had up to date first aid response training.

(2)(a) There was a first aid box located in the main playroom of the service.

(b) The first aid box was readily available and accessible to all staff if required. A staff member was assigned responsibility to regularly check the contents in each first aid box. All items were removed when expired and the box was regularly restocked.