

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK169
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Name of Service:	Sunnyside Montessori
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Address of Service:	Sunnyside House, Mill Road, Corbally, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 ER84
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Name of Registered Provider:	Desiree Jordan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	29/02/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Offices, 2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan
Title:	EYI

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

Sunnyside Montessori Pre-School is a privately operated preschool operating in an urban area on the outskirts of Limerick city. The service is registered to cater for a maximum of 22 children at any one time. The service provides a morning sessional service and is open Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 12.00pm. On the day of the inspection there were 20 pre-school children present for the morning session.

The service operates from a well-designed and equipped playroom adjacent to the providers' home. Sanitary facilities are located next to the playroom. A well-resourced, outdoor play area is located to the side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider is the owner and the manager of the service. There are 2 additional staff employed at the service.

All staff have achieved 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/ 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 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*

(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 was the designated person in charge available on the day of the inspection and there was a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a) There were written references, from past employers, available in respect of all staff working at the service, with recorded validations where required.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, references from alternative sources were provided.

(c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available in respect of all staff members.

(d) Not applicable to this service as none of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(4) All adults working in the service held the required qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education. Staff participated in on going professional development training on a regular basis.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The service operates a morning session from 9.00am to 12.00md. On the day of the inspection there were 20 children present with 3 staff. The adult child ratio was above the requirements of Regulation 11.

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

(1) A sample of 11 children's registration forms were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of these children.

- (a) The name and date of birth of the child.
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) provision to record 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 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 received by the child.
- (i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service:
- (a) The name, position, qualifications, and experience of the persons in charge.
 - (b) Details of the type of service in operation and the age profile of children for which the facility is registered to provide services.

- (c) Details of the adult: child ratios in the service.
- (d) The type of care or programme provided in the service.
- (e) The facilities available.
- (f) The opening hours and fees.
- (g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10 and were found to be comprehensive and detailed. Parents were emailed a copy of the policies following enrolment of their child in the school.
- (h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child daily.
- (i) Rosters were maintained daily and available for inspection. These correlated with the numbers that were present on the day of inspection.
- (j) The service had a medication administration record template available that could be used in the event of a child requiring medication to be administered at the service.
- (k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending 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:

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service and nutritious snacks of cheese, sandwiches, fruit, crackers, and yogurts were observed in the children's lunch boxes at break time. Perishable foods were stored in a fridge until required. Children had access to their drinks both inside and outside at the service and staff reminded children to drink water throughout the morning.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets located next to the classroom. Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were accessible for handwashing. All waste towels were safely disposed of in lidded bins.

A change of clothes was available for children if needed. Protective clothing was used during messy play activities. Outdoor clothing and wellingtons were available for all children.

The library area had comfortable soft mats and cushions available creating a quiet space for children to relax away from more active general play areas.

Children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment both indoors and outdoors. A sheltered covered area was available outdoors in the walk-in sand pit. This provided a space for children to play in during wet weather.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The preschool room was well designed with clearly defined interest areas developed. Low level tables and chairs were available for tabletop activities and for dining at break time. Tables and chairs were positioned to accommodate different size groupings, with seating for 2 at a table to seating arrangements accommodating bigger groups sitting together. A literacy corner with a range of reading material, soft rubber floor mats and cushions provided a relaxation/rest space. Art and craft facilities were available with much of the children's painting works displayed around the room. Flags representing different countries were hanging from the ceiling. Blocks, bricks, pegs, puzzles, and a wide range of Montessori equipment were as all displayed on easily accessible open shelving. Toys were arranged in clearly labelled trays making choice and selection easy for all children. The outdoors environment provided an extension of the well-planned indoor space. A large covered, walk-in sand pit with diggers, buckets and shovels provided a sheltered space for outdoor play. Seating outdoors in favourable weather provided the children with opportunities to have lunch outside and bring much of the indoor play materials outside. A raised bed had lots of spring flowers beginning to bloom. Bubble cars, bikes, trikes, and scooters were available. Low level slides provided space for climbing. The outdoor area was covered with an all-weather, soft rubber matting to ensure the safety of the children while playing outside.

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:

All doors internally and externally were secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas. There were 2 exit doors from the outside playground which were secured to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access. A buzzer system was in operation to control the opening of the gate to the roadway.

All toys and play equipment were safe and in good condition for the age group using them. Furnishings were sturdy and safe. There were no broken toys observed on the premises. Shock absorbing surfaces covered the entire outside area. The large sand pit outdoors was covered and a gate at the entrance to the pit prevented any access to this area. All ride on toys were of suitable size for the children in attendance.

Children were supervised whether indoors or outside by sight primarily and by sound for short periods while children use the bathroom facilities.

Infection Control:

There was evidence of the policy on infection control being implemented. Hand washing procedures were observed, and the correct technique was practised. The guidelines for handwashing were displayed.

There was a high standard of cleanliness and operational hygiene noted in the service. Cleaning schedules were in place and tasks were signed off once completed.

Procedures for exclusion of children from the service due to illness were in place and were communicated in writing to all parents. Procedures for reporting notifiable infectious diseases were in place.