

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH117		
Name of Service:	Little Robyn'z Montessori		
Address of Service:	7 The Paddocks, Ratoath, Co. Meath		
Eircode:	A85 AP57		
Name of Registered Provider:	Linda O'Callaghan		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	22/11/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM 7
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	D .Murray		
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		

Description of service

Little Robyn'z Montessori Pre-School provides a sessional service to children from 2.5 to 6 years and operates a morning session from 09:00 to 12:00hrs and an afternoon session from 13:00 to 16:00 hrs weekdays. Children who are eligible can participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). The service is situated in a room in the registered providers own home with sanitary facilities. An outdoor space is located off the care room.

Staffing

The registered provider operates the service and has a named emergency person to call on if required.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,20,21,23,25,26 & 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within 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 wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider 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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Four validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 2 staff members.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdictions for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The 2 childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications 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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered providers ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (3) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. For the morning session there was 1 adult working directly with the 7 children ranging in age from 3 to 6 years. For the afternoon session there was 1 adult working directly with 7 children ranging in age from 2.5 to 4 years.
- (8)(c) The registered provider ensured that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge is, at all times available to the service to assist in the event of an emergency.

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 were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:
- The indoor and outdoor area had well developed areas of interest which provided the children with the opportunity to enjoy imaginary, creative and energetic play with their peers. On the day of inspection the children moved freely between the indoor and outdoor area.
 - The registered provider provided the morning snack which on the day of inspection was rolls and bananas with water to drink.
 - Children individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required. Childrens independence was encouraged with each child being allocated a task i.e., putting out the table mats, cups and plated, tidying up before snack time.

- The themes of the month was “Hibernation” with the children colouring hedgehogs and gluing pictures which reflected this theme.
- Transitions were handled smoothly with sufficient time given to complete one activity before starting the next.

Supporting relationships around children:

- During activities children were offered choices and sought out the staff member for praise, encouragement and reassurance. At snack time in the partially sheltered area outside the children were observing sitting around tables chatting and laughing with each other which created a positive atmosphere for the development of friendships. The children showed confidence around the staff members and appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (2) A registered provider-
- (b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016 shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)(b) Cosy area consisting of cushions were available in the care room should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest
- (2)(b) The outdoor space had a partially sheltered area which permitted outdoor play in all types of weather. There was also a step up to an open area. The surfaces consisted of tarmacadam and artificial grass.

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 care room was well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas. The play materials and equipment incorporated sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving which supported children to select and have choices regarding their play experiences.
- The outdoor space had well developed areas of interest which incorporated natural and creative materials e.g. mud kitchen, water tray and gutters for pouring, climbing frame, tree house with slide and climbing ladder, art and craft materials, building blocks, wooden puzzles, dolls house, animal box and a nature tray.

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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The side door to the service was secured and the outdoor space was enclosed by wooden fencing. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- All play materials were placed on stable based shelving units. Play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children present in the service.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed.

- The hand washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times. Warm running water was available in the children's sanitary area, along with a supply of liquid soap and hand paper towel for effective hand washing.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules available.

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) The registered provider had an up to date First Aid Responders course completed and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in 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 fire fighting 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)(a) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 11/10/2023.
- (b) A record was not maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The mains powered smoke alarm were serviced on the day of inspection 22/11/23.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) On the day of the inspection a record was not maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the fire fighting equipment, however this equipment was serviced the day after the inspection on the 23/11/23.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)(b) The fire fighting equipment was serviced on the 23/11/2023. The registered provider will ensure that the fire fighting equipment is serviced on an annual basis with the maintenance record available for inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

Servicing record of the fire fighting equipment.

Summary Comment

The registered providers in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan has addressed the non-compliance for regulation 26 (1)(b). The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 11 children at any one time attending the service on a part-time basis. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2023 to 27/03 /2024.