

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WD043
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Treasures Montessori and Daycare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	100 Bishop Fields, Williamstown, Waterford City, Co. Waterford
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<b>Eircode:</b>	X91 XY20
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Siobhan Mullane
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	06/10/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	28	PM	17
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Ms. M. Ryan.
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Little Treasures provides a full day care service in a residential area in the suburbs of Waterford city. The facility was purpose built in 2007 and is a detached two-story building. The age range of children catered for is from 6 months to 5 years of age. The opening hours are from 07:30hrs to 17:30hrs Monday to Friday. The service has three early years rooms and offers a programme for school age children.

### Staffing

Little Treasures is privately owned and managed by the present registered provider since 2014. The service currently employs eight childcare staff. The registered provider is supernumerary but can be part of the staff compliment 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 following regulations.

Regulation 9- Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11- Staffing levels.

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child.

Regulation 25 - First aid.

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures.

Regulation 28 – Insurance.

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, 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

*(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.*

*(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”*

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) On the day of inspection, the registered provider was the designated person in charge for the service. The service also has a named person who is able to deputise as required.
- (b) The registered provider was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) There was documentation that demonstrated the management structure for the service which identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service. The service was observed to be well managed, and this was reflected in the registered providers working knowledge and hands on approach to all aspects of the service.
- (2)
- (a) Written validated references from past employers were available in respect of the three members who had commenced working for the service since the last inspection on 9 September 2020. These were reviewed as part of the inspection process.
- (b) Not applicable as all written references for the three staff members were from past employers.
- (c) There was evidence that all the eight staff members employed to work with the children in the service had their Garda vetting disclosures updated over the last 18 months.
- (d) A Police vetting certificate was available as required for one staff member who had lived and worked outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than six months.
- (4)
- There was evidence that all staff employed in the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or equivalent on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (6A)
- The registered provider had recently received funding for the employment of one staff member to work under the Access and Inclusion Model Scheme AIMS.

## 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.*

*(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.*

### Compliance Information

(1)  
The staff roster indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children throughout the operational hours of the service.

(2)  
On the morning of day one of the inspection 6 October 2023 there were 28 early years children directly supervised by 9 staff members.  
Baby area: 3 children and 2 staff.  
Wobbler area: 7 children and 2 staff.  
Pre Montessori room: 7 children and 2 staff.  
Montessori room: 11 children and 3 staff.

On the afternoon of the day of the inspection there were 17 early years children directly supervised by 9 staff  
Baby area: 3 children and 1 staff.  
Wobbler area: 4 children and 2 staff.  
Pre Montessori and Montessori room children came together in one room with 16 children and 3 staff.

The staff: child ratios were maintained in all rooms throughout the duration of the inspection in line with requirement for the Childcare (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

### 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
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(a)(b) of Regulation 19 was assessed through direct observation, review of records and discussion with staff. The following was observed in relation to providing a programme of care and activities for the children attending the service.

There were three early years rooms on the premises. The baby/wobbler room was subdivided to care for children from 6 months to 24 months. The pre-Montessori room caring for children aged 2 to 3 years of age and the Montessori room caring for children aged 3 to 5 years of age.

It was documented in the statement of purpose and function that the service's curriculum was informed by the principals of the Montessori method of teaching. The service had recently self-selected to participate in the national Early Years Quality Development Initiative from January 2023 to June 2023. The registered provider informed the inspector that this process was helpful for the staff to reflect and refocus on the present curriculum.

In all three rooms the physical environment had been carefully planned and presented appropriate to the needs of the children in attendance. Staff in the pre-Montessori and Montessori rooms stated that the Early Years Quality Development Initiative had helped the service as a whole to focus on becoming increasingly child-led with the introduction of an emergent and enquiry-based approach to the curriculum.

During the morning in the pre-Montessori room children were supported individually with hand washing before the snack time. While waiting for the snack to be served a staff member was observed to handle a minor dispute by sitting on the low chair at the children's eye level and reminding all the children of the story that was read to

them the previous day titled “hands were not for hitting”. All the children around the table were happy to recall the story which was observed to diffuse the tension immediately.

After the snack the staff member gathered the children into a small circle for a group exercise. Initially the children were observed to be giddy, however. the staff member skilfully and gently engaged the children back into the group with the use of animal recognition cards. The children were observed enjoying and taking pride in choosing their favourite animal.

Preparation for lunch was observed in the Montessori room. In this room children were supported and encouraged to be independent with hand washing before the mid-day lunch. Children’s lunches were brought from home and organised onto plates provided by the service. Staff continually engaged in conversation with the children while setting the tables. All children waited before eating to recite a thank you action/poem for the food that they had to eat. This ritual was observed to help the children to relax and focus on the meal they were about to have.

After the lunch clean up there was free play, during this time staff were observed being supportive, patient, and in tune with the children’s emerging interests. Some children used the small world play items they had chosen from the shelving around the room. Others were interested in the home corner while a few children remained at the table and chatted with each other and the staff in a relaxed atmosphere.

During the afternoon in the wobbler room staff were observed to be constantly alert and responsive to the babies needs. The staff members engaged in conversation with the young children asking if they liked their food, and if they were tired. The inspector also observed that staff communicated with each other around children’s needs observing their cues for tiredness and were observed being put down to sleep when tired. A collective decision was made to give the babies who were awake an opportunity to go for a walk. Three strollers were organised for this event and children were suitably dressed for the damp weather.

Throughout the day of the inspection there was a homely atmosphere in the service as children were cared for in small groups by the same staff. This arrangement supported children and staff to get to know each other well and form secure relationships.

### 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)  
Six of the eight staff members employed to work in the service had current First Aid Responder Training for children. The registered provider stated that at least four staff trained in first aid were available at all times during the operational hours of the service.

(2)  
(a) Each kitchen had a suitably equipped wall mounted first aid box.  
(b) Both first aid boxes were accessible at all times.

## 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)
- (a) A record in writing of fire drills indicated that the last fire drill took place on the premises on the 2 October 2023.
  - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was maintained. It was recorded that fire equipment was last serviced on 19 April 2023 and smoke alarms were last serviced on 5 October 2023.
- (4)
- The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details of the measures to be taken in the event of a fire were displayed in the main hall.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available for inspection which indicated that there was adequate insurance cover for the numbers of children attending the service.