

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW191			
Name of Service:	Westfield Montessori School			
Address of Service:	Westfield House, Sidmonton Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow			
Eircode:	A98 H923			
Name of Registered Provider:	Deirdre Costello			
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	05/12/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	7
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow			
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke			
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 private pre-school service was first established in 2003. The service operates from an adapted premises located on the grounds of the registered providers home in a residential area of Bray Co. Wicklow. The service comprises of one large pre-school room, a sanitary area, and a large outdoor area which the children have access to daily. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age. The registered provider operates a part-time and sessional ECCE service for 38 weeks of the year Monday to Friday 9.00am to 1.00pm. Learning is facilitated following a Montessori curriculum and is integrated with a play-based child led curriculum.

Staffing

There are two staff members employed in the service and this includes the registered provider.

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.

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, second staff member 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The registered provider was in charge of the service and there was a named staff member who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider was on the premises at the time of arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Written references were available with respect to two staff members.

(c)

The required Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of two staff members.

(d)

Police vetting was available for the two staff members as both staff members had lived outside the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.

(4)

One staff member held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 7 and the second staff member had a qualification deemed equivalent 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.

(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.

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

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service at all times.

(2)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were two adults employed and present with nine children on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)
There were two adults on the premises at all times throughout the inspection.

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-

- (c) an authorised person.*

(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above list of particulars, was kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The registered provider ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

(5)

The registered provider had evidence that all children's records were kept for a period of 2 years from the time a child started at the Montessori.

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 appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the Montessori.
- All cleaning products were stored out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in the Montessori room was clearly marked and free from obstruction.

Infection Control:

- The Montessori had one sanitary area. This contained two toilets and two sinks.
- There was running water at 34°C, liquid soap and paper towels available. A foot pedal bin was available in the sanitary area for the safe disposal of used paper towels.
- Table cleaning was observed before snack time.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and after outdoor play.

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)
A staff member trained in FAR first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the Montessori service.

(2)(a)
A well-equipped first aid box was easily accessible and in a conspicuous position in the Montessori room.

(b)
The first aid box was always 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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
(c) an authorised person.

(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)

There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the premises and the last fire drill took place on the 13th of November 2023.

(b)

There was a maintenance record available for the firefighting equipment dated March 2023.

(2)(c)

The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were clearly displayed in the Montessori room.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

There was no record available for the number, type and maintenance of the smoke alarms in the premises. The last service date was October 2021.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

To have the smoke alarms serviced immediately. A reminder has been placed in the Diary to have the smoke alarms serviced annually.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence in the form of an invoice for servicing of the smoke detection system in the pre-school was submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance found on inspection in relation to Regulation 26-Fire safety measures has been addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The adult/child ratios ensured that all children attending the Montessori service were supervised at all times during their day.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had evidence to show that the pre-school was adequately insured for the children attending the service. The insurance policy expires on 27th November 2024.