

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015WW196 |
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| Name of Service: | Cuala Montessori |
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| Address of Service: | 3 Cuala Grove, Bray, Co. Wicklow |
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| Eircode: | A98 X832 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Sandra Kiernan |
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| Service type: | Part Time, Sessional |
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| Date of Inspection: | 10/10/2023 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 22 | PM | 12 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

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| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable |
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Description of service

This part-time Montessori service was first established in 2010 and is located in a housing estate in Bray Co. Wicklow. The Montessori is open from Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 2.15pm. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age, this includes a sessional ECCE service for 38 weeks of the year. The premises is a single storey building located to the side of the registered provider's home. It consists of a large preschool room, a small hall area and a sanitary area. There is an outdoor area located to the rear of the premises, which the children have access to on a daily basis.

Staffing

There are four staff members in the service and this includes the registered provider. There were three members of staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider, who does not always work directly with the children, was available during the inspection.

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, 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.

(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.

(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)

There was a person in charge of the service and there was a named staff member who was able to deputise as required

(b)

The person in charge 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 on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written validated references were available in respect of each of the four adults.

(c)

The required Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of four adults.

(d)

Police vetting was available for one adult had lived outside the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months since turning eighteen years of age.

- (3)
All garda vetting was in place before any employee commenced working in the Montessori.
- (4)
All adults working directly with the children attending the Montessori service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (6)(A)
One staff member employed pursuant to the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

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 were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the Montessori.
- (2)
There were three adults employed and present with 22 children on the day of inspection.
- (8)(a)
There were three adults present on the premises throughout the inspection and the staff roster confirmed there were at least two adults present at all times.

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.*

(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)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the Montessori service.

(3)(c)

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

(4)

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

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 main door to the Montessori service was securely locked on arrival of the inspector to the service.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in the service.
- All toys were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- The Montessori room had direct access to the outdoor area, that was suitable, safe and secure.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in the Montessori room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- There was a separate sanitary area available to the children. There was warm running water, 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 and after snack time.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and outdoor play.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the Montessori room.
- Hand sanitiser gel was available in the Montessori room and at prominent points in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The person in charge ensured that all children attending the service were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The person in charge ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people had access to the service.

(b)

The registered provider had a record in writing, in the form of a visitors' book, of all such persons who accessed the service.

(4)

The registered provider was able to demonstrate that the visitors book was kept for a period of one year from the dates to which it related

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 person in charge was trained in FAR first aid was and available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place within the Montessori room.

(b)

The first aid box was available to the children attending the service 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 fire fighting 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 evidence of regular fire drills haven taken place within the service. The most recent fire drill took place in September 2023.

(b)

There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated August 2023 and April 2023 respectively.

(2)(c)

These records were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the Montessori room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of the Montessori was adequately insured for 22 Sessional children and 16 Part-time children and the policy expires on the 24th of August 2024.