

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016DR003
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Leap Stone Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Christ Church Parochial Hall, Park Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A97 NY50
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jessica Barrett
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	04/05/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	9
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown drive, County Dublin.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Olivia Quill
<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

Leap Stone Montessori was established in September 2016 and is privately operated. The early years service is registered to provide part-time and sessional education and care to pre-school children aged from 2- 6 years. The programme of care is facilitated through the Montessori curriculum and operates Monday to Friday from 9am until 2pm. The early years service is located in Christ church parochial hall in Dun Laoghaire and consists of one large open plan room within the premises. Sanitary accommodation for the children is located off the Montessori room. An outdoor play area is available for the children on the premises.

### Staffing

In total three staff including the registered provider are employed in the service. On the 4 May 2023 three adults were working directly with the children.

### 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 inspections 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

(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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) and (b) The registered provider was the designated person in charge and there was a named person to deputise as required. The designated person in charge was on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2) Since the last inspection on the 18 May 2021 one staff member was employed by the service. This was the only file reviewed as detailed below:

(a) Two validated written references were available from a past employer for one adult.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána was available for this adult.

(3) All required recruitment procedures were carried out by the registered provider prior to the staff member being appointed to work in the service.

(4) A record was available evidencing the staff member who was employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification.

### 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, service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for part-time day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were fourteen children attending the service being supervised by three staff members.

(8)(a) There were two adults on the premises at all times. The staff roster demonstrated that two adults are present at all times during the hours of operation.

## 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:*

- (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

- (h)* Details of the attendance of each child in the service were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.
- (i)* A staff roster was available.
- (j)* A sample of medication records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and completed appropriately.
- (k)* The service maintained a written record of accidents, injury or incidents involving a pre-school child.

## 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,*

#### Compliance Information

*(1)(a)* The service had a healthy eating policy in place. Parents provided lunch for their children which included a variety of sandwiches, wraps, cheese slices, and fresh fruit. Mealtime was relaxed and sociable children and staff sat together and engaged in conversation. Drinking water was freely available to the children.

The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development. Children went to the toilet independently under close supervision by staff. Children learned through a Montessori and play based philosophy. Staff interacted warmly with the children in their care throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Children were observed to be learning about the continent Asia and tigers. Circle time and a painting activity evolved around this theme and appropriate materials were provided. During the morning the children were observed to be immersed in these activities with learning supported by staff that encouraged children to extend their interests. Transitions were managed well by staff and children were given plenty of notice between activities to allow them to prepare for the next activity.

Defined areas of the Montessori teaching curriculum including a practical life area, cultural areas and language and mathematical areas were available to the children. These areas were adequately resourced with various Montessori materials including practical life materials with tasks such as polishing, screwing, opening, pouring and sorting. Mathematical materials included counting exercises, peg boards and number rods. All materials were observed to be easily accessible at the children's level. Child size tables and chairs were provided. Children were observed to move freely around the room, independently choosing tasks to complete from low level shelving provided. Children returned the materials to the shelves when a task had been completed before choosing another. A designated rest area was provided beside the library area. Outdoor play is included in the daily timetable. All children spent time outdoors.

### 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:

- External doors were secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- Cleaning agents and medication were safely stored out of reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible.
- Fire exits were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

- The service maintained a written record of cleaning completed and the environment was clean.
- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels was available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. Children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including following messy play, after using the toilet and before meals.
- Waste was appropriately managed with the use of pedal operated bins.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Staff and management reported that no medication had been given to children while attending the service since the previous inspection.
- Staff demonstrated an understanding of the appropriate measures to be taken to safeguard children in the event that medication is required. This included ensuring written parental/guardian consent is obtained, a second person checks the name and dose of the medication, an appropriate record is kept detailing the administration and this is shared with parents/guardians on collection.
- A suitable care plan was available for a child with a specific allergy. Staff were familiar with the care plan.

### 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 person trained in paediatric first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection. Staff had an up to date First Aid Responder training certificate valid until the 19 August 2024.
- (2) (a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service.
  - (b) A first aid box was available to the children in 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.*
- (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 detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. A fire drill was just completed as the inspector arrived and recorded for the 4 May 2023.
  - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the fire equipment were dated December 2022 and November 2022 for the smoke alarms.
- (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was clearly displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.