

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016DR006		
Name of Service:	Monkstown Montessori School		
Address of Service:	Society of Friends Meeting House, Parkenham Road, Monkstown, Co Dublin.		
Eircode:	A94 H9D6		
Name of Registered Provider:	Olivia Dunne		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	20/11/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown, County Dublin.		
Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill		
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

Monkstown Montessori School was first established in 1977 and is privately owned. The early years service is registered to operate a sessional service. The service caters for children from the age of 2 to 6 years and operates Monday to Friday from 9am to 12.30pm. The early years service is located in a premises owned by the Quakers in Monkstown County Dublin and consists of one Montessori room. The early years service has use of a large hall within the premises and an outdoor play area is available for the children on the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider and two staff are employed in the service and they were present on the day of 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

The inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 16(h),(i),(j) and (k) Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 First Aid

Regulation 26 Fire safety measures.

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 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

(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

(2) Following a discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed that three staff are employed in the service. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these staff and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a) Of the six validated, written references that were required, five were available from a past employer.

(b) One staff member had a second written validated reference from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff working in the service.

(d) International police vetting was available for two of the adults who had lived outside the state for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4) A record was available evidencing the three staff 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.

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 was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were nineteen children attending the service being supervised by three adults.

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

- (1)
- (h) The service maintained a written record of children’s attendance daily including the time of arrival and departure.

- (i) The daily staff roster was available and accurately reflected the staff working in the service.
- (j) Documentation was available to demonstrate that signed parental consent was required prior to administering medication to a pre-school child.
- (k) Eleven accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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)

Each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Throughout the morning children were actively engaged in Montessori work for example using mathematical materials counting with number rods and peg boards while others were using practical life skills. Children were encouraged to be independent appropriate to their age and stage of development, for example, using the toilet and tidying up after themselves. Children were observed to move freely around the room independently choosing tasks to complete from the low-level shelving provided.

Each area was adequately resourced with various Montessori materials, which enabled a range of developmentally appropriate and valuable play experiences for children. Warm interactions were observed between the staff and children. Staff used soft gentle tones and respectful language during all communication which reflected in the calm atmosphere in the service. Cultural diversity was celebrated and embraced by the service for example the children and staff marked culturally specific holidays in fun ways together. Most recently the children celebrated 'Diwali' which is India's festival of light and later in the week the children were planning to celebrate Thanksgiving an American holiday.

These activities help all children to feel included and supports learning about different cultures. Staff explained they communicate daily with parents at drop off and collection and use a phone app to share additional information.

A healthy eating policy was in place. The food observed was varied and nutritious. The children’s lunches included sandwiches, crackers, various fruits and vegetables. Mealtime was relaxed, children and staff had their food together and engaged in conversation. Drinking water was freely available. Children had their own individual water bottle. All children were given the opportunity to spend time in the outdoor play area. Children were observed to enjoy this time exploring the hedges, playing on the swing and in the playhouse.

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.
- All toys and play equipment used by the children was safe and in good condition.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- The kitchen and storage areas were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- In the sanitary area liquid soap, warm water and paper towel and a pedal operated bin were provided. Children were observed to use the toilet independently and wash their own hands after. After outdoor play and prior to eating all children were supervised by staff washing their hands.
- Perishable food items were stored in the fridge as required.
- A cleaning schedule was in place.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had an administration of medication policy. Medication has not been given to date in the service. A suitable medication record was available should medication be given and staff were familiar when asked about the medication policy. Temperature reducing medication was clearly labelled, in date and stored safely out of reach of children if required.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed.

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 first aid for children was immediately available at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a) First aid boxes were safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous locations 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 of monthly fire drills completed was available. The last fire drill was completed on the 16 of October 2023.
 - (b) The maintenance record for the fire fighting equipment was dated the 25 July 2023 and for the smoke alarm was dated the 12 April 2023.