

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D: TU2016DR017

Name of Service Smart Cookies Montessori

Address of Service: St Patrick's Church Hall, Harbour Road, Dalkey, Co Dublin.

Email Address: smartcookiesdalkey@gmail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Lisa Mardell

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care		Part-Time	x	Sessional	x
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change:	Change in Number of Children from 20 to 23 children
Proposed Number of Children:	23
Recommended Change Following Inspection:	Change in Number of Children from 20 to 23 children
Registered change:	Change in Number of Children from 20 to 23 children

Date of Inspection: 2 6 0 9 2 0 2 4

Inspection undertaken by: Ms S. Quigley
Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: 1st Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park,
 Southern Cross Road,
 Bray, Co Wicklow

Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Part-Time Service for 23 children
Date of Registration	11 th October 2024

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Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Smart Cookies Montessori is a privately owned early years service which was established in 2014 by the current registered provider. Care and education are provided to children aged two to six years on a part time and sessional basis, and the programme of care is facilitated through a predominantly Montessori based curriculum which is blended with play. The service is located in a residential area in Dalkey, South County Dublin and is open from 08:30 to 13:00 each weekday.
Premises	The service operates from two adjoining rooms on the first floor of St Patrick’s Hall on the grounds of St Patricks Church in Dalkey, South Co Dublin. An enclosed outdoor play area is available to the rear of the premises.
Staffing	There is a designated person in charge in the service and a named person to deputise. The service currently employs 3 staff members, including the registered provider who works directly in the service. Adults employed to work in the service have attained a minimum of a level 5 award in early childhood care and education on the national framework of qualifications.
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes: Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>

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Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.
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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement of Regulation 9 (1) (a) has been met. The registered provider is the designated person in charge is available in the service and a named person to deputise is available if required.

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.

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

(b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The person in charge has identified that a minimum of two staff members will be on the premises at all times and evidenced this with the staffing roster in place for the service.

(8)(b) Not applicable as the proposed service is not a childminding service.

(c) Not applicable as this is not a sessional service that operates single headedly.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

- (1) *Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—*
- (a) *having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*
 - (b) *there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*
- (2) *A registered provider—*
- (b) *of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016, shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—*
- (a) *a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises or*
 - (b) *where no such space is provided, the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis to an outdoor service*
- (4) *Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.*
- (5) *Where pre-school children attending a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre have access to an outdoor space other than such a space specified in paragraph 4, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable.*

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>(1)(a) Adequate and suitable facilities were provided for children to play indoors and outdoors. The care rooms were bright and spacious and well laid out with various Montessori equipment and play materials on open, low level shelving units.</p> <p>(1)(b) Adequate and suitable rest facilities were available for preschool children to rest during the day in each room if required. A rest area is provided in each care room.</p> <p>(2)(a) The service has use of a designated, secure outdoor play area to the rear of the premises. The area is fully enclosed and equipped with a range of play materials.</p> <p>(3)(a)(b)</p>
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	<p>Not applicable.</p> <p>(4)</p> <p>Not applicable.</p> <p>(5)</p> <p>Not applicable.</p>
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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>Facilities for storing perishable foods were available. A healthy eating policy was available in the service and the registered provider stated that meals/snacks are provided by the parents/guardians of the children each day.</p>
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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.

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The door into the care rooms was adequately secure to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. • Facilities were available for the safe and secure storage of cleaning agents and equipment, and alcohol-based sanitisers out of reach of children. • There was provision for the appropriate storage and disposal of waste including foot pedal operated bins in the care rooms and sanitary areas. • The outdoor play area was appropriately secured.
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- An infection control policy was in place to inform practice and cleaning schedules were available and in use to ensure care rooms and sanitary accommodation are regularly cleaned. Warm water, soap, and paper towels were available to facilitate handwashing.

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—
- is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and
 - is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Certification was available to evidence that a person trained in first aid was available to the children at all times in the service.

(2) A suitably equipped first aid box was available in the service and was stored in a conspicuous location.

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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.

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>(1)</p> <p>(a) The registered provider indicated that fire drills take place monthly in the service and appropriate documentation was in place to record them.</p> <p>(b) There was a record available to indicate the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service.</p> <p>(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed conspicuously within the premises.</p>
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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service is adequately insured for the increase in children.</p>
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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,
- (b) safe and secure,
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(a) The care rooms have been purposely adapted for use as a preschool service and appeared to be of sound and stable structure.

(b) There are two entrance doors to the adjoining care rooms which were appropriately safe and secure on the day of inspection. The outdoor area was secured to prevent a child exiting the area unsupervised and prevent unauthorised access.

(c) The care rooms both benefited from natural light via openable windows which also provided adequate ventilation. There was a convectional gas central heating system in place and thematically controlled radiators were in place to heat the care rooms when required.

(d) Cleaning schedules were in place in the service. The premises and surrounding environments were clean and maintained as required.

(e) The service was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities. There were three toilets and wash hand basins designated for use by the children. A separate bathroom was available for staff members. Thermostatically controlled hot and cold water was available in the hand wash sinks.

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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*
- (4) *Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides—*
 (a) *a sessional pre-school service, and*
 (b) *a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).*
- (5) *A registered provider of a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a minimum of 2 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

- (1) An area of 18.53 square metres in the Committee Room and an area of 47.69 square metres in the Gallery Room provided adequate floor space for the proposed increase to 23 preschool children.
- (2) The care room had adequate clear floor space for a service that provides part-time and sessional care for children aged 2 years and 8 months to six years.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) There was adequate floor space to accommodate children whom attend a concurrent sessional service.
- (5) Not applicable.