

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016DY006			
Name of Service:	Ivy Lane Montessori			
Address of Service:	11 Fitzwilliam Street Upper, Dublin 2			
Eircode:	D02 YV66			
Name of Registered Provider:	Sally Breslin			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	24/06/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	51	PM	29
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K			
Inspection undertaken by:	L Jameson			
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

Ivy Lane Montessori is located in Dublin City centre and has the sole use of a Georgian Building. The service offers full day, part time and sessional care to a maximum of 60 children aged 2 – 6 years, Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE). There are four care rooms in the service, Little Feet caters for children aged 3 – 4 years and Little Hands caters for children aged 3 – 5 years, both rooms are located on the ground floor of the service. Little Hearts and Little Minds both cater for children aged 3 – 5 years and are located on the first floor of the service. The service has sanitary accommodation available, an onsite kitchen and a secure outdoor area at the rear of the premises. There is also a registered school age service in operation.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service in an administrative and supernumerary capacity providing support in care rooms when required. The registered provider employs sixteen staff members including the person in charge, the deputy person in charge, eleven early years practitioners who work directly with the children, a chef and two staff members who work with school age children. On the day of the inspection, the registered provider, the person in charge, the deputy person in charge, eight early years practitioners, the chef and one school-age staff member were present when the inspector arrived unannounced in the service. One early years practitioner and one school age staff member arrived in the service in the afternoon.

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 and 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, deputy 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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
 - (b) The person in charge and deputy person in charge were rostered to be present all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on and when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff members were aware of their own role and responsibilities.

- (2) The full staff files of eleven adults employed to work in the service since the last inspection, on 10 November 2022, were reviewed along with the Garda vetting for five adults which had expired since the last inspection.
- (a) Seventeen written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Five written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for sixteen adults employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
 - (d) Documentary evidence showed that nine adults had lived in a country other than Ireland for more than six consecutive months as an adult. International police vetting was available for seven staff members.
- (3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to nine adults before employment commenced.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that seven adults who worked directly with the children held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (d) International police vetting was not available for two staff members for countries that they had lived in for longer than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (3) Evidence showed that the procedures specified in (2) were not completed prior to the start date of two staff members as outlined above in (2)(d).
- (4) Documentation was not available to demonstrate that one adult who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. It is acknowledged that a qualification certificate was available however it could not be established that this was an approved qualification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (d) International police vetting has been obtained for two staff members and added to the staff files. Management have updated the recruitment process checklist to ensure all relevant documents are placed within the staff file before commencement in the service.
- (3) The staff file checklist has been updated to ensure copies of required documents are on file before new staff members commence in any position in the service. Management will continue to ensure that the staff file checklist is completed for all new staff members.
- (4) Qualification recognition has been obtained and added to the staff file. The recruitment process checklist has been updated to include a requirement for qualification recognition where necessary.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)
- (d) Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.
- (3) Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.
- (4) Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 9.

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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children throughout the inspection. In the morning, there were nine adults caring for fifty-one children and during the afternoon there were seven adults caring for twenty-nine children. In addition, the registered provider, person in charge, deputy person in charge were available to provide support in a supernumerary capacity where required.

(2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff members were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children in the rooms.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) The following practices were observed on the day of inspection which supported the health, welfare and development of the children attending:

- The staff members were observed to positively reinforce the children's achievements with recognition, praise and encouragement. Any minor disagreements that occurred between the children were dealt with in a positive and calm manner and the children were supported to resolve any conflict that arose.

- The children were supported to follow their own interests, explore their environment and given freedom of choice, while being offered support during activities and transitions. Decision making was encouraged by staff members who were observed to actively supervise and guide the children throughout the day.
- Staff members were familiar with the needs, likes and dislikes of the children in their care and confidently discussed strategies and important information which was documented in a detailed care plan for a child who required additional support within the service.
- Staff members were observed to tend to children's individual personal needs promptly, offering discreet supervision for toileting and assisting with hand washing. Self-care stations, consisting of tissues, wipes and mirrors, were available to the children in their care rooms, further promoting independence. On the day of the inspection, a child was observed to get wet while playing in the outdoor play area. Staff members responded in a timely manner, assisting and supporting the child to change into a fresh set of clothes.
- Mealtimes were observed to be a sociable and pleasant event, with staff members sitting alongside the children, engaging in meaningful conversations and offering support and encouragement to the children. Water was available in the care rooms, allowing the children to access a drink when they wanted, and additional portions of food were available if required.
- During sleep time, the blinds were drawn and soft music played in the background, creating a relaxing environment for sleeping children.
- Children's artwork, photographs, birthday charts and family walls were displayed throughout the care rooms and service, supporting the children's sense of identity and links between home and the service .

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that an adequate supply of suitable materials and equipment were available to the children in the service. The following was observed;

- Low level tables and chairs were available for use by the children which allowed them to engage in tabletop activities and meals comfortably.

- The care rooms were designed to support the age and developmental stages of the children attending the service, equipment and materials were stored at a low level to encourage the children's independence and decision-making skills.
- Equipment and materials in the care rooms were in good working order. Materials, including Montessori materials, jigsaws and puzzles, construction toys, cars, animals, art and craft materials, home corners with supporting equipment and dress up, and a selection of books were available to the children, facilitating a range of play and learning experiences and promoting imaginative play.
- Cosy areas were available in the care rooms to provide children a comfortable place to rest or engage in quiet activities.
- The outdoor area provided opportunities for a variety of play experiences including gross motor and imaginative play.

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 leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. A buzzer system was in place which was managed and monitored by staff members.
- Cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- Flexes and cords were secured safely out of reach of the children.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.

Infection Control:

- The care rooms and sanitary areas were equipped with warm water, liquid soap and hand paper towels. Staff members were observed to support children with handwashing at regular intervals throughout the day, before eating and after activities and toileting.
- The service and outdoor play area were observed to be clean and maintained, supported by up-to-date cleaning records.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas to ensure the hygienic disposal of contaminated materials.

- Staff members were observed to wear gloves, aprons and hairnets when handling and serving food to the children.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was observed to be in date, stored in the correct packaging and out of the children's reach. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff members were observed to physically check and record the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children every 10 minutes.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained for sleeping children over one years old in the cot room and care rooms.
- Cellular blankets were used.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection. Staff members were aware of the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

Outing:

- Written risk assessments for outings were available for review by the inspector. On the day of the inspection, staff members brought children from the Little Hands care room to the local park for a sports day. Through conversation with management and staff members, it was confirmed that children in the service regularly participate in outings to the local park. Staff members were familiar with the process and discussed it with the inspector.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Shelving units in the Little Hearts care room was observed to be chipped with worn surfaces in places which exposed the internal wood, reducing the likelihood of effective cleaning and increasing the risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The shelving units were replaced by management on the evening of the inspection as part of ongoing maintenance. Management have updated the daily risk assessment to ensure any damaged surfaces are reported and repaired or replaced. Management have communicated the updates with all staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

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 who held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service. This was evidenced in the FAR training records maintained for two staff members and their scheduled attendance in the service's staff roster.

(2)

- (a) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and easily accessible to the staff.
- (b) The first aid boxes were available for 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (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) A record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. The records indicated and staff members reported that fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 13 May 2025.
 - (b) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate a maintenance check was carried out on the firefighting equipment on 6 November 2024 and the smoke alarms on 2 May 2025.
- (2) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All fire records requested by the inspection team were available for review.
- (4) The evacuation procedure was conspicuously displayed on the premises which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire or emergency in the service.