

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

|                                     |  |    |    |    |    |
|-------------------------------------|--|----|----|----|----|
| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>            | TU2016DY010  |    |    |    |    |
| <b>Name of Service:</b>             | Hedley Park Montessori School  |    |    |    |    |
| <b>Address of Service:</b>          | 67 Merrion Square South, Dublin 2, Co. Dublin  |    |    |    |    |
| <b>Eircode:</b>                     | D02 CK11   |    |    |    |    |
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Ashley Scanlon   |    |    |    |    |
| <b>Service type:</b>                | Full Day, Sessional  |    |    |    |    |
| <b>Date of Inspection:</b>          | 17/07/2024   |    |    |    |    |
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b>   | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>11</td> <td>PM</td> <td>12</td> </tr> </table> | AM | 11 | PM | 12 |
| AM                                  | 11   | PM | 12 |    |    |

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| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate,<br>Floor 7 Brunel Building,<br>Heuston South Quarter,<br>St John's Road West,<br>Kilmainham,<br>Dublin 8<br>D08 X01F |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | E. Griffin   |
| <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).

Conditions if applicable

Not applicable.

### Description of service

Hedley Park Montessori School offers a service to children aged 2 ½ to 6 years old on a full-time basis from 8 am to 6 pm daily. The school also provides a school aged service to children up to 12 years old. The service is located in Dublin City centre and operates from a terraced Georgian property. The preschool service operates from the Reception Room which is to the rear of the property and there is access to sanitary facilities. The service has been in operation since 1991 and there is an outdoor area located on the premises and the registered provider confirmed the children have use of a public park as part of their outdoor play.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs three childcare staff to work in the preschool service, two childcare staff who work daily in the service and one staff member who provides relief cover. On the day of inspection, the registered provider and three childcare staff were present in the service working directly with the children in the service.

### 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2)(4)(7)-Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2)-Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15- Record of a Pre-School Child.

Regulation 19(1)(a)-Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

Regulation 23-Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of child.

Regulation 25-First Aid.

Regulation 26-Fire Safety Measures.

Regulation 28-Insurance.

As a result, the scope of the inspection covered the Reception Room. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under: Regulation 15, Regulation 19 and Regulation 23.

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
- (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.

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

#### 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 was present when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.
- (c) The service had a clear management structure in the service and staff were aware of their own role and responsibility.

- (2) A review of the roster and conversation with management demonstrated that the registered provider employed three staff to work in the service. All files including the registered provider were reviewed.
- (a) Seven written and verified references were available from recent past employers.
- (b) One written and verified reference was available from a reputable source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures had been obtained for all four adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was available in respect of one adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than six months as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the registered provider and three staff 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.
- (7)(a) The service had specified policies in place as specified in Schedule 5. Documentation showed that staff signed that they had been trained and updated in these policies and there was evidence to show that there was yearly induction training and supervision records for each staff member. On the day of inspection staff were able to discuss policies in relation to the Healthy Food Policy and the Risk Management Policy that were consistent with the policies of the service.

### 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 there was an adequate number of adults working with the children.
- (2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection as follows:

#### During the morning:

There were two adults caring for eleven children aged 2-5 years.

### During the afternoon:

There were two to three adults present and working directly with twelve children aged 2-5 years.

The registered provider/person in charge was available to provide general assistance where required during the inspection.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of ten children's files were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a)-(i) was maintained for each child.

(3)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

### 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) Basic Needs:

- The service provided one afternoon snack option which was prepared onsite. Children brought both their morning snack and lunch time snack from home. There were facilities to refrigerate and heat up food where required. Water was available in each care room for the children to drink.
- A cosy area of soft floor mats, cushions and books for rest and relaxation were present. There were soft floor mats for children to sit and play with activities, these was observed to be used by children during the inspection.
- All children were observed to enjoy outdoor play during the inspection. This supports their social, cognitive, and gross and fine motor development.
- The transition between activities such as outdoor play time and mealtime were observed to be calm and relaxed with staff giving children a five-minute notice and an additional staff member was available to care for the individual needs of the children. In addition, all new children beginning in September were given an allocated visiting time during the month of July so they could come in and spend time and be familiar with the staff and service. Staff discussed how when children begin in the service there is a settling in period which is individual to each child and children are permitted to bring a toy from home to support the transition from home to the service.

##### Supporting Relationships:

- The service used an electronic application to communicate with parents and update them on their child's day this included activities, mealtimes, toileting, and any other relevant updates. Parents/guardians were welcome to bring their child into the care room for drop off and collection times. The inspector observed staff greeting a parent at drop off time and updating the parent verbally on their child's week in the service.
- The presence of a birthday time display and the children's artwork on display throughout the care room demonstrated a sense of identity and belonging for the children. In addition, children had their own personalised drawer to store their artwork and each child had a coat hook labelled with their name.

- Staff discussed how parents/guardians are encouraged to share information about their own culture and how the service holds cultural celebration days throughout the year.
- Staff were observed to be engaged with the children and their play. They were responsive to the children and were observed to give them choices regarding their play activities.
- Language and literacy were supported in the care room through discussion and stories. For example, a staff member read a story book while the children were waiting for mealtime.

### **Physical and Material Environment:**

- The care room in the service was designed with the age and stage of development having been taken into consideration. Children were observed to take part in free play and group work. The layout of the rooms facilitated these choices as the toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and were visible and accessible to the children. There was a sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in the care room.
- The service operates as a school and is predominantly Montessori based. There were Montessori activities available for the children supporting the areas of practical life, sensorial, language, maths and culture. There was also a variety of play materials and equipment available to the children according to their age and stage of development, stored on low shelves. There were arts and crafts materials including an easel, paint and aprons directly accessible to the children; there was a home corner with props and real-life equipment. In addition, there was a role play area just outside the care room with dolls and supporting equipment. In this area there was also a library with seating.
- The children were provided with outdoor activities in the local park. Children were observed to play ball activities with each other during the outdoor play time.

## 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 premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- There was a visitor system in place which the registered provider used to support parents of children settling into the service and allowed viewings prior to the children's commencement for a limited time which was documented in the visitor log and on the service calendar.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of the reach to the children.
- The registered provider discussed how daily risk assessments are carried out prior to trips to the local park play ensuring the area is safe. The registered provider discussed these procedures with the inspector and the inspector observed a staff member carry out a safety risk check before the period of outdoor play.

##### Infection Control:

- The service had hand sanitizers available throughout the service including the entrance and staff were observed to wash and sanitize their hands frequently.
- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with liquid soap, warm water, and hand drying facilities. The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and playing outdoors.
- Pedal bins were evident within the care rooms and sanitary area.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The children's lunches were observed to be refrigerated.
- Windows in the care room were open to allow for circulation and reduce cross infection.

##### Administration of Medication:

- The service had an individual care plan on display to identify the medication requirement and procedures to follow in the event of an emergency for a child who had an identified allergy and/or diagnosed medical condition. In discussion, staff were aware of the procedures to follow as per the care plan.

- Emergency medication was located and safely stored in the care-room in the original box and was clearly labelled with the child' name.

### Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, it was observed that all emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This ensured the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency evacuation

## 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 service provided evidence that a person trained in First Aid Responder training was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school. The four staff members held up to date certification in First Aid Response (FAR) training.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises and was available to the adults caring for the children 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-
- (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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drill took place on 10 June 2024.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced on 5 October 2023 and the smoke detection system on 28 July 2023.
- (2)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- (4) A procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was on display in prominent positions at the premises.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for the childcare registered and an expiry date of 01 September 2024.