

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D: TU2017CC503

Name of Service Hope Montessori Autism Care Centre

Address of Service: Presentation Secondary School, Joe Murphy Road, Ballyphehane, Cork. T12YH04

Email Address: hopeasd@gmail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Ms. Sherene Powell

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed change:

- Change of address.
- Change in the number of children to 56

Proposed Number of Children: 56

Recommended Change Following Inspection: Approve all changes fully

Registered change:

- Change in service address from Deerpark CBS, St Patrick's Road, Cork City, Co. Cork, T12 XT96 to Presentation Secondary School, Joe Murphy Road, Ballyphehane, Cork. T12YH04
- Change in the number of children that can be accommodated in the service from 60 to 56

Date of Inspection:	0	9	0	2	2	0	2	4
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Inspection undertaken by: Margaret O' Reilly

Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher, Cork, T23 X440

Rationale for Inspection: Proposed Change of Circumstance

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

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day Care Service for 56 Children
Date of Registration	22 nd February 2024

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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	The service is planning on operating the service in a new location and is proposing to operate an early years and school aged care service from the building. Hope Montessori Autism Care Centre proposes to operate a full day care, part-time and sessional service catering for children aged from one to six years and for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. It will be a privately operated service and proposes to cater for up to a maximum of 56 children on the premises at any one time. The proposed opening times are from 8am to 6pm each day Monday to Friday.
Premises	The service will operate from the ground floor in Presentation Secondary School, located in a suburban area in Ballyphehane, Cork. The facility will be in an enclosed separate area from the existing school. The rooms have been changed from classrooms to accommodate a childcare and school aged care facility. The ground floor of the school has been revamped and refurbished. The service consists of four playrooms named the Wobbler room, Toddler room, ASD room (autism spectrum disorder) and Violets room (ECCE). There is a designated separate sleep room, a kitchen, a staff room and a storeroom, adult and children's toilets and nappy changing facilities. There is an outdoor play area beside the service.
Staffing	Initially when the service opens, it is proposed there will be nine staff employed to work directly with the children in the service increasing to fourteen when service is in full operation. The registered provider will not be serviced based. The proposed person in charge and the adults who will work directly with the children will have a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.
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>
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, director of education and deputy who were present on the day of the inspection.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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 has been met.

(1)

(a) A designated person in charge has been assigned to the service and a named person who can deputise, as 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 fit for purpose inspection was carried out in the absence of children. It is proposed that the children will be ranging in age from 1 to 6 years attending sessional, part time and full day care service. It is proposed initially that there will be 5 adults available to work with the children until the service is fully operational and the service operating to maximum capacity. The registered provider will ensure that the correct adult to child ratios is maintained, depending on the number and age range of children availing of the service. A minimum of 2 adults will be on the premises at all times when the service is in operation.

(8)

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

(c) Not applicable, as the service does not intend to operate single-handedly

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:

The requirement has been met.

(1)

(a) Suitable indoor play facilities are provided, and a number of interest areas have been developed in all rooms. There are low shelves provided in the playrooms that are accessible to the children. The shelves are stocked with a large selection of age-appropriate activities, equipment and play materials. There was an adequate number of age-appropriate tables, low and highchairs in the rooms suitable for the proposed age group.

(b) There is a designated internal separate sleep room for the children under two years that will require a sleep while attending the service. There were six cots with safety

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	<p>mattresses located in the sleep room. Each of the mattresses had a waterproof mattress cover placed over it. There was adequate space provided between each cot. The bed linen present was adequate with a fitted sheet and blanket provided for each cot.</p> <p>For the children aged over two years that require a sleep, there were stacking beds with accompanying mattress and linen, available to accommodate children who may wish to rest or sleep while in attendance. The Toddler Room will be converted into a sleep room when the children want to sleep. The Toddler Room has blinds that will reduce the natural daylight into the room. There was a designated rest area provided in each of the playrooms consisting of soft seating and floor mats.</p> <p>(2)(a), (3)(a) There is a designated outdoor play area provided beside the premise. The outdoor play area had a combination of surfaces. There is a new all-weather tile surface in part of the outdoor play area. The remaining outdoor play area surface consists of cement and the person in charge stated that grass seeds have been sown on the earth surface located in the outdoor play area. The outdoor play area is enclosed with a fence, block walls and gates.</p> <p>(3)(b) Not applicable as the children have access to an outdoor play area located beside the facility.</p> <p>(4) +(5) Not applicable as the children have access to onsite outdoor play area.</p>
Requirement not met	As the sleep room is located in an internal room in the service, a referral was made to the Fire Officer.
Response	Following a review by a Senior Executive Fire Prevention Officer, the location of the sleep room within the service was approved following a planned-on site service visit on Thursday 22 nd February 2024.
Summary comment	The Early Years Inspectorate and Person in Charge were on site when the Senior Executive Fire Officer approved of the location of the internal sleep room within the service.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

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:

The requirement has been met.

- The service has developed a Healthy Eating policy.
- The service proposes to provide breakfast, mid-morning, mid afternoon snack and tea. The parents/guardians will also receive the choice of supplying all the food for their child’s meals and snacks while attending the service.
- The service proposes to offer parents and guardians the option of a hot meal provided by a registered food company and will be prepared/reheated and served to the children by the adults in the service.
- There is a fridge in each playroom and in the kitchen to store perishable foods.
- Crockery and cutlery are available for the children’s use at mealtimes.
- The person in charge stated that children’s individual water bottles will be accessible to them throughout their attendance at the service.

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:

The requirement has been partially met.

- Cleaning agents and equipment are stored safely in a locked storeroom or on shelves located at adult height.
- The first aid boxes, one located in each playroom is maintained in a conspicuous location out of reach of children in cupboards with childproof locks in place.
- Low lying electrical sockets are fitted with safety plugs.
- Fire extinguishers are securely wall mounted.
- Tension devices are in place to securely anchor blind cords.
- Childrens’ coats and bags are stored on wall hooks in each playroom.
- The radiators are covered with radiator covers. The temperatures of the playrooms and toilet facilities was ranging from 18°C to 20°C.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There was thermostatically controlled warm water at all wash hand basins. There were liquid soap dispensers, individual disposable paper hand towels stored in wall dispensers located at an appropriate height were available at all the wash hand basins for hygienic hand washing and hygienic hand drying in the adult and children’s toilet and nappy changing facilities. •Lidded, foot pedal operated bins, are available throughout the service including in the children’s toilet and nappy changing facilities and in the adult toilet facility. •Laundry will be sent to a laundrette located near the service.
Requirement not met:	<p>During the inspection the following hazards were observed and considered a potential safety risk to the children when playing outdoors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The two gates, located in the outdoor space were not adequately secured to prevent unauthorised access and the unsupervised exit of a child. One of the gates is the entrance gate to the service. The gate opens into the outdoor play area which leads to the main entrance door of the service. The second gate is the services emergency fire exit gate. 2. The area around the manhole cover located on the cement surface in the outdoor play space was uneven. 3. There was a large tree with visible protruding roots located in the outdoor play area that the children could access when playing outdoors. The service had risk assessed and for safety reasons had decided to put a fence around the tree and protruding roots as the roots are a trip hazard in their present state.
Response from Provider:	<p>Photographic evidence of the corrective actions taken to address each issue was forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed satisfactory.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An intercom bell at adult height was installed at the main entrance gate for parents to use when accessing the service. The staff can see, through the intercom camera located indoors the persons at the entrance, prior to releasing the gate. There is a digital key code system in place at the entrance gate for staff to enter the service building area. An alarm has been installed on the emergency fire exit gate that will alarm if opened accidentally by a child when playing in the outdoor space. The

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	<p>outdoor play area is now adequately secured to prevent unauthorised access and the unsupervised exit of a child.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The area around the manhole cover has been raised to provide a more level surface area reducing the potential safety risks to children when playing outdoors. The service will include this area in the safety risk assessment of the outdoor play area. A wooden fence was placed around the tree and the visible tree roots located on the surface of the outdoor play area reducing the potential safety risks associated with the children tripping on the protruding tree roots when playing in the outdoor play space.
Summary Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correspondence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23 (1). (2). (3) of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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)

The available documentary evidence demonstrates that four of the adults employed at the service holds up to date certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training. The adults will be available on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

(2)

(a) Adequately stocked first aid boxes, are safely stored in cupboards with child proof locks in the four care rooms and are accessible only by adults.

(b) First aid supplies will be available to the children at all times throughout the hours of operation.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of—

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

- (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 requirement is met in relation to the provision of a form for recording monthly fire drills.</p> <p>(b) A document outlining the number and type of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms is available.</p> <p>According to the records, the smoke alarm was installed and tested on 31/01/2024. It was recorded that new fire equipment were installed on the 22/01/24.</p> <p>(4) A fire evacuation notice is clearly displayed in the service and the fire assembly point is clearly displayed in the outdoor play space.</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>The insurance certificate was available on the premises and demonstrated that the service was adequately insured for a full day care service. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of children covered which was 56. The start date was the 28 March 2023, the end date, which was the 27th March 2024 and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding, contents, public liability and fire and theft cover.</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—

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

- (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:	<p>The requirement has been partially met.</p> <p>(a) From a visual assessment, the premises appears to be of sound and stable structure.</p> <p>(b) The service has three access/exit points.</p> <p>The outdoor play space is enclosed by a fence, block walls and gates.</p> <p>The internal doors, which provide access to the kitchen, staff room and storeroom and the adult toilet facilities and sleep room are secured when not in use, to reduce the risk of children accessing these areas, while unsupervised.</p> <p>(c) • Adequate light in the care rooms, sleep rooms and toilet facilities are supplied by a combination of natural light and ceiling lights, with protective covers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radiator covers have been installed over the radiators in the playrooms. • The recorded air temperatures of the care rooms ranged from 18°C to 20°C, the care room temperature should be maintained between 18°C and 22°C. The recorded air temperatures of the sleep room were 18°C. The sleep room temperature should be maintained between 16°C and 20°C. • Natural ventilation is supplied through openable windows in the care rooms. <p>There is an air conditioning unit present in the internal sleep room. There is mechanical ventilation present in some of the children’s and adult toilet facilities and nappy changing facilities where there are no openable windows.</p> <p>(d) Cleaning templates were present, which details daily cleaning of the various areas and equipment within the service, including the care rooms, sanitary facilities and the outdoor play environment.</p> <p>(e) For children’s use, there are four toilets with four wash hand basins available. There is two designated toilets and wash hand basins for the adults. There is two nappy changing facilities. Running water is provided from a public supply.</p>
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TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	Wastewater and sewage are removed from the premises by means of a public sewage system.
Requirement not met:	<p>(d)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There were visible cavities/holes at child height in the block walls that partially enclosed the outdoor space. 2. The surface of the inner block wall and fence of the outdoor play space were covered in a film of moss/algae. <p>(e)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an insufficient number of wash hand basins in the toilet facilities beside the Toddler Room. The Toddler room can cater for a maximum of 18 children. There is currently one child size toilet and one nappy changing facility but only one wash hand basin when two are required. The ratio is one wash hand basin to every 11 children.
Response from Provider:	<p>Photographic evidence of the corrective actions taken to address each issue was forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed satisfactory.</p> <p>(d)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The cavities in the block wall located in the outdoor play space have been filled. 2. The wall and fence located in the outdoor play have been power washed and the visible film of moss has been removed. <p>(e)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wash hand basin has been installed in the children's toilet facility designated for the Toddler Room. There are now an adequate number of wash hand basins in the children toilet facility beside the Toddler Room.
Summary Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 29(d)1.2 and (e) of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Adequate floor space is provided in the care rooms to enable the free movement of children, as they engage in play and learning activities.

(2) The available clear floor space meets the requirement for a maximum of 56 children. The maximum number of children in attendance each day will depend on the number of children from each of the age groups on a daily basis.

(1) The Wobbler room measured 29 square meters.

The person in charge stated at time of inspection that the service plans to accommodate in the Wobbler Room 10 children aged between one and two years at 2.80 square meters per child.

The Toddler room measured 42.9 square meters. The Toddler Room has space to accommodate a maximum of 18 children aged between two and three years at 2.35 square meters per child.

ASD room (autism spectrum disorder) measured 17.83 square meters. This room will operate under the Department of Education. The person in charge proposes to have a maximum of 6 children aged between 3 and 6 years.

Violets room (ECCE), measured 42.9 square meters. The playroom has sufficient floor space for a maximum of 22 children (ECCE) aged between 3 and 6 years each morning.

The room has adequate space to accommodate 21 children attending part time and full day care children each evening. Instead, the service proposes to operate a school aged care service in this room each evening.

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



(3) There was adequate space provided for the proposed maximum number of 22(ECCE) children that will attend each morning.