

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

**Tusla I.D:** TU2018LH506

**Name of Service** Playmates Montessori St Joseph's School

**Address of Service:** The Old Mell School, Mell, Drogheda, Co Louth A92WP76

**Email Address:** Playmatesmontessori@gmail.com

**Name of Registered Provider:** Ms Jackie Walsh

<b>Type of Proposed Service:</b>	<b>Full Day Care</b>		<b>Part-Time</b>		<b>Sessional</b>	✓
	<b>Drop-In</b>		<b>Childminding</b>		<b>Temporary</b>	

**Proposed change:**

- Change in address.
- Increase in numbers accommodated from 22 to 36.

**Proposed Number of Children:** 36

**Recommended Change Following Inspection:** Approve all changes

**Registered change:**

- Change in service address from St. Joseph's National School, Upper Magdelene Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth, A92 Y927 to The Old Mell School, Mell, Drogheda, Co Louth A92WP76
- Change in number of children that can be accommodated from 22 to 36

**Date of Inspection:** 1 0 0 8 2 0 2 3

**Inspection undertaken by:** AM Coyle & S Cully

**Title:** Early Years Inspectors

**Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:** 181-189 Lakeshore Drive,  
Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.

**Rationale for Inspection:**  
Proposed Change of Circumstance

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

**Registration Status:** Registered Sessional Service for 36 Children  
**Date of Registration** 18<sup>th</sup> August 2023

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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).

<b>Description of Service</b>	Playmates Montessori is an established Early Years Service which operated 2 Early Years' services in Drogheda, Co Louth. The service is proposing to amalgamate the 2 existing services and to move location to a former primary school in Drogheda, Co Louth. The service proposes to provide sessional preschool care and education to children from 2 years until they commence attendance at primary school. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) and proposes to operate from 9am to 12:30 pm Monday to Friday.
<b>Premises</b>	The service is proposing to relocate to the Mell Community building which is a former single storey primary school in Drogheda, Co Louth. The service has exclusive use of the building during the operational hours of the service. The proposed new service has 2 care rooms namely Room 1 and Room 2. An enclosed outdoor area is available to the children. Set down parking is provided to the front of the service to facilitate drop offs and collections from the service.
<b>Staffing</b>	The service employs 6 staff members including the registered provider. One staff member is employed in the service to reduce the adult to child ratio and if necessary to work with a child with additional needs, a post which is funded by the minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.
<b>Methodology</b>	<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>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	The Inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider and person in charge, 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 has been met. The service has designated person in charge and a named deputy.

### 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.

**Requirement met:**

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider is aware of the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in Part 2 of Schedule 6 and would ensure that an adequate number of adults would at all times work directly with the children in the service.

### 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.

**Requirement met:**

(1)(a) The care rooms were resourced with a wide range of play materials and equipment to facilitate children to initiate and sustain meaningful play activities. An extensive range of Montessori equipment including practical life, sensorial play, mathematic resources, language and cultural resources. Furthermore, a variety of interest areas were clearly defined and included well-resourced home areas including dress up materials, construction toys and a range of table top materials. The play materials were stored at an accessible level to the pre-school children. An enclosed outdoor area is available to the side of the service.

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	<p>(b) The requirements have been met.</p> <p>Cosy areas are available which included appropriately sized armchairs, mats and soft cushions in the 2 care rooms should the children choose to take a break from the activities during the day.</p> <p>(2) (b)The preschool children have access to a large outdoor area to the side of the service. The area was fully enclosed with wooden fencing, the area was surfaced with safety tiles with a section of the outdoor area with bark underfoot. A wooden tepee, a crawl through tunnel, a large wooden sandpit, a water wall, and a mud kitchen were provided for the children to play with. The outdoor play area was observed to be suitable and secure, and no safety hazards were noted on the day of inspection.</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:

The requirement has been met. The children will bring their own snack with them to the service. Fridges are provided in both preschool rooms for the storage of perishable items. Potable water is available for the children to drink.

### 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 requirements have been met.

1. The external doors and windows were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the early years' service. The gates leading into the service will be locked during the operational hours.
2. The kitchen is inaccessible to the children.
3. The play materials and equipment in the service were stored on stable-based low level shelving units. The play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children.
4. The outdoor area is secure thus preventing a pre-school child from exiting the area and preventing unauthorised access to the service.
5. Bins are provided for the collection of waste in the care room. Refuge bins are securely stored outside in an area which is inaccessible to the children.
6. The fire exits and fire assembly point are clearly marked in the service.

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7. A system is available for the safe storage of cleaning agents and equipment.
8. Two fridges are available for the storage of perishable goods.

### 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.

#### Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Two staff members have in date first aid responder training.

(2)(a)  
A well supplied first aid bag was available and safely stored in a readily accessible and conspicuous position in the service and was available in the pre-school 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.

#### Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) A copy of the monthly fire drills was available in the service.

(b) A record is maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the service. The firefighting equipment was certified as having been serviced in January 2023 and the fire detection and alarm system on 08/05/2023.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire are displayed in the service.

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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:

An insurance quotation was submitted to the Registration Team prior to this inspection. The Registered Provider must ensure that adequate insurance is in place prior to the commencement of the change. The change approval is contingent on the registered providers compliance with Regulation 28.

### 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 building appears to be of sound and stable structure.

(b) The building is safe and secure. The entrance door to the service and the internal door are secured adequately to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the service.

(c) The care room in the service has a number of windows which provides the room with natural light. The natural light can be augmented with artificial ceiling lighting as required. Appropriate shatter proof coverings are provided on the ceiling lighting. The temperature of the care rooms was 19°C on the day of inspection.

There are sufficient windows provided in all of the care room to achieve adequate ventilation. Mechanical ventilation is available in the sanitary facility located off the main corridor.

The service is heated by gas fired central heating.

(d) The service was in a clean condition on the day of inspection. Cleaning schedules are available.

(e) The building was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities. There are 4 toilets and 4 wash hand basins available for the children's use, 2 wash hand basins are located in the sanitary accommodation off the main corridor and there is a wash hand basin for the children's use in each care room. There are 2 toilets and 2 wash hand basins available for staff use. A nappy changing area was provided in the sanitary accommodation. Warm water not exceeding 43 °C, liquid soap and paper towels are provided at all the wash hand basins in the service.

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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.*

#### Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(2) The clear floor space of Room 1 was 36.37m<sup>2</sup> This provides sufficient space for the proposed 19 children between the age of 2 years 8 months to 5 years to be cared for in this room on a sessional ECCE basis.

The clear floor space of Room 2 was 35.39m<sup>2</sup> which provides sufficient space for the proposed 17 children between the age of 2 years 8 months to 5 years to be cared for in this room on a sessional ECCE basis.