

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019DR004
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Name of Service:	Clonkeen Montessori School
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Address of Service:	64A Clonkeen Drive, Foxrock, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D18 H2H3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sharon Small
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	11 January 2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM	22
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien
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
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Description of service

Clonkeen Montessori School is registered to provide part time care for children from 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates from 08:30 to 13:00, Monday to Friday.

The service is located in a suburban, residential area and operates from a ground floor commercial premises that has been adapted to provide early childhood care and education. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs four staff including the registered provider. There were three staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection including the registered provider.

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/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 Record in relation to Pre-school service (k).

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

(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,
- (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

(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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2) Following a discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed that one new member of staff commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 15 January 2020. Documentation was reviewed in respect of this adult and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a) Two validated references were available from a past employer for the adult.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána was available for the adult.

(4) A record was available evidencing that the adult who was employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification.

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.

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

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for part time services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twenty-three children attending the service being supervised by three adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were two adults on the premises at all times.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(h) Details of the attendance of each child in the service were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

(i) The staff roster was available and accurately reflected the adults working in the service on the day of inspection.

(k) A sample of accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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

(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

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that children bring in their lunch from home. Children were offered a fruit snack at 10:00 and lunch took place at 11:00. Water was provided with each meal. Children were observed engaging in conversation with their peers and staff during their meals and staff supported children who needed assistance with their lunch.

Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including using the toilet independently and cleaning up after their play and meals.

The service had a key person system in place and staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff interacted warmly with the children in their care throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's positive behaviour management policy. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed.

Transitions within the service were managed well. Children were given notice when an activity was coming to an end and appeared to be familiar with the daily routine.

The staff described how they communicate with parents daily about their child at arrival and collection time. The service also uses an online messaging system to communicate with parents.

Children's choices were respected with children given the opportunity to choose their own play equipment and activities during free play.

The care room was arranged to provide a range of play materials and areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Areas of interest included Montessori equipment, mark making stations, small world toys, jigsaws and a rest area with books. The care room provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and was adequately resourced with a variety of materials. The materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care room. The children's photos were displayed throughout the room.

A fully enclosed outdoor area was located to the rear of the premises and had a mix of paving and artificial grass surfacing. A range of developmentally appropriate play equipment was provided in the outdoor play area.

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

The inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- Hand sanitisers, medicines and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.
- All blind cords were secured.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and before meals.
- The service had an infection control policy in place. A cleaning schedule was in place and maintained to ensure the service was regularly cleaned.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.

Non-Compliance Information

Administration of Medication:

1. The documentation, procedures and practices in place for children attending the service requiring emergency medication were contrary to the service policy, posing a potential risk to the health and safety of children as follows;
 - a. There was no documented care plan available for one child attending the service who required emergency medication for an allergy, posing a risk to the timely treatment of the child in the event of an emergency. Discussion with staff demonstrated that they were aware of what to do if the medication was required and where the medication was stored.

- b. Emergency medication for the child was not stored in its original container, therefore, the expiry date of the medication could not be determined.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Administration of Medication:

A specific care plan for the administration of medication and the detailed action to be taken was developed immediately and shared with staff. Each staff member has studied and understood the plan and how to administer emergency medication if required. In future we will always develop a clear care plan if required for a child with specific medical needs. We have put a reminder on the school phone calendar prior to the medication use by date to ask the parent to replace in time.

Supporting documentation submitted

Administration of Medication:

Written evidence of the care plan was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.

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 trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service.

(b) A first aid box was available to the adults and children in 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 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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had been recorded as undertaken on the 06 December 2022.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the fire equipment were dated 19 May 2022 and 18 October 2022 for the smoke alarms.
 - (4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had evidence of insurance cover valid until 27 November 2023. The insurance provides cover for a part time service accommodating 25 children.