

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022DS003
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Name of Service:	Spraoi Montessori
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Address of Service:	1 The Close, Grange Manor, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K78 CA49
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Name of Registered Provider:	Denise McGuinness
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	24/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	10
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland
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

Spraoi Montessori is a sessional service located in a residential area in Lucan, Co Dublin. The service operates from a single storey building to the rear of the registered providers domestic property and comprises of one care room, sanitary facilities and a fully enclosed outdoor area to the front of the premises. Care and education are offered to children aged 2 years 8 months to 6 years from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and an afternoon session from 1:00 to 4:00 pm Monday to Friday 38 weeks of the year.

Staffing

There are currently two adults employed to work in the service including the registered provider. On the day of the inspection both adults were present working directly with the children.

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 records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 (1) (a-c), (2) (a-d), (3), (4) Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1), (3), –Staffing Levels

Regulation 19 (1)(a) – Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23– Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25(1), (2) (a-b) First Aid

Regulation 26 (1), (a), (b), (4) –Fire Safety Measures

Regulation 27 Supervision

Regulation –28 Insurance

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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice (IAN) was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to a risk identified under Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures. Further details are available in the body of the report. The registered provider submitted a response on the 25 September 2025 which was deemed to adequately address the non-compliance.

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.

(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 person in charge and a named person to deputise.
 - (b) The person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure and adults demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the lines of authority within the service.
- (2) Conversation with the person in charge confirmed that one new adult commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 13 December 2022. Documentation required under Regulation 9(2)(3)(4)

was reviewed in respect of the adult as detailed below. The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) relating to Garda Vetting was reviewed for both adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for two adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.

(d) Not required

(4) Documentation was available to show that the adult held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) (b) There were no written validated references available for review for one staff member.
- (3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified above under 9(2)(a)(b) had not been carried out prior to the adult commencing employment in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Two written and verified references have been obtained for the staff member. The registered provider has created new staff files and will ensure all references are validated and kept on file going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Two verified references received

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (2)(a) (b), (3) has been adequately addressed.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children to meet their care needs. There were two adults available to eight children in the morning and two adults available to ten children in the afternoon.
- (3) The required adult to child ratio was maintained for the duration of the inspection.

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

Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed in the service as evidenced by the following:

The service had a healthy eating policy and the registered provider reported that parents provide the children's lunches and the policy is shared with them before their children join the service. On the day of inspection children were observed sitting together engaging in positive conversation with their peers while eating a variety of healthy options such as fruit, yogurt and sandwiches. Staff used lunchtime as an opportunity to promote independence. For example, children were encouraged to retrieve and manage their own lunch boxes with support provided if required. Children were observed to use the toilet independently and any child who required assistance with toileting or hand washing was supported when needed. Children were prompted to wash their hands before snack, following outdoor play and after using the toilet.

An area with a rug and cushions was available for children to take a break from activities if needed. The children appeared content in the service demonstrating a sense of familiarity with staff. Staff spoke to children in warm playful tones, fostering a positive atmosphere that supported children's sense of security, encouraged

communication and the development of their social skills. Children were observed to move freely around the care room and the outdoor area exploring and discovering through self-guided learning. Staff moved about to support the children but allowed children autonomy to play with whom and what they wished. Transitions from one activity to the next were well managed with staff providing advance warning that a change in activity was approaching. Staff used verbal cues and music to signal the change to children. Staff were observed to actively listen to children's voices and responded with positive encouraging language. Staff explained that parents are invited into the service for an induction evening prior to their child's start date and ongoing communication happens at drop off and collection and through an app where staff share updates on children's weekly activities.

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:

- Doors both internal and external were appropriately secured to restrict unauthorised access and prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Toys and play equipment used by the children were observed to be safe for the age of children using them and in good condition.
- The windows were secured and could not be reached by the children.
- Cleaning materials and medication were stored safely and inaccessible to children.
- Electric cables observed were in good condition and out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- The premises was observed to be clean and well maintained.
- Liquid soap and warm water were available at wash hand basins.
- A pedal operated bin was in use in the sanitary area.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated knowledge of the procedure to safely administer medication to a child and documentation was available for use should it be required.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit was observed to be unobstructed for the duration of the inspection.

- Staff members adequately detailed the procedure to follow to ensure the safe evacuation of children in the event of a fire.
- The sign for the evacuation meeting point was in a prominent position at the front of the registered providers domestic dwelling.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A care plan was available for a child requiring medication however, there was no signed consent from the parents and it was not updated to reflect the current medical requirements of the child. It is acknowledged that staff clearly demonstrated awareness of the procedures to follow to meet the child's needs and were observed to continuously monitor the child during the inspection.
Failure to maintain records of a child's current medical requirements poses a risk to the child's safety.

Infection Control:

2. There was no single use paper towels available to the children to support effective hand washing. Children were observed using their own individual cloth towels which were stored together in a storage unit in the sanitary area creating a risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. An updated care plan was drawn up by a professional and signed by the parent. In addition, an updated administration of medication form was developed. Going forward any child who starts in the service with a medical condition will require a care plan signed by their parent. The care plan will be on display for easy access.

Infection Control:

2. The service has removed all cloth towels and will use single use paper towels going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copy of care plan

Infection Control:

No evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

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) There was evidence to show that two adults hold certification in First Aid Responder training and both adults were available for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible and prominent position in the care room.

(b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

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

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a prominent position in the hallway of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The registered provider stated that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis; however, there were no records available to demonstrate that fire drills had taken place in the service.
 - (b) There were no records to demonstrate that the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms had been serviced since the service opened in 2022. Failure to routinely service firefighting equipment and smoke alarms compromises the safety of the children attending the service.
- An immediate action notice (IAN) was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to the risk identified above.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (a) A fire drill was carried out with children attending the morning and afternoon sessions. Children were given clear instruction and evacuated the premises promptly and safely. Going forward fire drills will take place on a monthly basis and a record for each drill will be maintained.
 - (b) Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms were serviced. The registered provider has put a system in place to ensure annual servicing takes place on all fire equipment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Record of fire drills

Evidence of service of fire extinguishers

Evidence of service of smoke alarm

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 26 has been adequately addressed and will be subject to review in the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Children were adequately supervised at all times during the inspection by both sight and sound. This was observed during indoor and outdoor play, mealtimes and toileting routines.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service is adequately insured for the type of service provided and the number of children in attendance. The service is insured for a maximum of 11 children and cover is valid until 27 March 2026.