

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2023DR004		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	St. Nicholas Montessori School Blackrock		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Pastoral Centre, Newtown Park Avenue, Blackrock, Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	A94 VF74		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Nicholas Breakwell		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	05/12/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	7	PM n/a
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R. Brien		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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).			
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable		

### Description of service

St. Nicholas Montessori School Blackrock is registered to provide part time and sessional care for children from 3 to 6 years of age from 09:00 to 14:00, Monday to Friday. On the day of inspection, the service was operating a sessional service from 09:00 to 12:30.

The service is located in an urban residential area in Blackrock, Co. Dublin. Care and education are provided in one preschool room within a multi-purpose pastoral care centre. A fully enclosed outdoor play area is located to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The service currently employs two staff who were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider does not work directly in the service and was not present on the day of inspection.

### 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 an announced initial inspection and focused on the area of governance and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 person in charge, 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) The files of two adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a) Four references were available from a past employer in respect of the two adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for two adults.
- (4) Records were available evidencing that the two staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent.

### 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.*

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

*(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service 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.*

#### Compliance Information

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

(3) The minimum ratio of adults to children for sessional care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were seven children attending the service being supervised by two adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(c) Not applicable, the service is not operated single-handedly.

### 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

(1)(a)(b)

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that children bring in their own lunch from home. Lunch took place at 11:10 and children were given a drink with their meal. The children sat together when eating, engaging in conversation with each other and staff creating a sociable atmosphere. Drinking water was freely accessible throughout the inspection.

Children were given responsibility appropriate to their age and were encouraged and supported to be independent. The inspector observed the children using the toilet as they needed and cleaning up after their lunch and play. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes.

Staff displayed warmth and sensitivity during all interactions with the children throughout the inspection. Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour policy. Children's choices were respected with children given the opportunity to choose their own play equipment and activities. Staff encouraged and supported children in their chosen activities. Children appeared to be familiar with the daily routine. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed.

The care room was arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included Montessori equipment, construction toys, small world play, jigsaws and a library. The care room provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and was adequately resourced with a variety of materials. The children's artwork was displayed in the care room. The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving and low level hooks were provided for coats. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care room.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was available to the rear of the premises with a mix of concrete and artificial grass surfacing. The outdoor area was resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment