

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023DY004			
Name of Service:	Maple Montessori			
Address of Service:	33 Shanliss Park, Santry, Co. Dublin			
Eircode:	D09 A038			
Name of Registered Provider:	Grace Geoghegan			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	01/03/2024			
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>4</td> <td>PM</td> </tr> </table>	AM	4	PM
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	<p>Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6 A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin15</p>			
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne			
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

Maple Montessori is a sessional only service located in Dublin 9. The service is located in a purpose-built building to the side of the registered providers residential dwelling. There is one large care room with a sanitary facility off the care room. The service has access to two outdoor areas one to the front and one to the rear of the service. The service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years, Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 12pm, September to June. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.

Staffing

On the day of inspection, the registered provider was present to care for the children. The service operates singlehandedly. In the event of an emergency, a second familiar person familiar with the service is available. The registered provider holds a level 8 major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National framework of Qualifications.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the regulations.

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(2).

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare

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 and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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.

(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

(2) Two staff files were reviewed and the following was available.

(a) Two written references were available for the registered provider from a past employer.

Two written and validated references were available from a past employer for the emergency contact person.

(b) Not applicable

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for both the registered provider and the emergency contact person.

(d) Police vetting was not required for the registered provider and the emergency contact person as they had not lived in a state other than the state for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The registered provider held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge and was available upon the inspector's arrival and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (3) The correct adult /child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection. There was one adult from 8.30 am until 12.00 pm working directly with the four children present in the service.
- (8)(c) A second person who is familiar with the operation of the service is available to provide assistance to the registered provider at all times and was located within close distance of the service and is available to attend in the event of an emergency.

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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic needs:

- The inspector observed the children having their lunches consisting of sandwiches, yogurts, cheese and fruit and water in bottles, all brought from home.
- Children were supported in personal care, accessing toilets independently whenever required with facilities available for good hand hygiene.
- The development of self-care skills of the children was evident for example the inspector observed the children tidying up their snack, packing their bags and placing them at their coat hooks ready for taking home at collection time.
- There was provision of rest and relaxation for the children with a couch and rug available.
- During the inspection, the children demonstrated freedom of movement in the classroom providing opportunities for fine and gross motor development, for example, completing jigsaws, playing with the sensory tray filled with rice and play equipment including play bugs relating to the weekly theme of Mini beasts, playing with the play kitchen and play food and equipment.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

- Children were supported to engage positively with play activities through positive affirmation from the registered provider, while completing a playdough activity with play equipment.
- The registered provider offered praise and gave children, both individual and group attention during the inspection, for example by sitting with the children during lunchtime and giving positive guidance.
- During lunchtime the children were observed to sit in the care room to have their lunches independently in a comfortable and relaxed environment that promoted social interaction with their peers.
- The registered provider discussed with the inspector that communication with parents is completed verbally at drop off /collection times and through a messaging application to include children's weekly routine and activities.

Physical and material environment:

- The care room was welcoming and laid out with a variety of activities including low level shelving with materials as follows:
 - home corner area with a play kitchen with appropriate supportive equipment such as toy food, delph, utensils, dolls and supportive equipment such as clothes and rocking chair, doctors set, musical instruments.
 - art materials were set up with crayons, colouring pencils and paper.
 - messy play area with supporting equipment example rice with play equipment.
 - construction areas with plastic bricks, building blocks, construction clicks, construction cubes, trains and track set.
 - small world play areas with cars and trucks, car ramp, garage, two small dolls houses with supportive equipment, animals, dinosaurs.
 - tabletop activities of pegs and peg boards, sorting, threading, jigsaws, wooden puzzles, number puzzles.
 - Montessori materials supporting practical life, sensorial, language, maths and culture.
- The children were observed to take activities of their choice throughout the session as all activities were available and accessible on shelving positioned at child height.
- There were family and birthday dates displays on the wall, promoting a sense of identity and belonging for the children.
- Artwork of Life cycle of a butterfly and beehives were displayed on the walls of the classroom relating to the Theme of the week mini beasts and life cycle of a butterfly.
- The enclosed outdoor play area to the front was secure with a soft artificial grass surface. The children had access to two slides, two ride in cars, a wooden playhouse and a climbing cube with a slide and the second outdoor area to the rear of the service was surrounded by a concrete wall with a grass surface.
- On the day of the inspection, the registered provider confirmed that the children have access to outdoor play daily but due to the inclement weather of snow on the day of inspection, outdoor play was not possible.

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:

- On arrival to the service, the inspector observed, the entrance gate was secure with an intercom visual system with a release button controlled by the registered provider in the classroom.
- Attendance records were present, completed and accurate.
- The play equipment and materials observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The temperature of the care room was recorded as 22°C at 11.15am, within the recommended ambient temperature of 18 - 22 °C.

Infection Control:

- The service was visually clean and the registered provider was observed cleaning the tables prior to the children's lunch.
- Cleaning checklist, Managers morning check list, Daily risk checklist and the outdoor checklist were completed daily and available.
- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included warm water, liquid soap, and hand towels.
- Handwashing was completed after before meals, after toilet visits and after messy activities.
- Pedal operated lidded bins were available for waste disposal.
- Adequate ventilation was available in the care room by means of openable windows and doors.
- Windows were fitted with restrictive opening devices.