

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR103
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Name of Service:	Montessori Playschool
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Address of Service:	320 Nutgrove Avenue, Churchtown, Dublin 14, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D14 EK02
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Name of Registered Provider:	Tara McGowan
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Service type:	Childminder
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Date of Inspection:	30/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
Inspection undertaken by:	Sarah Quigley
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

Montessori Playschool is a privately owned service which is located in an urban, residential area of Churchtown, Dublin 14. The child-minding service operates from 9:30 to 12:45 each weekday providing a child-led, play based curriculum. Care and education are provided for in a purposely adapted classroom located within the registered provider's own private home to children aged 2 to 6 years. An outdoor play area is available to the rear of the premises with a blend of artificial grass and gravelled surfacing.

Staffing

The registered provider operates the service single handedly. A second person who is familiar with the operation of the service is available to the registered provider in the case of an emergency should the need arise.

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/information and records/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety. 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 -

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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.

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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) Documentation was reviewed in respect of the registered provider and the second person who is available as an emergency contact. The following records were available for the two adults:

(a) (b)

Two verified references in respect of each adult from past employers.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure from The National Vetting Bureau for the adults.

(d) Not applicable, international police vetting was not required for either adult.

(3) A review of documentation evidenced that the procedures specified above under Regulation 9(2) had been completed prior to the adult's commencing employment in the service.

(4) There was evidence that the registered provider had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

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

(b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and

Compliance Information

- (8)
- (b) The registered provider ensured that a second person who was familiar with the operation of the service and lived within close proximity of the service, was available to provide assistance in the event of an emergency as required.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

- (a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,*
- (b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and*
- (c) there is a working telephone on the premises.*

(2) A childminder may have more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time where all such children are siblings of each other.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A review of documentation and discussions with the registered provider evidenced there were no more than 5 children enrolled to attend the service at any given time.
 - (b) Not applicable, the service is registered to provide care for children aged 2 to 6 years.
 - (c) A working telephone is available on the premises.
- (2) Not applicable, the service is registered to provide care for children aged 2 to 6 years.

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Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1)
A sample of documentation was reviewed by the inspector to assess compliance relating to the records of preschool children maintained in the service. The sample of documentation reviewed evidenced that a record was kept in writing in respect of pre-school children attending the service detailing the information outlined under Regulation 15(1)(a)-(i).

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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

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place during the inspection.

The registered provider interacted warmly with the children when assisting with personal care. Children were given regular opportunities to use the toilet, with assistance being provided by the provider where required. The care room was equipped with a rest area where children could take time away from the group if desired. A snack is offered daily by the registered provider and on the day of inspection consisted of fruit, toast, and milk. Children were supported to clean their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection.

The provider was observed to be kind and engaged during interactions observed with the children. Children were observed to be content and engaged in play and Montessori based activities throughout the inspection. The registered provider demonstrated a robust awareness of each child's individual care needs which was reflected during one-on-one interactions with children. Children were alerted in advance of transitions which ensued smoothly from one activity to the next.

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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 the provider, 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 premises was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor play environment was safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal-operated, lidded bins. The children were supported to wash and sanitize their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet, and before snack. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. The provider stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. The registered provider adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape route was clearly indicated on the evacuation plan and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. The registered provider adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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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)

The registered provider was trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) training and works single handedly with the children each day.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was stored in a conspicuous location within the service.

(b) A first aid box was available in the service at all times on the day of inspection.

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 was adequately insured for the type of service provided and the number of children in attendance.