

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE043
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Name of Service:	Edmund Rice Montessori
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Address of Service:	Highbury House, Ballymorris, Cratloe, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 VC5F
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rachel Ormston
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	27/02/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	6	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Inspection undertaken by:	J. Hayes
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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Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Edmund Rice Montessori School is a privately owned sessional preschool service located in a rural area close to Cratloe in Co. Clare. The service provides a morning sessional service from 9.30am to 12.30pm, Monday to Friday. The service is registered to care for 11 pre-school children.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge of operating the service. A second person is available to call on in the event of an emergency. The service provider has achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education and engages regularly in ongoing training and professional development.

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 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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

(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.*

(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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The registered provider was present on the day of the inspection. There was a person available to call on in the event of an emergency.
- (b) The staff roster indicated that the registered provider was always available on the premises during the operational hours of the service
- (c) The information in relation to the service clearly indicated that this service is operated solely by the registered provider.
- (2)(a) Two written references were available for the registered provider.
- (b) The references on file were from previous employers or from reputable sources.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána was available for the registered provider. The disclosure was dated within the last 3 years.
- (d) Not applicable.
- (4) The registered provider held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education

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) The registered provider ensured that at all times there was the correct number of adults working with the number of children present.
- (3) There were 6 pre-school children with 1 adult attending the morning sessional service. This met the requirements of Regulation 11.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.*

(2) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or of 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 particulars specified in subparagraphs (a), (d), (e) and (f) of paragraph (1).

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) to (i) All of the required information was detailed in each child's records.
- (2) Not applicable as this was a sessional service.
- (3) (a), (b), (c) The required records were available and open to inspection.
- (5) The registered provider ensured the records were maintained as required.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) all documents and records relating to references and Garda and police vetting obtained under Regulation 9(2) are retained for a period of 5 years from the date on which the person to whom the document or record relates commences working in the service, and*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

(4) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises by a parent or guardian of a child but only in respect of information concerning that child.

(5) For the purposes of operating the pre-school service, a record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises by an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) to (k) A record in writing was available detailing all required information in relation to the service.
- (2) (a) (b) All documents and records are retained for the required period of time.
- (3) The required documents and records were available for inspection.
- (4) Parents/Guardians could access records in relation to their child.
- (5) Not applicable as this service is operated solely by the registered provider.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

Basic Needs:

The children's basic needs were carefully considered in the daily activities. A healthy eating policy was in place, with parents providing healthy snacks and drinks. Children and staff sat together at meal time which provided an opportunity for casual conversations. Drinking water was readily available to the children throughout the morning. The children's toilet was easily accessible to the playroom which ensured the children could access this area independently. Spare clothes, tissues, wipes, and proper waste disposal (foot pedal bins) were available at all times. A quiet corner with soft seating and books was provided for children to rest and take time out if needed. The registered provider and the children were engaged in a range of activities both indoors and outdoors. The atmosphere was calm, and the children's needs were attended to as required.

Physical and Material Environment:

Children spent part of the morning in a well-laid out playroom which had a wide range of Montessori equipment and materials accessible on low level shelving. The patio door to the outdoor play area directly in front of the service remained open and children could freely access this area if they required additional space for movement and gross motor activities. The area included , gardening spaces, a sand pit, stepping stones , a picnic bench and space for ball games. Additional extensive garden and lawn space was available for nature walks and further play opportunities.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) There were no issues identified in relation to the structure of the premises.
- (b) Safe and secure access to the premises was provided.
- (c) The Montessori playroom was warm and comfortable, well-lit with natural and artificial lighting and well-ventilated with openable windows and a patio door.
- (d) All areas of the premises were well maintained and in a clean condition.

Non-Compliance Information

- (e) The hot water supply at the wash hand basin in the children's sanitary accommodation was not thermostatically controlled to ensure a maximum safe hot water temperature of 43°C. A high temperature of 58.9 °C was recorded on inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(e)
Corrective and Preventive Action
A plumber has been contacted to fit a thermostat. He has given the week starting March 31st as a possible week to do the work. He has also suggested in the meantime turning down the temperature of the heating as they are both linked. The children will be supervised while using the tap to make sure they are not using the hot water until the issue is resolved.

Supporting documentation submitted

Install a thermostat to prevent any future non-compliance.

Summary Comment

Based on the registered providers response the non compliance under Regulation 29(e) has been addressed.