

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR129
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Name of Service:	Mountainside Montessori
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Address of Service:	Holy Trinity National School, Glencairn, Leopardstown, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D18 YV91
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ann Mc Nulty and Martina Long
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date(s) of Inspection:	26/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency, The Brunel Building Heuston South Quarter St Johns Road West, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	J Mayock and 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).

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Conditions if applicable

Not applicable

Description of service

Mountainside Montessori is a privately owned part time service offering early childhood education to children aged 2-6 years from 9:00am to 1:00pm Monday to Friday 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from a partitioned area within a hall in Holy Trinity National School and comprises of a care room, sanitary area for both children and adults and an outdoor area located to the rear of the premises. The outdoor area is securely enclosed with high level heavy duty fencing.

Staffing

The service operates with 3 staff members including 2 registered providers. The 3rd staff member is employed in the service under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). All 3 staff were present on the day of inspection, working directly with the children attending the preschool service.

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 and safety inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulation:

- 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c) Management and recruitment
- 11 (1)(2) Staffing levels
- 19 1(a)(b) Health welfare and development of child
- 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child
- 25 1,2 (a)(b) First Aid
- 26 1 (a)(b) Fire safety

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered providers, 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*

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(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-

(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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) A review of the staff roster showed that the person in charge and the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present.
- (2) Following a discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed that no adults had commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 13/06/2022.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for 3 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years

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.*
- (2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.*

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children to meet their care needs. There were 3 staff available to the 21 children present.
- (2) The required adult to child ratio was maintained for the duration of the inspection.

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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-

(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

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(a)(b) The atmosphere at lunchtime was relaxed and pleasant with positive social interactions observed among staff and children. Lunch was provided daily by the parents; the meals included a variety of foods ensuring a balanced nutritious selection for the children. Drinking water was available and accessible to children throughout the morning.

Children's independence was encouraged and supported throughout the day for example packing away lunch boxes, tidying up following play and using the toilet independently. An area with a mat and child size armchairs was available for children who wanted to take a break from activities.

The routine in the service was guided by the children's interests with activities and play experiences designed to encourage children to be creative and curious, co directing their own learning. Staff were observed speaking to children in warm gentle tones, interactions that are respectful and consistent support children to become competent confident learners. Children were given the freedom to make choices and were observed to move freely around the room following their own interests and engaging in positive interactions with their peers. Smooth transitions were observed, as children took the responsibility for ringing a bell to signal tidy up time was approaching. Staff also provided advanced notice of transitions throughout the day, ensuring children were well prepared and the flow remained seamless.

The care room was bright and airy and laid out with a variety of interest areas for example a library area, home corner, shop, construction area, small world play, art and crafts and a selection of puzzles. Storage was at child's level and materials were organised allowing children to find and return them with ease. Children's work was

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displayed around the room in ways that value and respect it. Children had the opportunity to engage in outdoor play in an enclosed space accessed directly from the care room. Staff brought a variety of equipment promoting physical activity to the garden, for example slides and bikes.

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:

- The entrances into the service were appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised access or a child exiting the service unsupervised.
- Visibility strips were placed on glass panelled doors.
- Toys and play equipment were safe and age appropriate to the children using them.

Infection Control:

- Pedal bins were available in the sanitary area and care room to support effective hygiene practices.
- Children were supported to wash their hands after toileting and before mealtimes.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- Tables were cleaned with disinfectant spray before and after mealtimes.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated knowledge of the procedure to safely administer medication to a child should they require it. The registered provider advised that they had not yet been required to administer medication however there was a medicine consent form available for use if needed.

Outing:

- The service had an outings policy and a risk assessment form available for outings.

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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)

There was evidence to show that 2 adults were trained in First Aid Responder and both were available for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

(a)(b) An adequately stocked first aid box was stored safely in a press in the care room and was observed to be immediately accessible if required. The press had a first aid sign on the door to signal its location.

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

(1)

(a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service.

(b) The number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms were dated 7th January 2025.

(4) A notice of procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the wall in the care room.