

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR161
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Name of Service:	Cherry Blossom Grove Montessori
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Address of Service:	23 Corbawn Drive, Shankill, Dublin 18,
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Eircode:	D18 RK54
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Name of Registered Provider:	Suzanne Widger
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	09/04/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Sutherland and O Quill
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

Cherry Blossom Grove Montessori is a private service located in a residential area in Dublin 18. The service operates from a building attached to the registered providers home and comprises of two care rooms. It accommodates children from the age of 2 years and 6 months to 6 years offering sessional and part time care from 9:00am to 1:30pm Monday to Friday. Additionally, the service has a fully enclosed outdoor area to the front of the premises.

Staffing

There are currently four staff employed in the service including the registered provider, the person in charge, the deputy person in charge and one childcare staff employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM). On the day of inspection three staff were present working directly with the children.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

9(1)(a),(b),(c) (2) (a)-(d) and (4) Management and Recruitment

11(1),(2), Staffing Levels

15 (1)(a) -(i) and 3 Record of a pre-school child

19(1)(a) Health, welfare and development of child

23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 (1)(a) -(i).

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 person in charge, staff 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

(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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived and remained present for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) The service had clear management structure and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

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- (2) Conversation with the person in charge confirmed that there are four adults currently employed in the service including the registered provider, two of which are new to the service since the last inspection of Regulation 9 on the 25 January 2022. The following records were available for the four adults.
- (a) Seven written references were available from past employers and were appropriately verified
 - (b) One written reference was available from a reputable source other than a past employer and was appropriately verified.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for four adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years
 - (d) International Police Vetting was available for one adult who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the four adults who worked directly with the children held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 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.*
- (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 three adults available to eighteen children.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained in accordance with requirements.

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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.*

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

Compliance Information

- (1) A sample of eleven children's files were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a)-(i) was maintained for each child.
- (3) (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspectors were available for review.

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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

Compliance Information

1(a)

The children's lunches were provided daily by their parents and offered a variety of food choices that ensured a balanced nutritious diet for the children. Drinking water was available and stored in an area to allow children to access it with ease throughout the day and staff were observed to encourage children to drink their water with their meals. Children were supported to be confident and independent in their development of self-help and self-care skills for example, tidying up following play, handing out and packing away lunch boxes, hanging up their coats and using the toilet independently. The presence of a family wall, images of where the children live and the children's artwork on display throughout the care rooms demonstrated a sense of belonging for the children. A child size sofa and armchairs were available for children, providing a comfortable space where they could relax and take a break from activities. In addition, the outdoor play area had a table and chairs for the children to sit and rest during outdoor play.

Staff were observed to create a flow through the daily routine, ensuring a relaxed pace and supporting children to transition smoothly to the next activity. Children were given the opportunity to have a voice in decision making, staff created space where children felt safe to express their views and immediately responded to children's verbal and non-verbal cues. Staff interacted with children in a warm, patient and playful manner using soft tones and friendly body language. Children's feelings were acknowledged, and staff were observed to respond respectfully and consistently throughout the morning. Children were observed moving freely around the indoor and outdoor environment engaging in positive interactions with their peers and directing their own learning.

The indoor environment offered a rich variety of resources to support children's development. For example, open ended materials and Montessori equipment was available to encourage creativity and fine motor skills, a home corner promoted imaginative play and social interaction and books and mark making materials fostered early literacy and communication. Materials were freely available to the children and stored in a way that allowed

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children to independently find and return items of interest with ease. Children's scrapbooks were stored in a way that made them easily accessible allowing them to engage with them independently. Staff advised that children were encouraged to choose and add their own items promoting autonomy and personal expression.

The equipment and materials available in the outdoor area supported children's play and exploration. For example, resources such as a chalkboard, sand, toy cars, slide, and a tunnel were available to encourage a range of physical and imaginative activities.

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:

- Doors both internal and external were appropriately secured to restrict unauthorised access and prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Toys and play equipment used by the children were observed to be safe for the age of children using them and in good condition.
- Medication was stored in a locked press which was inaccessible to children.
- Staff confirmed that daily risk assessments are carried out in the outdoor area, with documentation available to confirm that these checks were completed each day.

Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were in use in the sanitary area, care room and the outdoor area to support effective hand hygiene practices.
- Children were supported to wash their hands after toileting, nasal care, outdoor play and before mealtimes.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- Lunch provided by the parents was suitably stored in the fridge.

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Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated clear understanding of the procedure for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency fire exits were free from obstruction on the day of inspection.
- Staff reported that fire drills were carried out monthly and clearly outlined the procedures in place to safely evacuate the children in the event of a fire. Relevant documentation, including the evacuation plan and monthly fire drills were available for review and it was noted that the last fire drill had taken place on 28th March 2025.