

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015FL199

Name of Service: Lorraine's Montessori School

Address of Service: 101 Pineridge
Balbriggan
Co. Dublin

Email Address: moorelorraine100@hotmail.com

Name of Registered Service Provider: Ms. Lorraine Moore

Type of service registered: Sessional ☒

Date of Inspection: 2 4 0 5 2 0 2 1

No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection: AM 7 PM 0

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Inspectorate
180-189 Lakeshore Drive
Airside Business Park
Swords
Co. Dublin

Inspection undertaken by : S Taaffe
Title: Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health, Welfare and Development	Safety

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

Description of Service	Lorraine's Montessori was established by the registered provider in 2010 and is conducted from the same premises as Circle of Friends which is another sessional service operating concurrently from the same setting. Pre-school children from both services attend simultaneously. Both services provide sessional care to pre-school children from 2 years 8 months to 6 years of age and participate in the Early Childhood care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.15am to 12.15pm each weekday for 38 weeks of the year. Lorraine's Montessori is registered to accommodate a maximum of 7 pre-school children with a maximum of 22 pre-school children attending in total on any given day between the two early years services. School aged children are not accommodated in either of the two services. The purpose-built premises from where the two services are conducted is based to the side of a private dwelling in a housing estate in Balbriggan in Co. Dublin. The pre-school children have access to three interconnecting rooms, a main pre-school room (the Montessori Room), a smaller pre-school room for play-based activities and a home room. A fully enclosed area provided to the rear of the premises is set up for outdoor play.
Staffing	The two registered providers (for Lorraine's Montessori and for Circle of Friends) were present on the day of inspection, working directly with the 20 children in attendance.
Methodology	Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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. 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 areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 health welfare and development of child and regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. 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.
Acknowledgements	The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the children and the registered provider for this and the registered provider for the concurrent service, both of whom were present on the day of the inspection.

GOVERNANCE

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:

The staff files maintained in relation to the registered provider for this service and also the registered provider for the concurrent early years service were previously found to meet the regulatory requirement in relation to Regulation 9 and therefore are not included in this inspection report. The files maintained in relation to the two relief staff were viewed in the course of this inspection.

(2)(a)and(b)There were 2 written and validated references available for the two relief staff members.

(c) Evidence of completed Garda vetting disclosures were available for the two staff members employed in a relief capacity in the service.

(d) Not applicable as there was no evidence that international police vetting was required for the two staff members employed in a relief capacity in the service.

(4) The two relief staff members held a major award in childcare at Level 5-6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

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) thereof 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) During the unannounced inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) On the day of inspection two adults (the registered provider for this service and the registered provider for the concurrent early years service) were working directly with the 20 pre-school children present on the premises, all of whom were attending on a sessional basis and were aged between 3 years 4 months and 5 years.
- (8)(c) The registered providers of this service and the concurrent service were familiar with the operation of both services and had two relief staff available if required in the event of an emergency or the unexpected absence of either registered provider.

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

Compliance Information:

- (1)(a) The inspector viewed the care practices in the service, although the time spent indoors in the premises was reduced in order to minimise risk in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following examples demonstrate how children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated on the day of inspection:

BASIC NEEDS:

- The registered providers demonstrated care and attention to the children in attendance.
- The children were given as much time as they needed to eat their morning snack provided from home without rushing. Drinking water was freely available to children throughout the session.
- Prompting, supervision and assistance was provided when necessary to the children when using the toilet. Nappy changing was not required as all

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

children were fully toilet-trained, in keeping with the service's enrolment policy.

- The activities facilitated on the day of inspection ensured that children regularly changed position and moved around the pre-school rooms. The children were brought outdoors for energetic play during the session.
- The registered providers promptly managed issues that arose between the children in a calm and supportive manner, which diffused the situation and prevented minor behavioural problems from escalating.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The registered providers were observed to be caring and kind in their interactions with the children, demonstrating responsiveness to each child's individual needs and supporting the children in their choice of activities and facilitating play opportunities.
- Children were praised for their involvement in activities and on completion of tasks.
- The children were observed to seek out the adults for assistance and comfort when necessary which was promptly provided by the registered providers.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The smaller pre-school room was equipped with a wide range of developmentally appropriate play materials and the larger Montessori Room contained an array of specialist Montessori equipment. The environments supported the children in initiating and sustaining play activities and blended learning opportunities.
- The home room was set up with a well-resourced wooden play kitchen, dolls, prams, ironing board, dress-up costumes, a 3-storey wooden dolls house with furniture and wooden people and a shop area.
- The play materials and equipment were laid out in defined interest areas and positioned at an accessible level on open shelving which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- There was a broad range of books available in the service which supported children's language development.
- The outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises was fully-enclosed and surfaced with paving slabs. The play equipment provided opportunities for children to engage in active physical play and outdoor related activities including a spacious raised wooden play house with slide attached and a swing and sand pit beneath, an outdoor kitchen, raised beds with pebbles, logs and soil for digging, wall-mounted tubing for pouring activities, push-along toys, balls and a range of seating for adults and children.

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 viewed the following measures undertaken in the service to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children. The time spent indoors in the premises was reduced in order to minimise risk, taking cognisance of the COVID-19 pandemic. INFECTION CONTROL: • Plastic cones spaced 2 metres apart were in place on the pathway leading to the entrance of the premises to guide and prompt parents and visitors in relation to maintaining social distancing. • When asked, the registered providers accurately described the symptoms of COVID-19 and the isolation procedures to be followed in the event of an adult or child becoming unwell whilst attending the service. • Liquid soap and paper hand towel were provided for hand washing in the sanitary accommodation of the service. Appropriate hand hygiene procedures were implemented with staff observed reminding the children to wash their hands after using the toilet, and the children being facilitated to wash their hands before eating their snack, after outdoor play and after using tissues. • The children's lunches were refrigerated on arrival to the service. This reduced the risk of bacteria growth in the perishable food items. • Foot-operated pedal waste bins were available in the service which facilitated the hygienic disposal of waste. • A tarpaulin was provided to cover the large outdoor sandpit and the inspector was informed that this was removed each morning in advance of the children arriving and secured into place at the end of the session, preventing contamination of the sand by animals and birds.
Non-Compliance Information:	The following risks were identified that could impact on the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service: INFECTION CONTROL: 1. The cleaning schedules on display had not been revised since 2017 and were not sufficiently detailed to demonstrate enhanced cleaning and infection control measures in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. These records included the weekly cleaning procedures being undertaken in the service but did not include the daily cleaning required and did not reference the specific guidance provided for Early Years services by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC). 2. A heavy layer of dust had accumulated on top of the carbon monoxide alarm and cobwebs were observed, including on the wall above the fire extinguisher and attached to laminated posters on the wall between the two care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

	- There was significant build-up of grime and limescale surrounding the base of the taps on the sink in the cosy area of the main room. - The red children's couch in the smaller pre-school room had a cracked edge leaving foam exposed which was an infection control hazard as it could not be thoroughly cleaned.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been carried out: <u>CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:</u> - The specific guidance for cleaning programme for early years service by HSPC was printed from HSE website on 25th May 2021 and is now being used accordingly. - The cobwebs and dust were removed on 24th May 2021 after the inspection and is listed on the HSPC cleaning programme that is used currently and is checked daily and monthly. - The build-up of grime and lime scale was removed from sink on 25th May 2021 after sourcing the correct cleaning agents. This was also added to the HPSC cleaning programme. - The crack on the edge of the red couch was covered immediately with tape as a temporary measure. A water proof patch was ordered on 25th May 2021 and fitted to the couch on 26th May 2021. <u>PREVENTIVE ACTIONS:</u> - The HPSC Cleaning programme is now part of the service's regular routine and the service is following the cleaning schedule as advised on a daily and monthly basis. - Cobweb webs and dust are now listed on the HSPC cleaning programme and part of regular routine. - Build-up of grime and lime scale is part of the HSPC cleaning programme and now part of regular routine. - Couches and seating are checked monthly for cracks and patches are available to cover them if necessary, to manage infection control.
Summary Comment:	The inspector emailed the registered provider on 05/07/2021 requesting that a copy of the up-dated cleaning schedules be submitted to the Inspectorate in order to determine regulatory compliance. This document remains outstanding, as of 22/07/2021. This regulation will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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 of fire drills completed in the service but it was noted that these were carried out sporadically. The last recorded fire drill was carried out in February 2020. (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises.
Non-Compliance Information:	(1)(b) There was no up-to-date official maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been carried out: <u>CORRECTIVE ACTION:</u> (1)(b) Up-to-date maintenance records for fire equipment and smoke alarms are now in place, having last been serviced on 2nd June 2021. <u>PREVENTIVE ACTION:</u> (1)(b) Yearly service will be carried out in relation to the fire alarm and fire equipment and the service records will be displayed.
Summary Comment:	The registered provider submitted the following documentary evidence: • A maintenance record for the smoke alarm system in the service dated 02/06/2021. The corrective actions and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have partially addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 26. The inspector contacted the registered provider by email on 05/07/2021 requesting that an up-to-date maintenance record for the fire extinguishers in the service be submitted to the Inspectorate in order to determine regulatory compliance. This document remains outstanding, as of 22/07/2021. The regulatory requirement has not been met.

Additional Significant Risks Identified

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.

Non-Compliance Information:	Significant risks in relation to the safety of the children have been identified in relation to general safety: 1. The water temperature in the sinks in the sanitary accommodation was recorded at 49.8°C on the day of inspection which exceeded the recommended safe maximum water temperature of 43°C. This posed a risk of scalding for the children in attendance. When made aware of this, the registered providers facilitated the children to wash their hands at the sinks in the care rooms as a control measure until the water supply in the sanitary accommodation is thermostatically controlled. 2. Fire drills were not being practiced on a monthly basis to familiarise both adults and children of the correct procedures to follow in the event of a fire. The last recorded fire drill took place in February 2020.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been carried out: <u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u> 1. Sinks in the sanitary accommodation have been installed with thermostatic devices to regulate the temperature of water to a safe temperature. 2. Fire drills with the children were resumed on 1st June 2021 (due to COVID-19 fire drills were not regular, this has been rectified). <u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u> 1. Water temperature will be tested monthly and has been added to the cleaning schedule. 2. Fire drills will be carried out monthly and records will be displayed.
Summary Comment	The registered provider submitted the following documentary evidence: • A plumber's report and receipt for the supply and fitting of 3 thermostatic mixing valves in the service. The corrective actions and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 26. The regulatory requirement has been met.