

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK172
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Name of Service:	Teach Mhuire Montessori
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Address of Service:	12 Colbert Terrace, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 P9F9
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Barrett
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Service type:	Sessional
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Day 1 of Inspection:	09/10/2023
Day 2 of Inspection:	29/11/2023

No of pre-school children Day 1	AM	16	PM	No.
No of pre-school children Day 1	AM	16	PM	No.

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan
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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TUSLA An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency	Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2015LK172	1 of 13
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Description of service

This is a private montessori school which first opened in 2002. The service provides sessional care and education to preschool children aged 2 years to 5 years of age. The service operates from 09.00hrs to 12.00hrs and the setting caters for a maximum of 36 children. The service is located in a two-storey house in an urban area. There are 3 playrooms available to the children however 2 rooms upstairs are not currently in use. The service has an outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment.

Staffing

Two staff who work directly with the children have childcare qualifications and the third staff member completes the administrative work. The staff have engaged in on-going professional development including first aid training.

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.

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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.

Additional Information

19/10/2023

A referral was made to the Fire Safety Department to review the location of the boiler within the service. The person in charge was informed of the referral on the day of the inspection.

08/12/2023

A regulatory compliance meeting took place, attended by the Inspection and Registration Manager and the person in charge of Teach Mhuire Montessori. To discuss the actions taken, to address the non-compliances identified in the inspection report, as a corrective and preventive response had not been received to the inspectorate. The outcome of this meeting is outlined within the body of the report.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The details in relation to the sessional service on the directory of services were not up to date.

The details of the person in charge documented on the directory of services did not correlate with the person in charge identified on the day of the inspection.

29/11/2023

A follow up inspection took place at the service as the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) had not been returned to the Early Years Inspectorate. This non-compliance had not been addressed and remained outstanding.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

At the Regulatory Compliance meeting held 8th December 2023 the person in charge advised that a change in circumstance form was now completed and would be forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation was submitted to the registration office which detailed the change in person in charge to be updated on the directory of services.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the person in charge meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 8.

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.

(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,

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(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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge or the deputy person in charge were available on the premises at all times.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer were available for one staff member present on the day.

(b) References from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers were not required.

(c) Vetting disclosures were received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of all three staff.

(4) Two staff working directly with the children had childcare qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) Two written and validated references from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer were not available for two staff present on the day.

(d) Police vetting was not available for one member of staff who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) References which were validated were submitted for both staff.

(d) Police vetting was submitted for the staff member who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 months.

Supporting documentation submitted

References and police vetting.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the person in charge have addressed the requirements of Regulation 9.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Non-Compliance Information

The policy and procedure manual for the service was not available on site on the day of the inspection.

This may have resulted in staff not following correct procedures if they were unsure of the steps to follow in each policy e.g., accident and incident policy, notification of incident policy, policy on infection control, policy on managing behaviour.

29/11/2023

A follow up inspection took place at the service as the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) had not been returned to the Early Years Inspectorate. This non-compliance had not been addressed and remained outstanding. The policy and procedure manual for the service was not available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

At the Regulatory Compliance meeting held 8th December 2023 the person in charge advised that the nappy changing policy has been updated and is currently working with the local county childcare committee and reviewing the remaining policies

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of nappy changing policy

Summary Comment

The person in charge is currently reviewing and updating the current service policy folder. This will be completed by 1st March 2024.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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

(2) At all times during the period of the inspection the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. On the day of the inspection there were 2 staff working with and supervising 16 children. An additional adult was present who was in charge of completing the administrative duties for the service.

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)BASIC NEEDS:

Children brought their own packed lunches on the day of the inspection which included sandwiches, crackers, yogurts, fruit and drinks of water. Drinking water was also available in the service throughout the session if a child needed a drink. The children and staff sat together around the tables and were given as much time as they needed to eat their food.

Children went to the toilet independently with assistance given to those who needed it. Nappy changing facilities were also available if required. Children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after toileting and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water and liquid antibacterial soap. Children were encouraged to use a tissue to clean their noses. An adult sized couch was available in the playroom where children could rest and relax as desired throughout the morning.

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Children enjoyed freedom of movement within the pre-school room and there was a plentiful supply of play props available to support play and children played on their own and in small groups and in large groups.

The children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level of choice of activities.

The adults modelled positive behaviour for the children, and they were praised for their good behaviour.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

This sessional service was operated from one room with the sanitary accommodation area nearby and an outdoor play area at the rear of the facility. Adequate and varied play equipment suited to the age and stage of development of the child was available in the service and in the outdoor play area.

The playroom was spacious and bright with shelving available to display play equipment. Defined interest areas included a reading area, construction area, home corner, dress up area with a long mirror, puzzles, manipulative play area, tabletop area, and small world area.

The outdoor play area consisted of an all-weather surface and grass and was surrounded by high walls and gated.

Non-Compliance Information

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

1. The walls throughout the playroom were overpopulated with posters, art / craft displays and information leaflets which had the potential to cause sensory overload for the children.
2. Art activities completed by the children were not located on the walls at child height to allow children view their own work and that of the other children in the group.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A follow up inspection took place at the service on 29/11/2023 as the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) had not been returned to the Early Years Inspectorate.

1. A limited amount of the materials displayed were removed.
2. Childrens artwork had not been removed to a lower level on the walls.

Supporting documentation submitted

Not required.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the person in charge have addressed the requirements of Regulation 19. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The oil burner for the heating system was located in the playroom. There was no record available to indicate when it had been serviced and there was no documentation available to demonstrate that the burner was safe to use indoors.
2. Three large waste disposal bins were accessible to the children in the outdoor play area and posed a risk to the childrens safety.
3. A shed at the rear of the garden was unlocked and posed a safety risk to the children as it was used to store work equipment , paint and play equipment.
4. Staffs personal belongings such as handbags and jackets were accessible to the children and posed a safety hazard.
5. A Hoover, sweeping brushes and mops were stored in the playroom and posed a tripping hazard for both children and staff.
6. A toaster and a kettle were accessible to the children on the countertop in the playroom and pose a safety hazard.
7. There were two extension leads located beside a sink on the countertop with 3 plugs in each of them which posed a potential electrical safety hazard to both the children and the staff.
8. A water tray in the outdoor play area was overflowing with water and posed a safety hazard to children.

Infection Control:

9. The nappy changing policy was not available and was not displayed in the nappy change area. This posed a risk of cross infection as staff were not aware of hygienic nappy changing procedures.
10. Aprons were not available for staff to wear whilst nappy changing to help prevent the spread of infection.
11. A communal cloth hand towel was observed to be in use in the childrens sanitary area. This predisposed a risk of cross infection between children and staff.

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29/11/2023

A follow up inspection took place at the service as the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) had not been returned to the Early Years Inspectorate. This non-compliance had not been addressed and remained outstanding.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

At the Regulatory Compliance meeting held 8th December 2023 the person in charge advised the following.

1. The oil burner has been assessed by a service engineer and deemed suitable for indoor use.
2. A new storage unit has been purchased for the outdoors bins which is secure and inaccessible to children.
3. A new door to the outside shed will be installed in January 2024 and this will make it inaccessible to the children. At present they are not allowed access that area.
4. Staff belongings will be relocated to upstairs.
5. Cleaning equipment has been relocated upstairs which is inaccessible to children.
6. The toaster and kettle have been removed when not in use.
7. The extension leads have been made secure and low-level electrical sockets have been decommissioned.
8. The outdoor water tray has been removed and new trays are being sourced.
9. Nappy changing policy has been updated and displayed in the sanitary area.
10. Aprons have been provided for nappy changing.
11. The towel has been removed and paper towels provided.

Supporting documentation submitted

Nappy changing policy.

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the person in charge have addressed the requirements of Regulation 23. These will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) no person other than-*
 - (i) pre-school child attending the service,*
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*
 - (iii) an employee, or*
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

Compliance Information

- (1) Each child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by the person in charge.
- (3) (a) The registered provider ensured that no person could enter the premises without her approval other than-
- (i) Pre-school child attending the service.
 - (ii) A person dropping or collecting a child.
 - (iii) An employee.
 - (iv) An unpaid worker
- (b) A written record of every person who enters the service is available. The service will ensure that any persons entering the service will sign in and out and include the date, time and signature.

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.*

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Compliance Information

- (1) One staff held current certification in first aid for children.
- (2)(a) A first aid box was stored in the playroom.
- (b) The first aid box was available at all times if required by a child

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) (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual basis, most recently in October 2022. A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises. Smoke alarms were tested on 21/10/2022.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(a) There was no record of fire drills practiced on a monthly basis in the service. This posed a risk to the safety of both staff and children in the service.

29/11/2023

A follow up inspection took place at the service as the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) had not been returned to the Early Years Inspectorate. This non-compliance had not been addressed and remained outstanding.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

At the Regulatory Compliance meeting held 8th December 2023 the person in charge advised that fire drills are now practiced monthly.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of fire drill record for December 2023.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the person in charge have addressed the requirements of Regulation 26 and will be reviewed at the next inspection of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The Insurance certificate for the service was available and adequate and it had an expiry date of March 2024.