

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO012
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Fantasia Montessori Preschool
-------------------------	-------------------------------

Address of Service:	34 St Anne's Terrace, Sligo, Co. Sligo
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	F91 T85C
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Annmarie Herrity
-------------------------------------	------------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date(s) of Inspection:	20/11/2024
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	---	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	K. Folan & Y. Coyne
Title:	Early years inspector & Inspection and regulation manager

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
---------------------------------	----------------

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Fantasia Montessori is a private operated preschool service. It provides a morning session from 09:30 to 12:30 for children aged 2 to 6 years. The service is registered to cater for a maximum of 13 children. The preschool is situated in a separate purpose-built premises to the rear of the registered providers residence within proximity of Sligo town. There is one playroom with a kitchenette, sanitary accommodation and an outdoor area to the rear of the premises for the children's use. The outdoor area is sheltered with Perspex to allow for outdoor play all year round.

Staffing

The registered provider is currently operating the service single handedly. There is an emergency person available if required.

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 focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28.

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 20th of November 2024 in relation to a safety concern under Regulation 23. The registered provider issued a response on the 21st of November 2024 to address this concern.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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

(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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

2 (a)(b) The record of one adult was reviewed. There were two references on file. One reference was from a previous employer and one from a reputable source.

2 (c) (d) Garda Vetting disclosures were on file for one adult. Records demonstrated that police vetting was required as one adult had lived out of the state for a period of more than six months. This was obtained and on file.

(4) One adult had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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)(a) On the day of the inspection there was one adult working seven children aged between 3 years and 4 years 6 months.

(3) The minimum ratio of adults to children were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(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

1 (a) (b) The preschool room was well equipped with a vast array of Montessori material in keeping with the services curriculum framework. In addition, the service had equipment and materials suitable for the ages and stages of the children in attendance. A home corner with a kitchen, small ironing board, dolls, highchairs and baskets of dolls clothes provided for the children's imaginative play. Boxes containing dinosaurs, construction blocks, animals and vehicles were on low level shelving and available to the children.

On the morning of the inspection, children engaged with open ended cardboard construction materials. The children had choice around their activity with some engaged in small group activity and others in independent play with plastic bricks. The children had free access to the outdoor area when they chose to go outside, while others remained inside, engaged in their preferred activities.

The outdoor area was sheltered by means of a large Perspex roof, which allowed for various types of play in all-weather, such as construction toys and vehicles on soft matting. A seating area with cushions was provided outdoors for children to rest if they wished. The outdoor area was decorated with crafted mobiles and photographs of visits by members of the community such as the fire service. In addition to the covered outdoor area, a separate open outdoor area containing a well-stocked mud kitchen, baskets containing loose parts for open ended play and pipes of various sizes for water play. Jigsaws, puzzles, pegboards and prewriting materials were provided for the children's fine motor development.

Interactions in the service were warm and supportive with an emphasis placed on responding to each child and engaging in conversation in relation to the child's interest as well as notifying the children of any upcoming changes such as snack times and tidy up time. On the walls of the service, pictures of the children's families were

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

displayed to promote the children's sense of belonging in the service. In addition, a birthday wall with a picture of each child was displayed.

A feeling "tree" was displayed with pictures depicting various emotions available for each child to post their feeling under their own name.

Children were given opportunity to complete tasks independently and support was provided when needed such as toileting, handwashing and putting on coats. Incidents of minor disagreements among children were handled with sensitivity and empathy, ensuring all children's feelings were heard.

The service had a healthy eating policy in place. Children brought in their own lunches and drinks from home which consisted of sandwiches, crackers, fruit, vegetables and yogurts. Snack time was a relaxed occasion with the children and the adult engaged in social conversation.

The preschool room was warm and inviting and contained a rest area with sofa's if the children wished to use it. The children used the toilet independently when needed and support was given when required. Outdoor clothing, spare clothing and wellingtons were available for the children for going outside.

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 entrance to the service was secure upon the inspector's arrival to the service and remained secure throughout the inspection ensuring no unauthorised person could enter and no child could leave unattended.
- Emergency exit doors were unobstructed during the inspection.
- Handrails were provided at the entrance steps to the service.
- All toys and play equipment were in good condition and suitable for the age group of children attending.
- Cleaning materials were stored out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor area was secure ensuring no child could leave unattended and no unauthorised person could gain entry to the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Infection Control:

- Foot operated pedal bins are in use in the service, to prevent contamination from waste.
- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were provided for effective handwashing.
- Children were observed to washing their hands before snack time and after using the toilet.
- Cleaning schedules were in place and up to date which evidenced a clean environment.
- Perishable food items were stored in a refrigerator.

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider explained to the inspector that currently no medication has been requested or required to be administered to children during their attendance at the preschool service.

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

2 (a) (b) There were two suitably stocked first aid boxes stored safely on the premises and available to the children.

Non-Compliance Information

1(a) On the day of inspection there was no adult trained in First Aid Responder available to the preschool children. An Immediate action notice under regulation 23 was issued in relation to this issue on the 20th of November 2024. On the 21st of November 2024 the registered provider submitted evidence of completion of paediatric first aid training and a place on an upcoming FAR training has been secured.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

I have completed a paediatric first aid course and booked a space on a First Aid Responder course. In future I will ensure that my FAR training has been renewed before it expires.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the paediatric first aid certificate and evidence of an email booking a place on a first aid responder training was submitted.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was reviewed by the early years inspectorate and it was deemed the regulatory requirement has not been met. Evidence of completion will be submitted to the early years inspectorate and will also reviewed on 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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The registered provider ensured that a log of monthly fire drills was kept by the service.
- (b) The service provided evidence of a maintenance log of smoke alarms in the service with the most recent maintenance date of 23/05/2024.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that adequate insurance was in place for 22 preschool children in a sessional service up to 27/03/2025.