

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016WW007							
Name of Service:	Discoveries Montessori and Afterschool							
Address of Service:	St. James Church, Crinken, Bray, Co. Wicklow							
Email Address:	crinken@discoveries.ie							
Name of Registered Service Provider:	Liz Mahon							
Type of Service Registered:	Sessional		☒					
Date of Inspection:	1	7	0	2	2	0	2	2
No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:	AM		18		PM		N/A	
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, First Floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.							
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke							
Title:	Early Years Inspector							

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health Welfare and Development of Child	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	Discoveries Montessori and Afterschool first opened in September 2016. It is a sessional childcare service and is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age. The service operates between the hours of 9.15am and 12.15pm Monday to Friday, revised hours due to the covid pandemic and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and operate a sessional service for 38 weeks of the year. This service also operates a school aged childcare facility.
Premises	The service is located in the top floor of St. James Church Hall outside the town of Bray Co. Wicklow. It consists of 2 pre-school rooms, a kitchen area, and a sanitary area. It has access to an outdoor play area, which the children use on a daily basis.
Staffing	There are 3 staff members employed in the pre-school service. There were 2 staff members present on the day of inspection, this included the service manager. All staff members hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.
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 may be 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 person in charge, other staff member and children who 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—
- (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:	(2)(c) Not applicable as the service had no new staff members since the last inspection. (d) Not applicable. (4) Not applicable.
-------------------------	---

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.

Compliance Information:	The pre-school service had all the policies procedures and statements required under Schedule 5. Risk management and Infection control policies and procedures had been updated recently to reflect changing practices due to Covid-19. All the services policies, procedures and statements were available for parents and this information had been communicated to parents.
-------------------------	--

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) Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service. (3) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were 2 adults employed and present with 18 pre-school children on the day of inspection (8)(c) Not applicable as the service is not operated single-handedly.
-------------------------	--

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) BASIC NEEDS: • The Montessori provides all the food for the children attending the service. The food served to the children follows the healthy eating policy of the Montessori. Weekly menus are available and visible in the pre-school room. • Adults sat with the children during their lunch and conversation was encouraged. • Children were given plenty of time to eat their food in a relaxed and unhurried environment. • Children were given opportunities to make choices as to which activities they wished to pursue and were supported in their choice by the staff present. • There was water, visible and available for children to drink throughout the morning.
-------------------------	--

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The pre-school room had a low-level tables and chairs suitable for the age range of the children attending the service.
- There was a suitable rest area available for children should a child require it during their time in the service.
- There were specific areas of interest within the pre-school room and these areas were clearly labelled and equipment was visible and spaciouly laid out. All areas of interest were accessible to the children.
- Imaginative play was supported with a toy kitchen and shop, dress up clothes, dolls and doll houses, farm animals and toy garages. Materials including paper, colouring pencils, crayons and paints were available to the children; other equipment that promoted the development of fine motor skills such as a variety of Montessori toys, peg boards, puzzles, stacking toys and beading were accessible to the children.
- The outdoor area was a large, suitably fenced grass area with a range of assorted, permanent, wooden structures available for the children. There was a large playhouse, a climbing frame with climbing rope, a long low balance beam, a picnic seating area, a slide, a sand pit, outdoor kitchen, and a planting area. The entire area was safe and secure.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The adults sat at the children's level, addressed them by name when communicating with them.
- A strong teamwork ethos was evident by the interactions between the staff members and how they interacted with the children.
- The adults demonstrated warmth towards the children, using calm voices, positive language and children's choices were always respected during the inspection.
- Children's behaviour was managed in a competent and positive way. A minor issue which arose over a seating place at a table, was dealt with promptly and calmly all the time helping the child find a positive solution to the problem.
- Children's parents were spoken to directly at the end of the day to discuss how their child was during the day and any issues that might have arisen. In addition, the service used a secure online web group to keep in contact with parents.
- The children were supported and encouraged to be self-caring, including caring for their belongings and using the toilet independently, but were supervised appropriately.

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 door to the service was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- All cleaning products were stored, in the kitchen area, out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in the pre-school room was clearly marked and free from obstruction.
- There was a record of all fire drills carried out in the service, the last fire drill was dated 15th February 2022.

INFECTION CONTROL:

- The pre-school had 1 sanitary area, with 2 toilets and 2 sinks.
- The sanitary area had warm running water at 43°C, liquid soap and an air hand dryer. Foot pedal bins were available throughout the service, for the safe disposal of used paper towels.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snacks and after using the toilet.
- Hand sanitiser gel was available in the pre-school room and in prominent locations, inside and outside the service.
- A cleaning schedule was present, up to date, and had been upgraded to include provisions for Covid-19.
- Personal protective equipment such as disposable aprons, gloves and face masks were available and used by the adults in the service when required.
- An isolation room was available if needed.