



Early-Years Education-focused Inspection

Report for Setting Response

<i>Name of Setting</i> Teach Leabh Montessori School and Day-care Centre	<i>Identifier number</i> 09LD0014
<i>Address of Setting</i> Soran Ballinalee Co Longford	<i>Date of visit</i> 12 May 2016

CONTEXT OF SETTING

Teach Leabh Montessori School and Daycare Centre is located in a purpose-built facility close to the village of Ballinalee in Co Longford. It was established in 2001 and expanded in 2007. There are currently twenty-two pre-school children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. 18 children, together with the manager and 2 practitioners, were present on day of the inspection.

AREA 1: QUALITY OF CONTEXT TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The quality of the context to support the children's learning and development is excellent.
- A caring, enriching, child-centred ethos is evident. There is a strong emphasis on respecting children's rights and on enabling them to realise their individual potential.
- Practitioners show interest in the children's ideas and provide ample opportunity and appropriate support to enable children to make choices and decisions about their learning. They use suitable prompts in a very skilful, consistent manner to facilitate the development of children's resilience and their coping strategies. The effective use of positive behaviour management strategies by practitioners supports the development of children's self-management and social skills.
- A warm, affirming atmosphere is fostered by the practitioners throughout the session through their positive interactions with children and with their families. The use of soothing, background music and regular references to children's family experiences and relationships contributes to the sense of security and calm that pervades.
- A suitable range of well-established organisational procedures support the development of an ethos and an environment that is conducive to learning and development for children of varying interests, dispositions and needs.
- A key person system has been successfully developed and supports positive relationships between children and practitioners in the setting. Practitioners use their knowledge and understanding about each individual child to optimise children's learning and self-esteem.
- Regular opportunities are provided for children to develop an awareness of their family and local community. These include regular guest visitors to the setting to share aspects of local life. Practitioners are proactive in promoting children's awareness of and respect for diverse social and cultural backgrounds.

AREA 2: QUALITY OF PROCESSES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The quality of the processes to support the children's learning and development is excellent.
- A broad-based curriculum, informed by the Montessori principles and by *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*, is used effectively to support age-appropriate and stage-appropriate learning. Short-term planning is sufficiently flexible and responsive to support the implementation of an emergent, enquiry-based curriculum.
- Practitioners use a suitable range of strategies to gather information about children's learning experiences and achievements, including input from children and their parents. They use this information purposefully to support progression in children's learning, in accordance with their individual needs and interests. Provision for children who require additional support with aspects of their learning is characterised by conscientious observation and appropriate intervention.
- The indoor environment is very well prepared with clearly-defined areas of interest that are accessible and attractive to children. It is equipped with an extensive range of suitable resources to facilitate children's engagement in meaningful, playful learning activities. The provision of story books relating to the weekly themes and to children's interests contributes to the cohesiveness of the learning experiences provided.
- The very high quality of the provision for outdoor learning is a significant strength of the setting. Careful consideration has been given to the development and regular use of an outdoor environment that facilitates children's exploration and physical development.
- The very high quality of provision for children's learning in meaningful contexts and through the medium of play and exploration in this setting is commended.
- Practitioners are very skilful, playful and purposeful in their interactions with children as they stimulate, consolidate and extend their learning. They regularly engage the children in sustained shared thinking and use a wide range of open-ended questions and prompts to extend the children's language, thinking and engagement in learning.
- The development of early mathematical and literacy concepts and skills is very well embedded in the learning experiences provided by practitioners for children. Practitioners promote the development of children's learning dispositions in a consistent and sensitive manner.

Action advised

- To complement the very good story-telling practices that have been developed in this setting with the large group, practitioners are advised to consider increasing the opportunities for story telling in the context of small groups.

AREA 3: QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The quality of the children's learning experiences and achievements is excellent.
- The children demonstrate sustained engagement in their learning activities. They are keen to explore and they show considerable curiosity in new learning situations.
- Information recorded by the practitioners reflects great breadth, balance and cohesion in the children's learning. Many children comment with enthusiasm on their samples of art work and on photographs of their learning activities with some children demonstrating an awareness of their own progression and development.
- Children are developing appropriate language skills and a very strong interest in books and stories is evident. Most children expressed their thoughts and feelings at various stages during the pre-school session observed. Children regularly expressed their creativity through role play and representational art.
- Early mathematical concepts related to patterns, shape, size and number are well developed in children.
- Children enjoy running and jumping in the outdoors and demonstrate very good gross motor skills.
- Children are developing personal and social skills which enable them to respond appropriately to different situations which involve turn-taking and co-operation. They play and relate to each other and to the practitioners in their environment in a confident and positive manner.

AREA 4: QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

- The quality of management and leadership for learning is excellent.
- The owner/manager is proactive in leading change and has been successful in managing a number of significant developments that have impacted positively on the children's learning and development. She has successfully nurtured a culture of self-reflection and improvement with staff in this setting and has promoted ongoing professional development.
- Systematic self-reflection and improvement initiatives are informed by staff engagement in the national frameworks *Aistear* and *Síolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education*. The engagement of management and practitioners in this service in the *Aistear in Action* initiative reflects their strong commitment to high standards and to ongoing improvement in the quality of provision in this setting.
- Regular staff meetings take place that focus on children's learning and the implications for practitioner's practice.
- A strong sense of teamwork is evident among the staff.
- A suitable range of channels has been established to support regular communication between the setting and children's families. This includes a daily journal, sharing of information about children's learning and regular meetings between practitioners and parents. Parents are also provided with the opportunity to complete an evaluation sheet on their experience of the service and the findings are shared and used purposefully to support improvement.
- Suitable attention is given to supporting children in their transition from pre-school to primary school with liaison occurring between the pre-school and some local primary schools. Parents and practitioners work together to fill in a transfer form for each child, collating the relevant information to support their transition to primary school.

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIONS ADVISED ABOVE

The management and staff demonstrate commendable capacity for ongoing improvement in the quality of provision in this setting.

Summary of Overall Inspection Findings

Area	Quality Level
Quality of context to support children's learning and development	Excellent
Quality of processes to support children's learning and development	Excellent
Quality of children's learning experiences and achievements	Excellent
Quality of management and leadership for learning	Excellent

Language used in Early-Years Education-focused Inspection reports

Excellent	Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of children.
Very good	Provision that is very good is highly effective in meeting the needs of children.
Good	Provision that is good is effective in meeting the needs of children but with some aspects to be developed.
Fair	Provision that is fair requires practice to be improved to meet the needs of children.
Poor	Provision that is poor is inadequate and requires significant improvement to meet the needs of children.

INSPECTION OUTCOME REPORT

Information on Service

DCYA Identifier: 09LD0014

Name of Service: Teach Leanbh

Address of Service:

Soran
Ballinalee
Co Longford

Service Provider:
(person carrying on Pre-school)

Type of Service as per Notification Form:

Sessional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Date(s) of Inspection:

Day	Month	Year
1 7	0 4	1 5

No. of children present on day of Inspection: 41

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

Child & Family Agency Address: Early Years Inspectorate ,Top Floor, Primary Care Unit,
St Loman's Campus
Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath.

County: Longford

TUSLA Inspector and Title:

Disclaimer: This report has been compiled following an inspection of the above service on the above date(s). The report is based on the tool which is used by the Early Years inspectors in assessing compliance with the Child Care (Pre-School Services) (Amendment No 2) Regulations 2006 and Explanatory Guide to Requirements and Procedures for Notification and Inspection. The areas covered are provided to enable the Early Years Inspectors to use their professional judgement in assessing compliance/non-compliance. The decision of the Inspector is based on an amalgamation of the information in each section and not in any one question.

INSPECTION OUTCOME REPORT

GOVERNANCE

Information on Management and Staffing

Regulation 8 (Management and Staffing)

- (1) A person carrying on a pre-school services shall ensure that:
- (a) a sufficient number of suitable and competent adults are working directly with the pre-school children in the pre-school service at all times,
 - (b) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required, and
 - (c) 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 paragraph 1(b) is on the premises.
- (2) A person carrying on a pre-school service shall ensure appropriate vetting of all staff, students and volunteers who have access to a child:
- (a) by reference to past employer references in particular the most recent employer reference, in respect of all staff, and
 - (b) by reference to references from reputable sources, in respect of all students and volunteers, and
 - (c) by acquiring Garda vetting from An Garda Síochána when An Garda Síochána have set down procedures to make such vetting available, and
 - (d) in circumstances where Garda vetting is not available for staff, students and volunteers who have lived outside the jurisdiction, by ensuring that these persons provide the necessary police vetting from other police authorities.

Compliance Information:	<p>(1)(a) There were 41 pre-school children attending the service being supervised by 7 adults. The adult/child ratio was correct.</p> <p>(1)(b) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.</p> <p>(1)(c) At all times during the period where the pre-school was being carried on the designated person in charge or the named person was on the premises.</p> <p>(2)(a) Two written references, with recorded validations were available in respect of all staff.</p> <p>(2)(b) There were no students or volunteers present.</p> <p>(2)(c) Garda vetting procedures were carried out in respect of all staff.</p> <p>(2)(d) Police vetting was available for the 2 staff members that had lived outside the jurisdiction.</p> <p>A Curriculum Vitae, proof of identity and that the person was over 18 years of age and validated qualifications were available in respect of all staff.</p>
Non-Compliance Information:	Not applicable
Action Required:	Not applicable

INSPECTION OUTCOME REPORT

Regulation 9 (Behaviour Management)	
<p>(1) A person carrying on a pre-school service shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child attending the service.</p> <p>(2) A person carrying on a pre-school service shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of any child.</p>	
Compliance Information:	<p>(1) It was observed that children were being positively encouraged during the inspection. No corporal punishment was inflicted on a pre-school child at the time of the inspection.</p> <p>(2) A positive behaviour management policy was in place in the service. This policy was available to parents or guardians.</p> <p>A Child Protection Policy based on Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) was available for the service. A designated liaison person for reporting child abuse and deputy was documented on the policy.</p>
Non-Compliance Information:	Not applicable
Action Required:	Not applicable

Information on Records	
Regulation 14 (Records)	
<p>(1) A person carrying on a pre-school service shall keep a record in writing of the following information in relation to the service:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(i) policies and procedures of the service</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(l) details of any medicine administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent, and</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(m) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service</p> <p>(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) and the documentation and records referred to in paragraph (5) of this Regulation shall be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person</p> <p>(5) A person carrying on a pre-school service shall maintain all documents and records relating to references and Garda and Police vetting obtained under Regulation 8(2).</p>	
Compliance Information:	<p>(1) The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service, in accordance with Regulation 14 (1)(i)(l)(m). The following policies and procedures were available in the service;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration of Medications Protocol • Child protection policy • Behaviour Management including managing children's behaviour • Safe Sleep policy • Outings policy <p>(2) Records were open and available for inspection by the inspection team.</p> <p>(5) All documents and records relating to references and Garda and Police vetting were available and open to inspection.</p>
Non-Compliance Information:	Not applicable
Action Required:	Not applicable

INSPECTION OUTCOME REPORT

Information on Safety Measures

Regulation 16 (Fire Safety Measures)

- (1) A person carrying on a pre-school service shall keep a record in writing of-
- (a) all fire drills which take place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises
- (3) 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:	<p>(1)(a) The service provider had a record of all fire drills carried out in the premises. Fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis. The last fire drill was carried out on the 2nd April 2015.</p> <p>(1)(b) The number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment on the premises was available. A service record for the fire extinguishers and the fire alarm system as per the manufacturer's instructions was provided and dated 13th April 2015.</p> <p>(3) The notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the premises.</p>
Non-Compliance Information:	Not applicable
Action Required:	Not applicable

HEALTH WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

Information on Health, Welfare & Development of Child

Regulation 5 (Health, Welfare and Development of Child)*

A person carrying on a pre-school service shall ensure that each child's learning development and well being is facilitated within the daily life of the service through the provision of the appropriate opportunities, experiences, activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child and the child's cultural context.

Compliance Information:

Basic Needs of the Infants & Children

- There was a healthy eating policy in place and was evident in the healthy dinners provided by the service that included mince, potatoes/ vegetables and dessert with water to drink.
- Family style dining with self service was in place at meal times and children were observed to help themselves supported by the adult.
- Children sat at low tables and had their lunch in an environment that promoted social interaction with peers and the adult.
- Drinking water was freely available to the children throughout the day.
- Younger children attending for full day care were placed to sleep in standard cots in the sleep room and monitored every 10 minutes.
- Hand washing was performed before lunch and children were supervised toileting independently.
- The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the pre-school rooms and in the outdoor play area.

Supporting Relationships around Children

- A key worker system was in place in this pre-school service thus promoting emotional security for the children attending.
- Staff were observed to be warm and kind towards the children in their care evidenced by soft language tones and use of children's individual names during activities
- Staff supported children at play in small and large group activities showing them how to share and take turns and praising them for their efforts.
- Children were observed to be fully engaged at the morning activities from the planned weekly /monthly curriculum supported by the staff.
- The service operated in partnership with parents and young children had a communication book documenting their daily routine, feeding, nappy changing and sleeping.
- The setting had integrated with the local community with visits from the local health promotion officer and the Garda on Beep Beep day for Road Safety Awareness week.

Non-Compliance Information:

Not applicable

Action Required:

Not applicable

INSPECTION OUTCOME REPORT

SAFETY

Information on Safety

Regulation 6 (First Aid)

There shall be a suitably equipped first aid-box for children in the premises.

Compliance Information:	A suitably equipped first aid box was available in the service. A person qualified in First Aid was available on the premises.
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Non-Compliance Information:	Not applicable
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Action Required:	Not applicable
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Information on Safety

Regulation 27 (Safety Measures)

*A person carrying on a pre-school service shall take **all reasonable measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child** attending the service and in particular shall ensure that:*

- (c) any garden or external play area is so fenced and doors and gates are so secured to prevent a pre-school child gaining unsupervised access to a roadway or other source of danger and to prevent unauthorised access to the garden or external play area*
- (d) ponds, pits and other hazards in any garden or external play area are so fenced as to ensure the safety of a pre-school child attending the service*
- (e) steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection,*
- (f) and operational procedures for the safe conduct of outings are in place and a pre-school child is safely escorted on any outing*

Compliance Information:	(c) The outdoor play area was adequately secured by fencing so children could not leave the area and unauthorised adults could not access the area. (d) No ponds, pits or hazards were apparent in the outdoor play area. (e) Children were observed washing their hands before lunch and after toileting. Adequate infection control policies were in place. (f) Adequate operational procedures for the safe conduct of outings were in place
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Non-Compliance Information:	Not applicable
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Action Required:	Not applicable
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INSPECTION OUTCOME REPORT

Information on Safety

Regulation 28 (Facilities for Rest)

A person carrying on a pre-school service shall ensure that:

(a)adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day and night (if an overnight pre-school service is provided) are provided

Compliance Information:	(a) A sleep room was provided equipped with 4 standard cots. A sleep log was available showing recorded physical checks of sleeping children every 10 minutes. An electric sleep monitor was in use and a viewing panel were provided in the door to the sleep room. Low level cot beds were provided for children over two years to rest. A rest area was available in the toddler room with a couch placed in the library area. A comfortable couch was available in the pre-school rooms for children to rest as required.
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Non-Compliance Information:	Not applicable
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Action Required:	Not applicable
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Information on Safety

Regulation 30 (Insurance)

A person carrying on a pre-school service shall ensure that the pre-school children attending the service are adequately insured against injury while attending the service.

Compliance Information:	There was evidence of current insurance cover available for the number of the pre-school children attending the service.
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Non-Compliance Information:	Not applicable
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Action Required:	Not applicable
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