Type of Inspection: Investigative

Name of School: MAYLEARN CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Date: Monday, 14th and Wednesday 23rd February, 2022

Background of Investigation

Following an allegation on the nature of classrooms and general learning environment of MAYLEARN CHRIST MONTESSORI SCHOOL, a team of Inspectors was tasked by the National Schools Inspectorate Authority to conduct an Investigative Inspection in the school. Specifically, the allegations were that;

i) The school was housed in an abandoned poultry farm with a metal roofing that was so low that learners risked suffering heat strokes.

ii) The classrooms were so hot that the kids had to eat under a tree, and

iii) The school was not licensed, neither were the teachers.

Information about the School

The school is located in Dansoman Last Stop in the Ablekuma West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region, with GPS code GA-569-0630. The school was established in 2015 and has been registered by the following regulatory bodies on the dates indicated.

a) As a Kindergarten by the Ghana Education Service (Accra Metropolis) on 7th May 2019 (Appendix 1a)
b) As a Day Care Centre by the Department of Social Welfare on 1st July 2019 (Appendix 1b)
c) By the Registrar General’s Department on 25th October 2019, (Appendix 1c) and
d) Currently undergoing the National Schools Inspectorate Authority’s (NaSIA) Licensing. (Appendix 1d)

The school had a crèche, a nursery a KG and Primary 1 to 3. There was a total of 20 learners in the school on the second day of the investigation. They were catered for by one male teacher, two female teachers and one non-teaching staff. The school is held in four (4) classrooms that had been partitioned, however, some of the classes were combined to contain the various level, hence multi-grade teaching was being carried out in the school.
The school building was built of cement blocks at the base (a dwarf-wall) with plywood on top to the lintel level, and a metal nylon mesh to complete the structure. It was roofed with metal roofing sheets, but the roofing was quite old. (Appendix 2)

**Purpose of investigation**

The investigation was carried out to confirm or disconfirm the authenticity of an allegation made against the school concerning its legal status and existing classroom conditions and, to take the necessary actions to improve the existing learning environment of the school if the allegations were found to be true.

**Inspection Panel**

1. Team Lead: FRANK AIDOO
2. Team Inspector: SAMUEL ARHIN

**Procedure of investigation**

The inspectors employed the following procedures in the conduct of their assignment:

The team went to the school on Monday 14th February 2022 at 9:00 am. The two entrances of the school were locked from within so the team called the contact numbers on the school’s billboard displayed on the walls. The proprietress of the school responded and indicated that she was in a meeting at the Ministries therefore it would be difficult for her to come and meet the team for the exercise that day. She however arranged for the place to be opened for the team to conduct a preliminary investigation.

a) Interviews: the team interviewed Mr. David Amableh who claimed to be a brother of the proprietress, but he did not have much information about the legal status of the school. He however alluded that the school premises used to be a poultry farm that had been abandoned for some time
and was later converted into a school block, and there were plans to renovate the roofing to avoid excessive heat in the classrooms.

b) He further indicated that the learners' food was prepared in the proprietress’ kitchen in an apartment on the same compound. Learners were also served under trees on the compound since the classrooms get excessively hot during noonday.

c) The proprietress of the school, Ms. Mary Akuvi Dzidzorm Awadzi was later interviewed on the second meeting on 23rd February 2022. She produced documents listed under appendix 1 (a) to 1 (d) to establish the legal status of the school. She asserted that the land was a family property bequeathed to her and her sibling by their late father but she could not produce the land documents nor the building permit. She also confirmed Mr. Amebleh’s assertion that the premises used to be a poultry farm but had been converted into a school block. Furthermore, she indicated that food was cooked in her kitchen or sometimes in the open space behind the kitchen and served to learners under the trees on the compound since the classrooms get excessively hot during the afternoons.

d) Majority of the parents interviewed asserted that they were quite satisfied with the care given to their wards in the school. However, most of them suggested the school should be provided with new classrooms. The team went ahead to conduct verification and compliance inspection in the school.

**Contact Persons and their roles (Complainants, Defendants, Witnesses, etc.)**

1. Mr. David Amableh (a brother of the Proprietress),
2. Ms. Mary Akuvi Dzidzorm Awadzi (Proprietress of the School), and
3. Some parents.

**Key Findings/Observations**

The team made the following observations:

i. The school had a legal status to operate at the various levels it was currently operating. Hence the allegation that the school was not licensed was found to be false.
ii. Two out of the three teachers in the school were professionally trained: one had a Diploma in Basic Education and has further obtained the teachers’ license from the National Teaching Council (NTC) while the other possessed B. Ed. (Arts) from the University of Education, Winneba. There was one non-professional teacher who holds HND in Accounting. Hence the allegation that the teachers had no licenses was not entirely true.

iii. The school’s ambience and health and safety measures (including child protection) were found to be adequate.

iv. However, the allegation that the school was held in an abandoned poultry farm with metal roofing lying so low, endangering the health of the learners was clearly established and admitted by the proprietress.

v. Furthermore, though the school was located on a large and serene compound, the classrooms were too small for the class sizes.

vi. Additionally, though furniture in the classrooms were age appropriate, the rooms were not well-ventilated.

vii. Moreover, the classrooms were roofed with very old roofing sheets and the rooms got heated during midday (as already observed by Mr. Amableh and the proprietress).

The investigations were inconclusive on the first visit because the proprietress was not available to be interviewed however on the 23rd February, 2022, we met the proprietress and came to the conclusions above.

Recommendations

1. The proprietress must take immediate steps to provide a safer classroom and kitchen facilities for the school.

2. National Schools Inspectorate Authority should undertake periodic visits to the school to ensure standards and compliance.
LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix I

1a) GES Certificate of Registration
1b) Day Care Centres Certificate of Registration

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE

DAY CARE CENTRES
CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

This is to certify that

MAY LEARN CHRIST MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Day Care Centre / Early Childhood Development Centre (E CDC) is hereby registered with the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and is permitted to operate at

DANSGUMAN

in the

ABLEKUMA WEST

District in

GREATER ACCRA Region.

REG. NO. D.S.W./GAR/ABW/314/19

CATEGORY............C

VALID UNTIL.....30TH JULY 2020

DATE ISSUED.....1ST JULY 2019

Director of Social Welfare

Note: This certificate may be withdrawn at any time when in the opinion of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), the Centre fails to meet the standard required for operation.
The Registration of Business Names Act, 1962 (No. 151)

Certificate of Registration

I hereby certify that the following Business Name has been registered under the above-mentioned Act as No. BNS86952019 viz,

MAYLEARN CHRIST MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Dated this 25th day of October 2019

[Signature]

Registrar of Companies
1d) NaSIA’s receipt for School Licensing
Appendix II

2a) The entire school block
2b) A classroom
2c) Another classroom in the school
2d) The learners at School Worship
2d – f) Toilet and Handwashing facilities in the school
2g) Part of the school compound