

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC171
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Name of Service:	Grainne's Montessori School
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Address of Service:	Western Road, Clonakilty, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P85 NN26
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Name of Registered Provider:	Grainne Campbell
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440
Inspection undertaken by:	V. McCarthy
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	N/A
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Description of service

Grainne's Montessori School is a privately owned service, which caters for children aged 2 - 6 years. The service provides sessional care, which includes the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, each morning and afternoon. The service operates from a 1 storey building that was purposely built as a childcare setting and is situated close to other amenities in the town of Clonakilty, Co. Cork. The premise consists of a double height care room, toilet facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area.

Staffing

There were 2 adults present on the day of inspection, including the registered provider, and both were working directly with the children. There are 3 adults including a relief adult attached to the service. Each of the 3 adults has a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education as on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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. 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, adult and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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, and*

(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 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) The service had a named person in charge and a deputy that could deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider who was the named person in charge was on duty when the inspector arrived at the premises and remained on duty for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

(a)(b) There were 4 references and required validations available on file from past employers in respect of the 3 adults attached to the service.

(b) There were 2 references and required validations available on file from sources other than past employers.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of each of the 3 adults.

(d) Not applicable as no adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

A copy of a childcare qualification as listed on the National Qualifications Framework was available on file in respect of each of the 3 adults.

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)
The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children.
- (3)
On the day of the inspection there were 2 adults working with 5 early years children. The adult child ratio exceeded the regulatory requirement.

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:

- The children were provided with opportunities to play outside daily and were assisted by the adults in dressing themselves in their coats and hats prior to going outside.
- Any child that was thirsty throughout the morning or required additional fluids could easily access a drink of water as their individual water bottles were stored on a low shelf in the care room.
- The food eaten by the children for their snack break was appetising and healthy.

- The children’s need to use the toilet was promptly and sensitively attended to. The independent use of the toilet by the children was encouraged and supported as appropriate by the adults.
- Hand hygiene by the children was supported and encouraged by the adults who supervised the children when they washed and dried their hands before eating, after outdoor play and after using the toilet.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The food for the children’s snacks was provided by the children’s respective parents or guardians.
- During the inspection it was noted that the food ate by the children was nutritious and healthy. The mid-morning snack consisted of a variety of sliced fruit, chopped vegetables and brown bread sandwiches.
- Drinking water was always easily accessible to the children. The children’s individual bottles of water were stored on a low shelf in the care room and were always readily available to the children. The children’s water bottles were provided to the children during their mid-morning break.
- The adults sat with the children as they ate their food creating a relaxed and social environment. It was noted that the children chatted, laughed, and interacted socially with each other and the adults during this break.
- The Healthy Eating policy was adhered to in practice and each child had an adequate quantity of food in their lunch box for his/her mid-morning snack break.

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 main entrance door leading into the premises was kept secured to prevent the unauthorised access by an adult or the leaving of an unsupervised child.
- The outdoor play area was secured by high fencing, walls and a secured gate.
- Each of the 4 doors in the outdoor storage building were maintained secure.
- The door leading into the adult toilet was kept secured and was not accessible to the children.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelves out of children's reach.
- All leads and flexes were kept out of children's reach.
- Low level glass panels throughout the premises were fitted with visibility strips.
- All window openings were out of children's reach and were fitted with window restrictors.
- The water at the hot water taps was thermostatically controlled to no higher than 43°C. The water temperature was recorded at 26.3°C during the inspection.
- The radiators throughout the premises were fitted with thermostats to ensure that the contact surface was maintained less than 43°C.
- The strip lighting throughout the premises were fitted with protective covers.
- The fire doors were provided with appropriate signage and were maintained unobstructed.

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

(1)
The service provided evidence that 1 adult had training in first aid response (FAR) and that this adult always on the premises.

(2)

(a) There was a fully equipped first aid cabinet available on the premises and it was wall mounted high out of children's reach.

(b) The fully equipped first aid cabinet was always available on the premises.

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 firefighting 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)
- (a) Records of monthly fire drills carried out at the service were available on file. The last fire drill was carried out on 09 October 2023.
 - (b) Records regarding the number, service and type of fire equipment were maintained on file. The records demonstrated that the fire equipment and wired smoke alarm each had a maintenance service on 13 September 2023.
- (4)
- Copies of the fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in 3 locations throughout the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The services' insurance certificate was displayed on the notice board situated in the main entrance foyer and demonstrated that the service was adequately insured. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of children covered which was 11, the start date, the end date, the category of service covered which was sessional service and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding, contents, public liability and fire and theft cover.