

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC199		
Name of Service:	Kilbrittain Montessori Pre-School		
Address of Service:	Parish Hall, Kilbrittain, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P72 P264		
Name of Registered Provider:	Emma O'Sullivan		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	23/04/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM Not assessed
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork		
Inspection undertaken by:	C Stokes		
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		

Description of service

This preschool is a long established private sessional service, based in Kilbrittain Community Hall. It is registered to offer provision from 8.45-11.45am, and 12 to 3.15pm except for Thursdays when it offers provision from 12 to 2pm. The setting operates for 38 weeks of the year. The ethos is Montessori and play based service provision for children availing of the ECCE scheme.

Staffing

The adults working directly with the children in the service have a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The Registered provider is not service based. On the day of inspection, there were three adults working directly with the children.

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.

Additional Information

Following the inspection of November 2021, a referral was made to Better Start Quality Development Service with the agreement of the person in charge. The setting was not in a position to proceed with the quality development service at that time and agreed on the day of inspection 23 April 2024 to a referral to be made to Better Start regarding the layout of the physical and material environment, giving consideration to the hall being used for other purposes and the resultant impact on the physical and material environment on the preschool layout.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff 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,*

(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 registered provider had ensured there was a named person in charge of operating the service.

(b) In addition to the person in charge (PIC), there was a deputy person in charge. The PIC or deputy were on the premises at all times according to the PIC.

(2) (a) The staff recruitment files for all 4 adults were examined as part of this inspection. When the recruitment files were reviewed two written and appropriately validated references were available from 3 past employers.

(b) Two written references were available from 5 source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was not required; no adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period exceeding 6 months.

(4) A certificate of qualification in Early Childhood care and education at a minimum of QQI level 5 on the National Qualification framework was on file for the 4 adults.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(b) Two of the references available from sources other than a past employer were not validated for one adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider responded on 20 May 2024 to state that the reference validations were located and will be stored safely for future inspections.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the reference validations was submitted on 20 May 2024.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was assessed and met the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

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) At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (3) The ratio of adults to children was adequate with the person in charge and two other adults working with 9 children

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

Basic Needs

- Adults were observed to encourage/assist the children to make the snack time a social occasion, while encouraging independence. Adults were observed to sit at the tables and interact with the children during snack time.
- The children were trained using the toilet and were supported appropriately by the adults to use the toilet and handwash afterwards.
- There was a cosy corner in the hall to provide for the children's need for relaxation.
- Children's need for mobility was met by regular visits to the local playground as there was no on-site outdoor play area in place. On the day of inspection, the children were observed to have visited the playground and the person in charge advised that 2-3 times a week the children are offered this opportunity.

Programme of Activities

- The service had a programme of activity for both sessions, which included child-led free play, arts and crafts, table-top activities (for fine motor skills development), circle time, exercise time (for gross motor skills development), snack time, and book time for language development.
- In addition, learning records linked to Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework and its four themes were available for inspection in respect of each child attending.
- Learning records complete with photographs were shared with parents/guardians.

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:

- External doors and internal doors were secured.
- Cleaning agents and equipment were inaccessible, stored in the kitchen.
- No blind cords, cables or trailing flexes/leads were observed.

Infection Control:

- A supply of thermostatically controlled hot water was available for hand washing at the sinks. Soap, paper towels were in place. A lidded, foot operated pedal bin was available in the toilet.
- Handwashing was observed prior to snack time where children washed their hands at the sink in the toilets.
- A fridge was in place for the storage of lunches and water bottles, located in the kitchen.

Administration of Medication:

- The person in charge advised no child currently attending had a requirement for medication.

Safe Sleep:

- Not applicable as the service is a sessional service.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exits were not obstructed.

Outing:

- The service had an outings policy.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. On the day of inspection while there was Garda vetting disclosures in place for 1 adult. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation

General Safety:

The registered provider responded on 20 May 2024 to state that Garda vetting was applied for in respect of the registered provider, who does not work directly with children in the service. The registered provider has committed in their response to ensuring that appropriate Garda vetting disclosures are in place for all staff and up to date. The Garda vetting disclosure supporting documentation was received on 21 May 2024.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was assessed and met the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

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 registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid was always available. Two adults were trained in FAR.
- (2) (a)(b) The registered provider ensured that a fully equipped first aid box, was readily available/accessible adjacent to the preschool room in the kitchen.

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.*
- (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) The registered provider ensured that a record of the fire drills was maintained. The most recent fire drill was dated 20 March 2024.
- (b) The registered provider ensured a maintenance of the fire extinguishers and smoke alarms were maintained. These records were dated August and November 2023 respectively.
- (4) A notice of the fire evacuation procedure was on display on the wall above the 'teachers table'.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

(e) There was suitable sanitary facilities in place for adults, with 1 toilet and 1 sink.

Non-Compliance Information

(e) There was an inadequate number of sinks available to the preschool children. While there were 2 toilets in place, there was only 1 sink available adjacent for the 22 children that the service is registered to cater for.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider responded to state that they are negotiating with their landlord to install a second sink in the children's sanitary area, meanwhile the service is using a second sink in the gents toilets with a partition from the urinals.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider on 20 May 2024 was assessed. It is acknowledged that the registered provider is attempting to rectify this issue, however, the proposed interim measure may lead to the spread of infection. Children must have direct access to sinks for hand washing in their sanitary accommodation and not have to leave this area and wash their hands in a separate sink location.