

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC346				
Name of Service:	Réiltín Beag Montessori				
Address of Service:	S.G.M.I., New Inn, Glanmire, Co. Cork				
Eircode:	T45 VX70				
Name of Registered Provider:	Aishling Kenefick				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	29/05/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>10</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	10	PM	N/A
AM	10	PM	N/A		

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurranabraher Cork
Inspection undertaken by:	D Prendergast
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	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Réiltín Beag Montessori is a sessional early years service, which has been in operation since 2014. It is registered to cater for children aged two to six years, from 9.00am to 12.00pm, each Monday to Friday. However, the service currently caters for children aged two and a half to five and a half years. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated over a 38-week annual period.

The childcare setting is situated in an urban area of Glanmire in Co. Cork, and consists of a prefabricated building, on the grounds of Scoil Ghleanna Maghair Íochtraigh. There is one operational care room, with adjoining sanitary facilities and a storage room. A staff sanitary facility is located in a separate, adjacent building. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play environment at the entrance to the service, which is also directly accessible from the care room.

Staffing

The service currently employs three adults and one relief staff member, all of whom are involved in the direct care of the children who attend. One adult is employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. Each of the adults holds a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, at a minimum level 6 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 the child, safety, premises and facilities. The inspections 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, deputy person in charge 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 registered provider was the named person in charge at the childcare setting. A deputy person in charge had also been identified.

(b) The registered provider was available for the duration of the inspection process. The deputy was also on site.

(2) The recruitment records of all four staff members were reviewed.

(a) Seven of the eight required references had been obtained from past employers.

(b) There was one reference on file from a source other than a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting from the National Vetting Bureau was in place for each of the four staff members.

(d) Not applicable. None of the staff members had lived outside the State for longer than six consecutive months, as adults.

(4) Copies of qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications, were maintained on file in respect of each of the four 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 an adequate number of adults were responsible for the direct care and education of the children in attendance.
- (3) The adult child ratio exceeded the requirements of the regulation. Two adults were working directly with 10 children, who were aged 3 to 5 years.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

- (1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*
- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
 - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
 - (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
 - (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
 - (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
 - (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
 - (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
 - (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1) A total of 15 children were enrolled at the sessional service. A sample of 11 children's registration forms were assessed and were found to include the requirements listed from (a) through to (i).

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:

- During the three-hour sessional service, a mid-morning snack was accommodated. This took place at 11.00am and sufficient time was allocated, which allowed the children to enjoy their food. The adults were also noted to assist the children with opening food packaging and containers.
- The children had access to adjoining sanitary facilities, which they were supported to use in an independent manner.
- Tissue boxes were accessible at the children's eye level, which supported the development of self-care skills.
- Aprons were available for messy play activities.
- Adequate space was available within the care room for the children to move freely, as they played, explored and participated in daily tasks. Free flow between the indoor and outdoor environments was also facilitated during non-structured activities.
- Individual inclusion plans had been devised for the children who were allocated AIM (Access and Inclusion Model) support. These plans included learning goals to ensure ongoing support.

Physical and material environment:

- Wall hangings in the care room reflected the children in attendance and were noted to include a birthday display and a family tree, with photographs of the children's families.

- The available child sized tables and chairs appeared comfortable and were suitable for table top activities and mealtime routines.
- Display units were set low, which allowed the children to freely access play and learning materials. The range of said play resources supported key developmental areas, such as fine motor skills, language, cognition, creativity and imagination. For example, there were:
 - Jigsaws, shape sorters and connectable shapes
 - A plastic brick construction table
 - Books
 - Montessori materials and dressing frames
 - A well-equipped play kitchen and a shop stall
 - Dress up clothes
 - A large furnished dolls house
 - Play tools and hard hats
 - Tuft trays, lined with artificial grass, which contained dinosaur figures and various wooden shapes.
- The sheltered outdoor play area provided further opportunities for imaginary play, through the availability of a play kitchen, with utensils, a car garage and hand-held vehicles. Sensorial exploration was promoted through a water tray and two additional tuft trays; one of which was filled with sand and the second with dried lentils. Fence mounted chalkboards were in place to encourage mark making activities. A selection of ride on toys were also brought outdoors later in the morning, which encouraged more active play and gross motor development.

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 available Healthy Eating policy was suited to a sessional category service.
- The snacks and drinks for the mid-morning meal break were provided by the parents or guardians of the children who attended. These were noted to include buttered crackers, sandwiches, wraps, rice cakes, cheese, yogurt and fruit such as bananas, apples, strawberries and raisins.
- During discussion, it was confirmed that children were free to have a snack from their lunch box outside of the designated mealtime, should they become hungry. The children's drinks were also accessible to them throughout the morning.
- The registered provider advised that none of the children who attended had any specific dietary requirements or food allergies.

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 gate which provided access to the rear of the school grounds, where the early years service was located, was secured with a padlock, when not in use. This practice reduced the likelihood of unauthorised persons accessing the area and also minimised the risk of a child exiting the premises, while unsupervised.
- The service's designated outdoor play space was enclosed by a combination of fencing, railing and an entrance gate, with a sliding bolt.
- A low-level cupboard in the care room was fitted with a restrictive opening device, which reduced the risk of a child gaining access to potentially hazardous items, such as cleaning agents.
- All examined play materials were free from pinch points.

- There were no blind cords accessible to the children.
- Firefighting equipment was wall mounted.
- Safety plugs were in place on some of the low-lying electrical sockets.

Infection Control:

- The available refrigerator was used to store the children's perishable snacks, which reduced the risk of food spoilage.
- At the children's wash hand basins, there was a supply of warm running water, liquid soap, a sensor operated paper towel dispenser and a foot pedal operated bin. These facilities supported the practice of effective handwashing. It was noted that handwashing routines were supervised by an adult and took place after the children had used the toilet and before the designated mealtime.
- A cleaning schedule was in place, along with provision to document the cleaning undertaken for the current week. Cleaning of the care room was observed to be initiated once the children had been collected.
- Cubby shelving was provided for the children's bags and wellies and there were wall hooks available in the sheltered outdoor area, to store the children's coats.
- Open windows in the care room ensured a supply of natural ventilation. The door to the outdoor play space also remained open during free play activities.

Administration of Medication:

- The administration of medication was not observed at the time of inspection. Further to this, the inspector was informed that none of the children were in receipt of medication.

Safe Sleep:

- None of the children in attendance were observed to sleep during the inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits routes were noted to be free from obstruction.

Outings:

- Not applicable, as the registered provider advised that outings were not conducted.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The available insurance certificate outlined details of cover for up to 22 children to attend the sessional service. The certificate was valid until 27 November 2023.

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) The children's sanitary facility was equipped with two toilets and two wash hand basins, which was adequate to cater for the number of children accommodated at the service. Since the previous inspection, a wall mounted nappy changing table had also been installed in this area, to cater for children who may require nappy changing. The staff sanitary facility was located in a separate, adjacent building on the school grounds and consisted of two toilets and two wash hand basins.