

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC361		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Seskin Montessori & Pre-School		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Seskin, Bantry, Co Cork		
<b>Eircode:</b>	P75 V522		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Mary O Sullivan-Keane		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	05/12/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	13	PM
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Social Work Dept, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, West Cork P81 PD78		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M Carney		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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).			
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A		

### Description of service

Seskin Montessori & Preschool a is private service registered to provide an early year setting for children aged from 2 to 6 years on a sessional basis.

It operates from 08:45am to 11:45am on a daily basis.

The service is situated on an elevated site overlooking Bantry Bay, a rural coastal market town in west Cork.

It comprises of a detached single storey modern property providing 2 interlinked playrooms, toilet facilities, staff toilet, kitchen, office and large storage room.

The children have direct access to a large outdoor play garden.

### Staffing

The registered provider works directly with the children and is the person in charge. There are an additional 2 adults employed in the service.

Each adult has certification of Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training, ranging from Level 5 to Level 8.

### Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Childcare 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, 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 worked directly with the children and was the person in charge. A deputy had been appointed to deputise as required.

(b)

On the day of the inspection the registered provider was present and available to facilitate the inspection process. Review of the staff roster indicated that 2 adults were always on the premises during service operation.

(2)(a) & (b)

There was a total of 3 adults attached to the service and each of their files were examined. The following information was obtained -

There were 6 written past employer references available with 12 records of validation attached.

(c)

There were 3 up to date Garda vetting disclosures on file dated December 2022.

(d)

Police vetting was available for 1 adult who had worked outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for a period of 6 consecutive months or longer. It was dated March 2018.

(4)

Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training were on file ranging from Level 5 to Level 8

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

*(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

(3)

There were 13 children aged from 3 to 4 years attending on a sessional basis with 2 adults in attendance. The adult child ratios were correct.

### 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)

Each of the children’s enrolment forms were reviewed to ensure they contained the required elements of Regulation 15(a) to (i). Each of the 13 forms were found to be compliant.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

## Compliance Information

The following records were reviewed in relation to the service –

- (1)
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the registered provider and every other employee attached to the service.
  - (h) A register to record the children’s attendance maintained on a daily basis;
  - (i) Staff rosters were made available;
  - (j) The service had a logbook developed by an agency associated with early years settings for the correct recoding of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent. There were no entries.

(k) A logbook was made available for the recording of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service. The most recent entry was logged on 22 November 2023 and involved a minor incident. Parental signature evidenced that the information had been duly relayed.

### 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:

- Food and drink items were provided by the children's parents and guardians.
- Lunch time was observed to be eaten at 11:15; the table was set by the children with assistance of the adults and the lunch boxes distributed.
- The meal was eaten in an unhurried manner with the children sitting with their friends in a companionable and sociable manner.
- The adults sat with the children and assisted with the opening of cartons as required and encouraging the disposal of rubbish in the correct bin.
- Toileting was gently supervised by staff members and children were encouraged to independently wash hands, flush toilets and discard of paper towels.
- Childrens coats and bags were stored on child height hooks in the lobby of the school so as to encourage independent dressing and organisation of their arts and crafts for home time.
- Protective boots were available for the children to wear whilst playing in the garden during damp weather.
- Aprons were available for the children to wear during messy play or art activities.
- A rest area corner was situated in a designated corner of the playroom to allow the children to opt out of scheduled activities if they so wished. It was furnished with a low orange couch, blue matting, mood lighting and a recessed built-in unit displaying a wide range of age-appropriate picture books to entice literacy during quiet time.

### Physical and Material Environment –

Seskin Montessori occupied a purpose-built premises which was spacious, well maintained, clean and brightly decorated to provide a sessional early year setting.

The lobby displayed signage of welcome in many languages, there was up to date information regarding the curriculum, service news and health promotion for parents information.

- The interlinked playrooms were airy and bright with many windows to allow for natural ventilation and light.
- The rooms were furnished with enough child sized tables and chairs for the children to enjoy tabletop activities and eat their lunches.
- Fixed open shelving units were anchored to the walls to display the wide range of Montessori resources and play materials in an accessible way to the children.
- There were multiple tabletop activities to encourage fine motor skill play such as peg boards, threading and small construction bricks.
- The smaller room was laid out to offer arts and crafts and small construction.
- The walls of the room displayed murals of farming life such as the large cow which was in keeping with the children’s surrounding environment. There were also displays of the children’s handprints and family photographs.
- The children had direct access to a large outdoor play area to the front of the premises; this included a hard surface area and lawn so that ball games and ride on play equipment could be enjoyed safely.
- A small decking area was situated to the side of the playroom which allowed for water and sand play.

### Supporting Relations Around the Children

- Both the adults present on the day demonstrated kindness, active listening and considered engagement with each child; this was observed during the facilitation of activities such as supervising the children’s toileting, preparing for lunch and practising carols for the forthcoming end of term performance.
- Low tones and good eye contact was maintained, and the children were relaxed, happy and familiar with the staff.
- The service was closely integrated with the local community for example they had visited the local library and had visited the local community hospital to sing carols to the residents.
- Parents with talents and interesting job roles had visited such as the dentist, the ambulance service and the local Ban Garda.

### 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

- Seskin Montessori & Pre-School operated a healthy eating policy and this was adhered to as observed by the healthy, nutritious and varied lunches meals eaten at lunch time.
- All food and drink items were supplied by the parents and guardians.
- Lunches were seen to be nutritious, varied and sufficient for example, fruits, crackers, wraps, meat and cheese sandwiches, yogurts and dips and cheese biscuits.
- A drink station in the smaller playroom allowed the children to access their drinks when they felt thirsty.
- The service made available an ample supply of cutlery and plates available to the children.

### 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 door to the school was suitably secured so as to prevent unauthorized access and stop a child from leaving the premises unsupervised.
- Internal doors to the staff, kitchen and storage room were also suitably secured to prevent the children accessing the rooms unsupervised.
- The emergency exit leading to the decking area was unobstructed.
- The staff members stored all their personal items in the kitchen out of reach of the children.
- Cables and flexes were not accessible to the children.
- Openable windows were fitted with child safety latches.
- Cleaning products were out of reach of the children.
- Prior to outdoor play the area a staff member closed the gate and checked for any hazardous items in the garden.

### Infection Control:

- Seskin Montessori was clean; with well-maintained cleaning schedules to evidence that regular cleaning duties was carried out.
- A sanitising unit was placed in the lobby for adult use.
- The children and adults were observed practising regular and thorough hand washing such as prior to lunch and after toileting and outdoor play.
- There were 3 child sized toilets and 3 wash hand basins situated in the lobby. They were clean and well maintained with toilet tissue, clean step ups and toilet seats available for the children's comfort.
- Hand wash posters promoted the correct hand wash routine.
- Liquid soap and paper towels were available.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water registered within the normal range of 39 degrees Celsius.
- An additional sink unit was installed in the smaller playroom to provide wash up after lunch and arts and crafts.
- The staff members had their own designated toilet and wash hand basin which were clean and well maintained.
- Tissues were available for nose hygiene.
- Lidded and non-contact pedal bins were in operation.

### Administration of Medication:

- It was reported that the staff members were familiar with the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a child requiring medications.
- There were currently no children attending the service that required medications.

### Fire Safety:

- The fire door was unobstructed.
- Fire cylinders were tethered to the walls.
- In conversation with the registered provider, it was stated that a designated staff member had completed fire training, and that each staff member was familiar with the procedures required to be followed in the event of a fire.

### Outing:

- The registered provider stated that outings were conducted in the service. In conversation it was established that staff members understood the safety procedures that are to be carried out during an outing such as maintaining the 1:2 adult child ratios.

## 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 had first aid responder (FAR) certification on file which had expired just recently in October 2023. Email confirmation evidenced that the registered provider was awaiting a place on the next available training course. The remaining 2 childcare professionals had first aid training with a paediatric component.

(2)(a) & (b)

The first box was stored on a high shelf in the playroom, out of the children's reach but accessible to the staff. The first aid box was suitably equipped with the required medical supplies.

### 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 premise.
- (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

(a) The service displayed a template in the playroom which indicated that monthly fire drills were carried out. The most recent fire drill took place on the 29 November 2023. There were 9 children present with 2 supervising staff members.

(b) A record was in place which detailed the number, type, and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms. The most recent service had been conducted in August 2023.

(4)  
A fire evacuation plan was displayed in the lobby and in the playroom which provided a visual guide of the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a fire.  
The fire assembly point was clearly identified.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

An up-to-date insurance certificate was available. It stipulated that the service was adequately insured to cater for up to 22 children on a sessional basis.

The expiry date was 27 11 2024.