

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC400		
Name of Service:	Teach na nOg Montessori School		
Address of Service:	3 Lower Convent Hill Street, Bandon, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P72 P620		
Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Burchill Dineen		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	14/03/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	16	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 Montessori school was established in 1989. It was established in its current premises in 2002 as a private sessional service. The setting is registered to operate daily Monday to Friday from 8.50 to 11.50am and 12.30 to 3.30pm for 38 weeks of the year. The setting is a play-based Montessori influenced provision. The ethos is child-led focussing on following the interests of the child in a fun-loving manner. The service is in Bandon town centre and comprises of a playroom in a converted terrace house adapted for the purpose of a childcare facility. There is an enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the service

Staffing

The registered provider was service based and worked directly with the children. Two other adults also worked directly with the children. All adults had a major award in Early Childhood care and education.

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. 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, deputy 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 was the named person in charge of operating the service.
- (b) In addition to the registered provider, there was a deputy person in charge.
- (2) (a) The staff recruitment files for all 3 adults were examined as part of this inspection. When the recruitment files were reviewed two written and appropriately validated references were available from 5 past employers.
- (b) Two written and appropriately validated references were available from 1 source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (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 3 adults in place.

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 registered provider and two other adults working with 16 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 interact and encourage/assist the children to make the meal times a social occasion, while encouraging independence. Children were observed to get their own lunchbox from the fridge and get a tray and sit at the table independently. A vase of flowers was observed on each table to create an ambiance at snack time.
- The children were largely trained using the toilet and were supported appropriately by the adults to use the toilet.
- There was a cosy corner in the home area to provide for the children's need for relaxation adjacent to the library area and a fully enclosed and partially covered outdoor area to facilitate children's mobility in small groups.
- The adults were observed to support the children to interact positively with each other, for example, with turn taking/sharing and with developing their independence in facilitating child led activities.

Physical and Material Environment

- The indoor and outdoor environments were laid out with defined interest areas to facilitate free choice and child led activities.
- The interest areas included arts area with gluing, and cutting; mathematical and sensorial area, practical life, puzzles, tuft trays, planting, cozy area, library, home area with dress up and kitchen, construction, and transport area.
- Outdoors the setting had a canopy area for shelter, in addition sand and water trays, slide, climbing wall, obstacle course, pirate ship to climb and scale and a kitchen with tapped water and bubbles.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available, and children's artwork was on display at the appropriate height.
- Materials were freely available and readily accessible to facilitate the needs of the children.

- Both indoors and outdoors had a wide range of materials and experiences for children to be challenged, stimulated and for variety. For example, the tuft trays were filled with coloured rice and corn as children celebrated St Patricks Day. Children had made flags and art associated with St Patricks Day and these were proudly displayed.

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.
- The outdoor area was secured, and no hazards were observed.
- No 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/electric dryers were in place. Lidded, foot operated pedal bins were available in the toilets.
- Handwashing was observed prior to snack time where children washed their hands at the sink in the playroom and in the toilets.
- Tables were cleaned prior to snack.
- A fridge was in place for the storage of lunches and water bottles.

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider stated that the service only administers emergency medication and that no child currently attending as any requirement for these types of medications.

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.

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 in the preschool room.

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 7 March 2024.
- (b) The registered provider ensured a maintenance of the smoke alarms were maintained. This record was dated 7 March 2024.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a) The registered provider did not ensure the regular maintenance of the fire extinguishers in line with the manufacturers guidance. The service record was dated October 2022.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a) The registered provider responded to state that the fire extinguishers were serviced on 20 March 2024 and a reminder placed in the school phone for scheduling their maintenance in March 2025.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the maintenance receipt for the fire extinguishers was submitted.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted by the registered provider on 28 March 2024 was assessed and deemed to meet regulatory compliance with this regulation.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was appropriate insurance for a sessional care for 22 children per session, valid until 27 March 2024.