

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE053		
Name of Service:	Giggles Montessori Pre-School		
Address of Service:	O'Connell Street, Kilkee, Co. Clare		
Eircode:	V15 VA02		
Name of Registered Provider:	Deborah Hickie		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	21/04/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E
Inspection undertaken by:	Á. 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

Not applicable

Description of service

Giggles Montessori Pre-school is a sessional preschool service located in Kilkee, County Clare. The service operates a morning session Monday to Friday for thirty-eight weeks each year. The programme of care is facilitated in two interconnecting care rooms from 09:15 to 12:45 for children ranging in age from two to six years. The service is located in an adapted single storey premises. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

On the 21st April 2023 the registered provider and two members of staff were present and worked directly with the children. A relief person is available to provide cover in the service.

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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19(1)(a), 23, 25 and 26. 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.

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, 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 designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.
- (b)
- A designated person in charge and a person who is able to deputise as required were available at all times in the service.
- Four files were available for the registered provider, two members of staff and a relief person. These four files were reviewed by the inspector and the following was noted:
- (2)
- (a)
- Four validated references were available from past employers.
- (b)
- Four references with evidence of verification were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c)
- Four Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the staff working directly with the children and the relief contact persons.
- (d)
- Not applicable, as the adults had not lived outside the Jurisdiction for a period longer than six months as an adult.
- (4)
- The staff working directly with the children, had evidence of an Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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)
An adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the service.
- (3)
The minimum ratio of adults caring for the children was adhered to at all times. Three adults supervised the fourteen children that were present during the inspection.

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)
Nineteen completed enrolment forms were available for the number of children enrolled in the service. A sample of eleven records were reviewed and detailed the required particulars outlined in (1) (a)-(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)
The inspector observed the children's learning, development, and well-being to be supported by the staff. The staff treated the children with positive regard. This was observed by the staff interacting with the children at their height, playing with the children in a group and individually in a respectful manner and conversing with the children in soft spoken voices. The children guided the programme of activities throughout the session and transitioned freely from the indoor to outdoor area in accordance with their preferences.

Upon arrival to the service the children were engaged in sensory activities using sand, engaged in chasing and running games, using the slide and climbing frame and were observed to be fully engaged in table top and pretend play. The children transitioned from group discussion, singing and nursery rhymes to mealtime to group work and discussion with the staff and their peers about the lifecycle of a bee theme. This involved a tasting session of honey which followed a discussion of how bees are useful and why honey is good for you. The children's artwork was displayed and included yellow bubble wrap depicting the honeycomb and the children's individual creations of bees made from paper plates.

Other sections included a birthday wall; fish and sea theme depicting nursery rhymes; family section; brush your teeth creations with a toothbrush and tooth paste and rhyme completed by each child. The children concluded the session engaging in play-based activities in the outdoor area. The staff supported the children to be independent while they used the toilet, cared for their personal belongings and by including them in the facilitation of the programme of care and during mealtime in the outdoor area. Individual records were available for each child with photographs of completed activities and learning and detailed descriptors explaining the context of the activity were documented with each photograph.

The indoor and outdoor environments were bright and spacious and laid out with designated interest areas, low level tables, chairs and shelving with equipment and materials which were accessible to the children. A large quantity of developmentally appropriate toys, educational materials and equipment were available and accessible to the children in the care room. An area for the children to rest and designated interest areas included: a reading area, a kitchen corner, a dolls house and supporting materials and equipment, a construction area, a dress up area displaying a large range of costumes and a large barn with farm animals. The care room was equipped with low level units with containers storing bricks, blocks, shape sorters, puzzles, jigsaws, animals, and dolls.

In the outdoor play area, a covered section and a section for children with seating underneath a wooden playhouse were available for children's use. These included: two wooden areas for sand play with supporting materials; a wooden playhouse with a slide, a climbing frame and a basketball net.

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 reception area was secured by a lock preventing unauthorised access by an adult or the leaving of an unsupervised child.
- The materials and equipment appeared in good condition.
- No electric cables were observed to be accessible to the children.
- The storage for cleaning equipment was out of reach of the children, in high cupboards in the care room.

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in clean condition and cleaning schedules were available demonstrating the measures taken by staff.
- Warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lined, lidded pedal operated bins were available in the care room and in the sanitary facility. Child friendly photographic illustrations are displayed in the sanitary facilities to promote hand washing. Hand sanitiser is located at the entrance to the service.
- Hand washing by the children was encouraged before eating, after using the toilet, messy play, and outdoor play activities.
- The children's perishable food items were stored in the fridge in the care room.

Administration of medication:

- The registered provider stated that medication is not routinely administered in the service. The service has a policy in place in the event that medication is required.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit passageways and fire exit routes were clear from obstruction.
- The records demonstrated that fire drills were carried out monthly by the service.

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 a record of up to date First Aid Responder training, the certificate was valid until the 30th of June 2025.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was stored on the wall in the care room.

(b)

The first aid box was available at the service entrance for use in the event of an emergency.

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)

Records were available to demonstrate that fire drills were carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 20th of April 2023.

(b)

A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system were available. The most recent firefighting equipment took place in September 2022 and smoke alarm maintenance service took place in April 2023.

(4)

A fire action notice demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in the care room.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured. Insurance cover was available for up to twenty-two pre-school children attending this sessional service. The policy is valid until the 27th of April 2024.