

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE061
Name of Service:	Jitterbugs Montessori Preschool
Address of Service:	Donoughboy, Kilkee, Co. Clare.
Eircode:	V15 DC18
Name of Registered Provider:	Amy Moloney Keane
Service type:	Sessional
Date of Inspection:	25/11/2024
No of pre-school children:	AM 7 PM N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare.
Inspection undertaken by:	A.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

Jitterbugs Montessori Preschool was established in 2007, as a private, sessional childcare facility on the outskirts of Kilkee, in County Clare. The programme of care and learning is provided Monday to Friday from 09:30 to 12:30 for children ranging in age from two to six years. The childcare facility is provided in one care room in a single storey building. An enclosed outdoor play area is located at the side and rear of the building.

Staffing

Both the registered provider and a second adult are employed by the service. On the 25 November 2024 one adult cared for the children in attendance. The adults working in the service had evidence of engagement in continuous professional development.

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 inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (3) (8)(c)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

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, the staff member 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 designated person in charge was available throughout the inspection and an emergency contact was available within close proximity.

(b)

The designated person in charge was available at all times during the inspection.

(2)

Two files were available in respect of the registered provider and the person in charge. The findings included the following:

(a)

Four written references from past employers were available.

(b)

Not applicable, the references were sourced from past employers.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the adults working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was not required, as the adults working in the service had not lived in another state for a period longer than six months.

(4)

Two adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications at Level 5 and 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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1)

An adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.

(3)

On the 25 November 2024, the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained in the service. One adult cared for the seven children attending the service.

(8)(c)

The service was operated single-handedly during the inspection. A second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service was available within close distance.

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 children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment, having regard to the age and level of development of the children:

Basic Needs of Children:

The adult treated the children in a kind and caring manner and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adult conversed with the children in a sensitive manner, used a soft tone of voice, acknowledged the children by their individual names and responded promptly to their cues for comfort. The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings and using the toilet. The adult offered praise and encouragement. The children were supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities. The transitions in the play-based activities were completed with ease. The children sat together during mealtime and conversed amicably. The parents/guardians provided the children's food and beverages. Mealtime was observed to be a relaxed and sociable occasion.

Physical and Material Environment:

One open plan room was in operation during the inspection. The children were offered a range of developmentally challenging play and educational activities. The children were observed to be fully engaged as they transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor environment. The care room was bright, spacious and well-resourced and was laid out to enable the children to freely move and play. Learning aids, visual routines and creative work were displayed on the walls in the care room. A variety of opportunities for play and learning activities were available and accessible in the indoor and outdoor environments with defined areas of interest. The care room included appropriately resourced wooden pretend kitchen, a wooden construction bench, a dress up area and a farm area.

A large seating area with soft furnishings was available and used by the children to rest and relax. An adjacent bookshelf accommodated a large range of reading materials. Shelving units were accessible to the children with a range of manipulative, imaginative and constructive toys and learning materials for the age and level of development of the children. On arrival the children were engaged in open ended and sensorial play and educational based activities and transitioned to mealtime and outdoor play.

The outdoor play area which is located to rear of the service was accessed by the children. All weather clothing and footwear was available for the children to support outdoor play. The designated sections contained spacious, all-weather ground surfaces for opportunities to play all year round. There was a variety of ride on toy vehicles, a large wooden playhouse, a climbing frame, balance equipment, a slide, sand and water play areas and seating. The children were observed to enjoy their time in the indoor and outdoor environment.

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 service was secured to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility.
- The outdoor area was secured with a fence, a raised surface and a gate to protect the children within.
- The children in attendance were recorded on arrival and on departure from the service.
- Cleaning agents were stored in a secured area out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, using the toilet and before mealtime.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and pedal operated bins. Visual aids demonstrating good hand hygiene practices were displayed for children at the wash hand basins to prompt children to wash their hands.
- A refrigerator was available to store the children's perishable food items.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- A fire assembly point was available adjacent to the service.
- A fire action notice was located at two fire exits doors.
- Records of completed monthly fire drills were available.

Outing:

- An outing was not undertaken during the inspection. An outings policy was available for review by staff, parents and guardians.