

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE069
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Name of Service:	Lahinch Montessori
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Address of Service:	4 Hillcrest, Dough, Lahinch, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 Y9Y3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ailish Linnane
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla, Station Road Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Ní Nialláin
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

This service first opened in 2010. The sessional service is a privately owned and operated service. The service is registered to cater for up to a maximum number of eleven pre-school children, between the ages of 3- 5 years. The service is in a rural setting between the towns of Ennistymon and Lahinch. The premises is a two-storey built structure and the two pre-school rooms are located at ground floor level. The outdoor space to the side of the pre-school is used for outdoor play for the children.

The service is open Monday-Fridays 09.15hrs - 12.15hrs .

Staffing

The registered provider operates the sessional service assisted by one adult who were both present on the day when the unannounced inspection was carried out.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 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) On the day of the inspection, the registered provider was the designated person in charge and there was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.
- (b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present on the premises. The staff roster indicated that the designated person and her deputy were always available in the service.
- (2)(a) Two references from past employers were available for two staff members.
- (b) Where past employer references were not available, two references from a source other than a past employer were available.
- (c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for two adults.
- (d) Not applicable as no adult had lived outside the state for a period greater than six months.
- (4) The two adults working directly with children in the service held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) On the day of Inspection there were two adults working with ten pre-school children. The adult/child ratio in the service was correct.
- (3) The staff roster showed that the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.
- (8)(c) Not applicable as the service was not operated single-handedly, two adults were available in the service

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*
- (3) *A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.*

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS OF CHILDREN

- There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service. The parents supplied healthy snacks and drinks for their children. Drinks of water were available throughout the session.
- Self-toileting was observed and the children attending were independent regarding their toileting needs.
- The personal cleanliness and hand washing of the pre-school children was encouraged by the adults.
- The pre-school children had ample space to move freely in the pre-school rooms and in the outdoor environment.
- The adults were positive and consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The indoor pre-school rooms were comfortable, bright, welcoming and safe and provided a good range of developmentally appropriate and challenging experiences for the children. Suitable seating was provided for children and adults.
- Montessori equipment was available in one of the pre-school room which included materials for the following areas; Practical life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics and Culture.
- The large pre-school room contained play materials arranged in interest areas. Some of these included a home corner, a construction area, a shop with authentic goods and a cash register, farm sheds, animals and animal feedstuffs, trucks, tractors, a train set on tracks, dolls, dolls houses and accessories, a garage with cars and a library area. A parachute and balls was used creatively for fun play.
- The play materials and equipment were organised to be visible and easily accessible to the children on low level open shelving
- The facility had an outdoor play area which consisted of a grassy and tarmacadam surface. The outdoor environment had a supply of ride on vehicles, a playhouse, sand play, a slide, a swing and facilities for the children to play a variety of games.

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 person in charge ensured that complete and accurate daily records of attendance were kept for all children and adults in the service. The entrance to the service was secured.
- The pre-school rooms were adequately ventilated by natural forms of ventilation.

Infection Control:

- The premises was maintained in a clean and hygienic manner. There was liquid soap at the wash hand basins to facilitate hygienic hand washing for children and adults.
Paper towels were provided in the sanitary areas used by the children and adults to facilitate hygienic hand drying.
- The external outdoor play area was secured and fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.

Administration of Medication:

- Appropriate documentation was available in the event that medication was required by a child attending the service. Medication was not administered in the service on the day of inspection

Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were carried out in 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) One adult held a First Aid Responder certificate which were valid to the 26th October 2023.

(2)(a) There was a fully equipped first aid box stored in a designated first aid storage area which was easily accessible.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children always attending the pre-school service.

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 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 are available to show that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises with the most recent services having been completed in August 2023.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in a conspicuous position on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The insurance certificate for the service was available and was valid to 27th March 2024. The required cover was available for a maximum of 11 pre-school children who could attend at any one time.