

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier: TU2015CE099

Name of Service: Minis Pre-school

Address of Service: Knockatemple,
Kilnamona,
Co Clare.

Email Address: info@minis.ie

Name of Registered Service Provider: Ms Caroline Rodgers

Type of Service Registered: Full Day Care

Date of Inspection: 2 4 0 9 2 0 2 1

No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection: AM 12 PM 4

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Tusla, Early Years Inspection Service,
River House,
Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Inspection undertaken by: M. Ní Nialláin
Title: Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection

Governance	Health Welfare and Development of Child	Safety
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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	<p>This privately operated Early Years Service is registered to provide full day care for pre-school children. It provides a service for children between the ages of 2 years 8 months - 5 years. The service is open Monday to Friday 08.00hrs to 18.00hrs. The premises is located close to the primary school and community centre in Kilnamona.</p>
Premises	<p>The service operates from a new purpose built premises. One preschool room and a large outdoor play area was available to the children. Outdoor play was also facilitated in specially designed and constructed wooden sheds some of which were used for storage purposes.</p>
Staffing	<p>The registered provider and one staff member work in the preschool service. Both staff members have an appropriate qualification in Childcare.</p>
Methodology	<p>Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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.</p> <p>The findings on inspection are based on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained through examination of documentation • Direct observation • Discussion with relevant staff <p>This inspection was unannounced and focused on areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required.</p> <p>The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 health welfare and development of child and regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.</p> <p>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.</p>
Acknowledgements	<p>The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff member and children who were present on the day of the inspection.</p>

GOVERNANCE

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.
- (6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who—
- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and
 - (b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date
- (6A is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of "paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)" for "paragraphs (5) and (6)", and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): "
- (6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."
- (7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:
- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;
 - (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
 - (c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information:

(1) (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

- (b) During the period of inspection, the designated person in charge was available on the premises. The staff roster indicated that the designated person or their deputy was always available on the premises.
- (2) (a) Four validated references from past employers were available for the adults who worked in the service and a relief staff member.
- (b) Where past employer references were not available, two references from a source other than a previous employer were provided.
- (c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for three adults.
- (d) Not applicable as none of the adults had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six consecutive months.
- (4) Two adults held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (6)(a) Not applicable as the qualification exemption for staff retiring by September 2021 was not required.
- (b) Not applicable as the granting of an exemption to the requirement for a qualification under the Early Childhood Care and Education was not required.
- (6A) Not applicable as the qualification exemption for an adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model had not been sought.
- (7) (a) The registered provider ensured that the employees were provided with appropriate information and training on the policies, procedures and statements specified in schedule 5 as evidenced by the following:
- A record of staff training was maintained in the service in respect of the adults, including updated training on revised procedures relating to COVID-19 including:
- Drop off and collection procedures
 - Procedures for enhanced cleaning and infection control
 - Risk and hazard management
 - Handwashing procedures

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information:

The registered provider ensured that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in schedule 5 were in place for the service. Policies, procedures and statements had been reviewed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and were verified upon review of documentation and during discussions with staff

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-school service

working in the service. The manager and staff member demonstrated a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to implementing new and revised policies, procedures and statements in the service.

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.
- (2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times

Compliance Information:

- (1)
On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)
The inspector observed that the minimum adult to child ratio was always maintained throughout the period of the inspection. There were 12 children present that were cared for by 2 adults.
- (8) (a)
The service was not operated single-handedly, and more than two adults were always available in the service.

HEALTH WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

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

Compliance Information:

BASIC NEEDS:

- The adults demonstrated respect and warmth towards the children in their care using soft and gentle tones, positive language and engaging with the children at their level.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

- The service had a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents and asks them to provide healthy and nutritious lunches/snacks for children to enjoy. All food and drinks were supplied by the parents. The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their lunch and snacks in a relaxed and unhurried environment. Mealtimes were observed to be a relaxed and sociable occasion for the children who could sit and chat with their friends.
- The children were being supported by the staff to be self-caring, according to their age and stage of development.
- Free-play activities predominated on the day of inspection and the children had access to plenty of free space to move around and select which activities they chose to engage with.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- There was one open plan playroom available for the children in the service. The room was used for free play and tabletop activities as well as for rest and relaxation.
- The organisation of the play environment supported children's independence and self directed play. All the play resources were visible to the children and were accessible to them on open low level shelving units or as part of a themed interest area. Appropriate seating and tabletops were interspersed throughout the room which ensured that children could choose between being mobile or playing at table top of floor play activities.
- An appropriate range and quantity of play resources were provided for the numbers of children attending. A selection of children's creations was on display throughout the playroom.
- There was a large play space outdoors. Outdoor play in all weathers was facilitated with the provision of all weather gear and wellies. The outdoor area was well resourced with play equipment. The children had free running space in part of the outdoor play area and opportunities to play games. A specially designed wooden shed was available for arts and crafts activities and for the storage of equipment. A caravan was colourfully decorated and served a den and an area for fun for 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.

<p>Compliance Information:</p>	<p>Infection Control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was evidence that the service had enhanced infection control measures in the pre-school setting to reflect national public health recommendations regarding COVID-19. The adults had proactively engaged with a suite of resources developed to guide and assist the staff in preparation for service provision considering COVID-19. The service manager had completed a self-assessment checklist regarding COVID-19 guidelines to help identify the works necessary to ensure the safety of the children and adults attending the service. • Documented and up-to-date cleaning schedules were available in the premises, its play equipment and materials were maintained in a visibly clean and hygienic condition. • Children routinely washed their hands following toilet use, before eating meals and upon returning from outdoor play. Warm water, liquid soap, and disposable paper towels were available at the wash hand basins in the children’s sanitary accommodation to facilitate effective hand hygiene practices. • In the event of a child or staff member became unwell while attending the service, an allocated isolation area had been identified. A supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) was available at this location.
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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.

<p>Compliance Information:</p>	<p>(1) Two adults in the service on the day had updated training in FAR and the certificates were valid to December 2022 and May 2023.</p> <p>(2) (2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in a designated first aid storage area which was easily accessible.</p> <p>(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.</p>
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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:	<p>(1)(a) Records were available to show that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 6th of September 2021.</p> <p>(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises. The last maintenance checks for the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms took place in September 2021.</p> <p>(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous positions on the premises.</p>
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