

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE135			
Name of Service:	Sunshine Montessori Pre-school			
Address of Service:	Clonadrum, Mullagh, Ennis, Co. Clare			
Eircode:	V95 K242			
Name of Registered Provider:	Geraldine Kavanagh			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	30/09/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	-
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:	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

Description of service

Sunshine Montessori Pre-School first opened in 2000 as a sessional early years service. The premises are located in a rural setting near the village of Mullagh in the west of the county. The premises are located on the same site as the registered provider's home and are converted for use to a childcare facility. This building is a single storey structure with childcare provided in one playroom which has its own access. A large newly developed enclosed outdoor play area is located at the rear of the premises. Access is via a secured gate. A shed which is part open and part covered is situated in the outdoor area and is used for play and changing of all weather gear. The service caters for children between the ages of 2 - 6 years and is open Monday-Friday 09.20am - 12.30pm

Staffing

The registered provider operates the sessional service assisted by one staff member who were both present on the day when the unannounced inspection was carried out. Both adults hold a qualification in childcare.

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 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.

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 and one adult were present on the premises. The staff roster indicated that the designated person and her deputy were always available in the service.
- (2)(a) The four reference for both adults were from a past employer.
- (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 adults working directly with children in the service both 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 eleven 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) The service was not operated single-handedly; a second staff member was present in the service during the hours of operation.

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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

- There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service. The parents supplied the snacks and drinks for their child. Drinks of water were available throughout the session. Snack time was observed to be an enjoyable social occasion for the children.
- Self-toileting was observed as the children attending were independent regarding their toileting needs.
- Personal cleanliness and hand washing was encouraged and supervised.
- The pre-school children had ample space to move freely in the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Children's behaviour was managed appropriately, and the adult positively encouraged and praised good behaviour.

PHYSICAL & MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The indoor environment was comfortable, welcoming, and safe and provided a good range of developmentally appropriate and challenging experiences for the children.
- Play equipment and materials were grouped to provide specific interest areas and appealing places for children to play and explore. The playroom was carefully laid out and presented.
- The play materials and equipment were freely available and accessible to the children on low level shelving.
- A large enclosed outdoor play area was provided to the rear of the premises. Ground surface cover included grass and concrete which allowed for play in all weathers. The area contained outdoor sand and water table, messy play area, cycle lane, mud kitchen and dens. A wooden shed provided shelter to a selection of outdoor toys and equipment and all-weather gear. A variety of ride on vehicles were available. The children played happily outdoors for most of the inspection.

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. The entrance to the service and the outdoor play area was secured and no hazards were identified in the playroom or in the outdoor play area.

Infection Control:

The playroom and sanitary areas were adequately ventilated by natural forms of ventilation.
There was liquid soap at the wash hand basins to facilitate hygienic hand washing for children and adults.
Paper hand towels were provided in the sanitary area used by the children and adults to facilitate hygienic hand drying.

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 18.11.2024.

(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 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 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 June and September 2024.

(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 November 2024. The required cover was available for the number of pre-school children who could attend at any one time.