

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CE149		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tomorrow's Child Montessori School		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	2 Woodview Heights, Sixmilebridge, Co. Clare.		
<b>Eircode:</b>	V95 E6R3		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Cara O'Malley		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	16/05/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	17	PM 13
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla, Ennis Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Ní Nialláin		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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).			
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable		

### Description of service

This service was first opened in 2009. The sessional service is a privately owned and operated Montessori service. The service is located in an urban setting on the outskirts of Sixmilebridge Village. The premises are a two storey built structure and is accessed through a front gate and front door dedicated for the use of the pre-school. The Pre-school room is located on the ground floor. The outdoor space to the rear of the pre-school is used for outdoor play for the children. It contains one pre-school room and has a capacity to cater for up to a maximum number of 22 pre-school children between the ages of 2- 6 years. The service is open Monday-Fridays 09.30hrs - 12.30hrs and 13.30hrs - 16.30hrs.

### Staffing

The registered provider operates the sessional service assisted by one adult who were both present on the day when the 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 9,11,15, 19, 25,26, 28 and 32.

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.

### Additional Information

The inspection was triggered by information received to the Early Years Inspectorate.

### 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 designated person in charge was present on the premises. The staff roster indicated that the designated person and her deputy were always available in the service.
- (2)(a) Four references from past employers were available for two staff members and one emergency relief person.
- (b) Where past employer references were not available, two references from a source other than past employers 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 three 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 seventeen pre-school children in the morning and thirteen pre-school children in the afternoon. 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 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.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and
- (c) an authorised person.

#### Compliance Information

- (1) Twenty-five children's records out of forty-three were inspected. The service maintained an adequate record for each child attending the service, in accordance with Regulation 15(1) (a) to (i).
- (3)(a) Parents/guardians had access to all information and written records relating to their own child.
- (b) Records were available to the authorised person in the service.
- (c) Records were open and available for inspection to the Tusla Early Years Inspector.

### 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

- The parents provided the snack food and drink for their child. The service encouraged parents to choose healthy options . On the day, children's snacks observed consisted of filled sandwiches and rolls with yogurts, raw vegetables and fresh fruits. Drinking water was available to the children at all times.
- Children could access the toilet at any time during the session. Staff supervised children's hand washing and provided assistance when needed.
- Good personal hygiene practices were observed. Children washed their hands before snack break and after toileting and outdoor play.
- Children had opportunities to move about freely in the playroom and in the outdoors during their free playtime.
- The adults were positive and consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour.

##### PHYSICAL & MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- There was one Montessori room in use and available at the time of Inspection. The indoor environment was 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 which included materials for the following areas; Practical life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics and Culture.

- Some play equipment and materials were arranged to provide a number of separate developed interest areas. There was a reading/relaxing area with a display unit of picture and story books. Tea sets, play food, animal toys, small cars, connecting blocks were also available. The play materials and equipment were organised to be visible and easily accessible to the children on low level open shelving
  - An enclosed outdoor play area was provided to the rear of the premises. The ground surface cover was an all-weather one which allowed for play in all weathers. The area contained an outdoor sand table, water play, a bench and table, a wooden boat, a basketball stand, tricycles and a storage shed of outdoor play equipment.
- (3) There was a behaviour management policy in the service and the registered provider ensured that the other staff member had received training on the policy. Positive interactions were observed between the adults and the children throughout the inspection. Children were praised for their good behaviour, for taking turns and sharing toys. Practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful were not observed to be 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 valid First Aid Responder certificate which were valid to the November 2023. The second adult had a Paediatric First Aid cert which was valid to February 2025

(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 service having been completed in January and May 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 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The required cover was available for a maximum of 22 pre-school children who could attend at any one time.

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

### Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The complaints policy of the service was available for inspection. It contained the procedure to be followed by a person making a complaint in relation to the service.
- (b) The policy outlined the manner in which a complaint will be dealt with by the registered provider.
- (c) The procedures for keeping a person who makes a complaint about the service informed of the manner in which a complaint is being dealt with was contained in the service complaints policy.