

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN038				
Name of Service:	Little Gems Montessori				
Address of Service:	Enagh, Beglieve, Bailieborough, Co. Cavan				
Eircode:	A82 E281				
Name of Registered Provider:	Nuala Rogers				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	04/06/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>17</td> <td>PM</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>	AM	17	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan				
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader				
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

Little Gems is a privately owned service which is in operation since 2012. It provides a sessional service to children aged 2 years – 6 years. The service caters for a maximum of 22 children. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme and opens from 08.45 am – 12.15 pm Monday to Friday. This service is located in a rural setting outside Bailieborough Co. Cavan. It operates from a purpose-built room adjoining the registered provider's own home. There is 1 care room, sanitary accommodation, and an outdoor play area to the side and back of the house.

Staffing

There are 3 staff members including the registered provider employed in the service who work directly with the preschool children.

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/ safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform

decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

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 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived on the premises and were present throughout the inspection.
- (c) A clear management structure was in place in the service.

All 3 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection:

- (2)(a) There were 2 written and validated references available for all members of staff.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 3 staff members. The service had adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International police vetting was available for the 1 staff member who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction as an adult for a period of 6 months or more.
- (4) All staff who worked directly with the preschool children had at least a minimum of a Level 5 childcare qualification.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there was 1 room in operation. During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(3) The adult: child ratios observed in the care room was correct, there were 2 adults caring for 17 preschool children aged 3-5 years of age.

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

There was 1 care room in operation on the day of the inspection.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs:

- All children had access to the outdoor area and a change of environment to the outdoor area. Children were dressed appropriately in waterproof clothes and footwear to go outside.
- All lunches were brought in by the children. Assistance was given to the children who required help with opening lunches and certain foods. The children's drinks cups were readily accessible to them in the care room and the children could go to the fridge and take a drink whenever they required one. Lunches were appropriately stored in the fridge.
- Independence with toileting was promoted for the children who were toilet trained and discreet supervision was also provided by staff when children were brought in by staff members from the outside to go to the toilet as required. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children and hands were washed after toileting and after coming in from outdoors.
- Tissues were available in the room and noses were observed to be cleaned when necessary.

Supporting Relationships

- The children were observed to be provided with sensitive care and nurturing interactions by the staff. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the staff and children in the room. For example, "...show me that lovely painting", "great wee girl" and "well done....." The children were observed to seek out the adults for assistance.

- Staff were observed to sit with children during indoor tabletop activities and also support the children's outdoor play when requested to do so; for example, when a child asked for water to water some plants.
- Communication with parents was predominantly informal at drop off and collection times. The registered provider reported that most communication with parents is carried out through this method. Weekly themes and activities were displayed on the door for the parents. In addition, communication was also conducted by phone and newsletter.

Physical and Material Environment

- There was a good range of Montessori equipment and a variety of age-appropriate toys and materials available in the care room. These supported many areas of development such as fine motor skills, role play and sensory development.
- Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in all rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children enabling them to choose which items they wished to play with. Additionally, there was a selection of free play equipment in developed interest areas.
- The outdoor area was well resourced with a variety of activities to develop gross motor development.

Programme Of Activities

- Long and short-term plans were display in the room.
- Activities observed were child led, children on returning to the care room after outdoor play were able to go and choose whatever tabletop activity, they wished to do themselves and in the outdoor area the children chose where they played.
- Activities that promoted the children's language development such as the social conversations between the staff and children were also observed.
- A variety of the children's art activities and photographs from the year were in the children's graduation folders.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day,

(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) There was a soft comfortable area in the care room. It consisted of a large plastic covered sofa beside the book area for a child to take a break and relax from activities if they wished. A daybed with bed linen was also available for any child who may require a lie down or if they were unwell.

(4). A well-resourced and developed outdoor area was available at the service. There was a bark covered area containing a mud kitchen, a slide and some balancing wooden beams, and toadstools. There were areas for planting, a bug hotel, fairy area and stone path. There were also some wall mounted flower shaped black boards. A hedge tunnel led down to a second outdoor area which had a safety surface.

Here the children had access to a variety of ride on toys, sand/ water trays and a partially covered area with a bench and small kitchen plus a small slide. There was a small shed for the storage of the children's wet gear.

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) The registered provider ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, on the premises at all times. One FAR certificate was reviewed.

(2)(a) and (b) A first aid box was available to the preschool children.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had adequate insurance cover for a maximum of 22 children expiring the 27/11/25.