

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CW026				
Name of Service:	Little Trinity Creche & Montessori				
Address of Service:	Montessori School, 17A Chapelstown Gate, Tullow Road, Carlow, Co. Carlow				
Eircode:	R93 HN52				
Name of Registered Provider:	Brenda Fitzgerald				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	18/07/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>33</td> <td>PM</td> <td>26</td> </tr> </table>	AM	33	PM	26
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspector Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital Ferrybank Wexford				
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Ryan				
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 Trinity Creche and Montessori is a private early years service providing sessional, part time and full day care to children aged 1 to 6 years of age. The service is open from 7am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The service operates from a detached house in a residential estate on the outskirts of Carlow town. The service consists of four playrooms, a sleep room, kitchen and toilets. Outside, children have access to an enclosed play area.

Staffing

There were nine staff including the registered provider on the premises on the day of inspection. The registered provider and the childcare manager are the designated people in charge daily and assist the staff working directly with the children. All the staff working directly with children in the service held the minimum of level 5, 6, 7 and 8 qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education. The service employs a chef who is on the premises daily.

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/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(b), 11(1)(2), 19(1)(a)(b), 23, 25(1)(2)(a)(b), 26(1)(a)(b)(4), 28 and 29(d).

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(b), 19(1)(a), 23, and 29(d).

As a result, the scope of the inspection included time in all of the early years room.

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, person in charge, 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

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection. There was a second named staff available to deputise as required. The files for 10 staff members were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

There were 2 validated references available on file for 10 staff members.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available on file in the service for each staff member.

- (d)
Police vetting disclosures were not required as no staff member had lived or worked outside of the state for a period of more than six consecutive months.
- (4)
Certificates of qualification for 10 staff members working directly with the early years children were available on file.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
Throughout the period of the inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children attending the service.
- (2)
During the morning there were 33 children being directly cared for by 7 staff. During the afternoon there were 26 children being directly cared for by 6 staff, ensuring there were adequate staff available to work with the children and to maintain staff/child ratios at all times. The registered provider and childcare manager were present and available to cover for lunch breaks for staff.

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

(1)(a) The following observations and discussions with staff reflect the children's experience within the service focusing on the area of supporting relationships on the day of inspection:

The interactions between the staff and children in the wobbler room were kind and gentle, with the staff observed down on the floor engaged in floor play with the children. A child who was unsettled was cuddled and rocked by the staff before being placed down to sleep in their cot. The parents dropped and collected their children directly from the room, which allowed for the staff to give daily feedback. The staff also gave parents a written record of their child's day, which included nappy changes, naps and food eaten.

The children in the toddler room enjoyed their morning snack, before reading books in circle time. The tidy up and transitions between activities were relaxed and smooth. Staff gently managed minor episodes of behaviour by reinforcing "gentle hands" when pushing between children occurred. Children enjoyed dancing and yoga in the room as they were unable to go outdoor during the morning.

Children in the junior and senior Montessori rooms were fully engaged in play during the day, which included time spent in free play, tabletop activities such as, painting, playdough and outdoor play. The children's artwork was displayed around the room. The children were observed to use the toilet independently, with staff supervising them and available to provide help if needed. The children sang songs and chatted about their holidays before dinner. The staff supported children who required additional support to settle into the service.

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:

Access to the service was secured with an electronic keypad system at the entrance ensuring restricted access to unauthorised persons. Cleaning products were stored away and inaccessible to children. The outdoor play area was fully enclosed to the rear of the premises.

Infection Control:

There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand hygiene throughout the service.

Administration of Medication:

There was an administration of medication policy. The staff discussed with the inspector the procedure to follow when a child required administration of medication. Medications were supplied by parents and stored securely in a designated area inaccessible to children. Each of the early years room had an administration of medication book.

Safe Sleep:

The service had a safe sleep policy. Children over two years were placed to sleep on sleep mattresses and staff remained in the room with the children for the duration of sleep and recorded sleep checks. Children under two years of age were settled to sleep in the designated sleep room between the wobbler and toddler room. There was documented evidence in the service, that the sleeping babies colour, position and breathing were observed to be physically checked and recorded every 10 minutes as per safe sleep guidelines.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. There was no system in place for the regular cleaning and sterilising of soothers in the service. This posed a risk of potential cross infection in the service.
2. Nappy changing practices observed on the day were not in line with the service policy. For example, staff did not wear aprons during the procedure. A staff member was observed not to change gloves or wash hands between nappy changing. Children's hands were not washed after having their nappy changed. The changing mat was not cleaned between changes.

3. Children in the senior Montessori room did not wash their hands before their dinner.
4. Children in the wobbler room did not have their hands washed before their afternoon snack.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action:

1. A sterilising unit was purchased. A soother policy was developed. Individual containers for storage of soothers were purchased.
2. The nappy changing policy was reviewed with all staff.
3. A staff meeting was held to outline the importance of handwashing in the prevention of infection.
4. A staff meeting was held to outline the importance of handwashing in the prevention of infection.

Preventative Action:

A copy of the hand hygiene, infection control, soother policy and nappy changing policy was given to all early year's educators. A form was signed by each staff member to acknowledge this action.

Soother sterilisation, nappy changing, and hand hygiene will be monitored and recorded as part of our staff feedback.

Evidence submitted:

Soother policy, nappy changing policy, infection control policy, sterilising unit and confirmation that staff reviewed new and updated policies.

Summary Comment

The registered providers response submitted was satisfactory to meets the requirements of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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)
There were staff trained in first aid available to the children attending the early years service.
- (2)(a)(b)
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the premises and was available for use.

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)

Monthly fire drills were carried out within the service. Records reviewed on inspection confirmed that the last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on the 29 June 2023.

(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment was serviced. The last maintenance carried out in the service was recorded as having taken place in September 2022 and February 2023.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service demonstrated that insurance cover to operate a full day care service for children was in place.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

Compliance Information

The service had a cleaning schedule.

Non-Compliance Information

The service was in need of repair and maintenance in some areas.

For example:

1. The tap in the wobbler room nappy changing area was broken and there appeared to be a leak under the sink.
2. A number of tiles around the sinks in the main bathroom were missing.
3. The bathroom needed painting and cleaning.
4. There were no handles on the inside of the toilet doors in the main bathroom.
5. There was inadequate ventilation in the nappy changing area in the wobbler room as there was a stuffy smell evident.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action:

1. The tap has been replaced and is now working.
2. The missing tiles have been replaced.
3. The bathroom has been repainted.
4. There are now handles on the inside of the bathroom doors.
5. The electronic vent is working in the nappy changing area.

Preventative Action:

The manager will continue to maintain and to upkeep on the premises when required.

Evidence submitted:

Photograph of newly painted bathroom, door handles, ventilation in nappy area, repaired sink taps and replaced tiles.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response submitted was satisfactory to meets the requirements of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.