

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR005		
Name of Service:	Oatlands Pre, After, Montessori, School Age Childcare		
Address of Service:	C/O Oatlands Primary, Mt Merrion, Blackrock, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	A94 KW94		
Name of Registered Provider:	Siobhan McDonagh		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	11/09/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown drive, County Dublin.		
Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill		
Title:	Early Years Inspectors		
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

This early years service is located on the grounds of Oatlands primary school in Stillorgan, County Dublin. The service provides sessional education and care to children aged 2 to 6 years, Monday to Friday from 9 am to 12.30 pm. The premises consist of two rooms in separate prefabricated buildings. An outdoor area is directly accessible from each building. The school indoor hall is also available to the pre-school children at designated times.

Staffing

In total three staff are employed in the service including the person in charge. Two adults worked directly with the children and the person in charge was available to provide additional assistance as required.

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 may also focus on other areas as required.

Compliance was assessed under the following regulations:

9(1)(a)(b), (2) (a)-(d) and (4) Management and Recruitment,
11(1), (2) Staffing Levels,
15(1)(a)-(i) Record of Pre-School Child

16(1)(i) Record in relation to pre-school service,
19(1)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1)(a)-(i) Record of Pre-School Child.

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 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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2) The inspection included the review of a file for one new adult who commenced working in the service since the last inspection.
- (a) Two written validated references from a past employer were available.
- (b) Not applicable, as the written references provided were from a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for three adults employed in the service. Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was available as required for one adult who had lived outside Ireland for longer than six months.
- (4) Records were available evidencing the adult employed to work directly with the children held the required 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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children for sessional care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twenty children attending being supervised by two adults on the day of inspection.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) A sample of ten records were reviewed for children who were attending the service. The records reviewed contained the following information:
- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
 - (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
 - (c) There was an area on the registration form where the date when a child would cease to attend the service will be recorded.
 - (d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service were also available.
 - (e) There was authorisation for the collection of the child.
 - (f) The record available supported the recording of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child.
 - (g) The name and telephone number of each child's medical practitioner was recorded.
 - (h) A record of immunisations received was recorded.
 - (i) There was written consent for appropriate medical treatment of a child in the event of an emergency.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

- (1)(i) The staff roster was available and reflected the adults working in the service.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) Staff reported children bring in their own lunch from home. Children were observed eating lunch between 10.30-11am. Healthy lunches were provided by parents including a variety of sandwiches, pasta, fruit and yogurts. Mealtime was sociable and relaxed, children and staff sat together and engaged in conversation. Staff supported children who needed assistance to open items. Drinking water was accessible and children throughout the day and children were given water with their snack.

The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed. Transitions within the service were managed well and children appeared to be familiar with the daily routine. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent. They were observed to use the toilet independently as they needed and cleaning up after their lunch and play. Children washed their hands at appropriate times after using the toilet, cleaning their nose, after outdoor play and prior to eating.

Staff displayed warmth and sensitivity during all interactions with the children and were observed supporting children in their play. Staff were observed to intervene promptly in minor disputes and used gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour policy. Staff were observed acknowledging children's efforts positively. Children's choices were respected with children given the opportunity to choose their own play equipment and activities during free play and outdoor play. Children had an opportunity for outer play. They were observed engaging in energetic and imaginative play in the outdoor area. Children from room 1 also spent time in the indoor school hall.

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:

Entry to the service was secure to prevent unauthorised access or children leaving unsupervised. An intercom system was in place to monitor visitors before granting access. The outdoor area to the rear of the premises was secure a high wall and security gate were in place. Cleaning agents and medications were stored safely out of reach of children. Blind cords were secured safely on windows in room 1.

Infection Control:

Sanitary facilities were equipped to support handwashing. Children were observed to wash their hands after using the toilet, outdoor play and before meals while being closely supervised by staff. Pedal operated bins were provided in the care rooms and sanitary areas.

Administration of Medication:

Staff were familiar with the medication policy when spoken to and a system was in place to record medication if required. To date no medication has been given to a child.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were clearly marked and the fire drill procedure was displayed. Staff were familiar with the fire drill routine.