

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY101
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Name of Service:	Goldilocks Montessori
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Address of Service:	Magheramore, Oughterard, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 C914
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Name of Registered Provider:	Josephine O'Donohue
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Kelly.
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

This private pre-school service was established in 1999. It offers sessional day care service, Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 12.30pm .It can cater for children aged 2 year to 5 years old. The service can cater for a maximum of 16 pre-school children. The service is located in a rural area of Oughterard, Co Galway. The service consists of a 1 large and 1 smaller playroom and both adult and children’s sanitary areas. The service also has access to a large extensive outdoor play area at the side of the building.

Staffing

There were 2 adults working in the service including the registered provider.

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 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*

(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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspections, the registered provider was in charge and there was also a named person who could deputise.
- (2)(a) There were written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer for the adults working in the service.
- (b) There were written and appropriately validated references available from a source other than the previous employer for adults working in the service.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for 2 adults.
- (d) There was Police vetting for 1 adult working in the service had lived for a period longer than 6 consecutive months outside the jurisdiction.
- (4) All adults working directly with children have obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework

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 there were 2 adults working directly with 16 pre-school children. At all times during the period of inspection, the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified were maintained.

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 of the Children

- There was a healthy eating policy in place and the parents were informed of this policy. The pre-school children attending were observed having a snack consisting of selection of sandwiches, scones, crackers, fruit and drinks at 11.15am .
- A hand washing policy was in place. The children were observed washing their hands after outdoor play and before snack times and after using the toilet. Hand washing was both supported and encouraged by staff.
- Children could access the toilet at any time during the session and were supported where necessary. The sanitary areas were conveniently located adjacent to the playroom.
- The children had access to the extensive and well-equipped outdoor play on 2 occasions during the session.
- The children were encouraged to put on their outdoor gear on their own before they went outside. The staff encouraged and praised the children and offered assistance when required. This was observed on the day when the children were changing out of their Christmas concert costumes and were getting ready to go outside. The staff were walking around the room assisting the children when needed.

Supporting Relationships around Children

- The adults demonstrated sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for the children as evidenced in the positive use of language and soft tones when speaking to the children. The children appeared comfortable and relaxed in the company of the staff.
- The atmosphere between the children and the staff remained calm and relaxed throughout the inspection. The children were observed happily playing in the outdoor play area on 2 occasion during the inspection.
- The service provides parents with daily information/feedback on the activities and their child's progress. The registered provider meets with the parents at drop off and collection times .On the day of inspection the registered provider took photographs of the children in their Christmas outfits that they will be wearing for the Christmas concert, these were forwarded to the parents for their attention.
- There was strong team spirt in the service, the staff had worked together for a long number of years and displaced excellent communication skills during the inspection.

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 had ensured all adults had first aid training for children.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was in place in the service.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the service at all times.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance cover was available for the number of pre-school children attending this service.