

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY283
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Name of Service:	Tuairíní Montessori & Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Tooreeny, Tooreeny National School, Moycullen, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	HYI YR64
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Name of Registered Provider:	Orla Keeler McDonagh, Michelle Madden
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	07/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway,
Inspection undertaken by:	F Nic Dhonnacha
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 preschool service is located in Tooreeney, a national school in Moycullen, west of Co. Galway. The preschool offers an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), a sessional care programme from 08.50hrs to 12.20hrs and a part-time service from 8.50hrs to 13.40hrs, from Monday to Friday. A bilingual service is offered through the medium of English and Irish. Additionally, the service operates a school-aged programme from 13.45hrs to 18.00hrs. The preschool caters for a maximum of 22 children at any one time, between 2 and 8 months to 6 years of age. A play-based Montessori preschool curriculum focusing on emerging interests is provided.

The service consists of 1 playroom. A quiet rest area with soft seating and matting was available for the children to relax or opt out of an activity if they wish to. Six foldable beds are available for children's sleep provision. There is a designated secure outdoor play area, to the front of the premises.

Staffing

Two registered providers work in the premises. There is a named person in charge and there is a named designated deputy. There are a total of three staff currently working in the premises. The three staff hold a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at least at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. On the day of inspection, three staff were working directly and caring for 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, and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 18, 19, 23, 25, 26, and 28. 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. 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 providers, additional 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 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)

There were two designated people in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service if required.

(b)

The two registered providers were the people in charge and were on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated people in charge or named person were available, on the premises, at all times when the pre-school children were present.

(2) All staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)&(b) Eight written validated references, available on file for the four adults were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.

- (c) Garda vetting disclosure was available in respect of the four adults.
- (d) No adult lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 months, while over the age of 18 years therefore, police vetting was not required.
- (4) Four adults held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of a Level 5, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for these staff members.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

- (1) At all times during the period of the inspection, the persons in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.
- (2) On the day of the inspection, there were 15 preschool children present.
There were 3 staff directly caring for these children, including the registered providers.
Additionally, there was a school aged programme and 2 staff members designated to their care.
- (8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were 2 staff on the premises at all times while the pre-school was operating.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

A copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013) of the Act and of these Regulations was available on the notice board and available for parents, guardians, employees, unpaid workers, contractors, and authorised persons.

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

(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

Basic Needs

(1)(a)(b)

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and a healthy eating policy was available for review on request.
- Nutritious meals and snacks were served at regular times, but there was flexibility.

- The atmosphere during mealtimes was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and staff. At approx. 10.40hrs, the children had their snacks provided by the parents and guardians which included a variety of sandwiches filled with cheese, ham, rice cakes, rolls, brown bread, fruit pieces with apple, bananas and grapes.
- There was a designated fridge for the safe storage of perishable foodstuffs from the children's bags.
- The staff encouraged and supported the children to be independent.
- The tables and chairs were suitable for the children's ages and stages of development.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilet and did not have to wait to use the toilet.
- Three children wore a nappy on the day of inspection and had their nappies changed in a timely manner in the designated nappy changing area.
- All the children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment, both indoors and outdoors.
- There was a cosy area within the playroom with child sized couches, matting and cushions provided which could be adapted as a rest area for the children to rest or opt out of activities if they so wished.
- The service had six stackable beds and linen for children's sleep provision. No child attended the part time service on the day of inspection therefore did not require a period of rest and sleep.
- The play materials and environment were changeable, flexible, and responsive to the emerging changing needs, preferences, and interests of the children in each playroom. The staff encouraged children to interact and to engage with a range of materials, activities, and equipment in the environment, based on the child's choices, age and stage of development.

Supporting Relationships

- The service supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with siblings, peers, and other children, by providing opportunities for small and large group activities and play, leading to increased social awareness, co-operation, collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of belonging.
- Staff responded to infants in a timely and appropriate way when they cried or became upset.
- On the day of inspection, the children were observed playing with sensory toys and listening to stories, at circle time, singing action songs, building blocks and playing with dolls and dress up clothing. All children had the opportunity to play outdoors the children were observed playing on the yoga mats, pedalling tricycles, jumping, chasing, and kicking ball. While other children and staff were observed listening to stories and singing songs.

- The staff spoke kindly to the children and resolved any issues calmly, they interacted at the child's level, sat with each other at meal/ snack time.
- On speaking with the staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the pre-school including the child's interests, preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times, via a private messaging application, or by phone calls. Information about the service and general information was displayed on the notice board, inside the main door.
- The children's art and craft materials were collated into scrap books and will be given to parents and guardians on a seasonal basis.
- The outdoor play areas to the side of the premises was sufficiently spacious to accommodate the numbers of children attending the service. The outdoor play environment provided activities and opportunities for fresh air, exercise, and discovery. These included a large wooden school bus, a sand and water basin, tricycles, tyres, diggers, a sand pit area, a basketball net and balls, mud kitchen, an activity play house, wall mounted flower shaped blackboards and a large wooden shop.

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:

- The main entrance door into the pre-school playroom was secured to prevent unauthorized access by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- The main gate into the school yard was secured and a buzzer system was in operation.
- All cleaning agents and equipment were stored inaccessible and out of children's reach in the playroom.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Fire doors were unobstructed.
- The temperature of the playroom was recorded and maintained within the recommended room temperature of 18°C -22°C.

- There were storage areas inside the entrance of the playroom with individually labelled hooks for the children's coats and bags; thereby preventing a trip hazard.
- Daily records of attendance were kept for all of children attending the playroom.

Infection Control:

- There were 2 toilets and 1 wash hand basin in the sanitary area adjacent to the playroom, for the pre-school children to use. Additionally, there was a separate wash hand basin in the playroom allocated for childrens use.
- During the inspection, the children were assisted and encouraged to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting, after using a tissue, after playing outdoors and on entry/ exiting the pre-school service.
- A supply of tissues was readily available indoors and in the outdoor play area.
- There was a fridge in the Naíonra playroom, for the storage of perishable items from the children's lunch boxes/ bags. Each child was offered age-appropriate plates and cutlery at snack time.
- Waste was disposed of in foot pedalled lidded bins in the playroom and in the sanitary area and thereby inaccessible to the children.
- There was a designated nappy changing area with steps up to the unit, a clean intact mat was observed.
- Aprons and gloves were used in line with best practice and the pre-school service policy while changing each child's nappy.
- An airtight sealable bin was available for the safe disposal of nappies in the service. Staff and children's hands were washed in the designated wash hand basin to reduce the risk of cross infection.

Administration of Medication:

- Individually labelled sun creams were applied on the children before going outside, each sunscreen was stored in a safe place in accessible to the pre-school children.

Safe Sleep:

- There was a child size couch with cushions beside the library and canopy where a child could rest and relax.
- Six stackable beds were available for the children who wish to attend the part time service. The staff advised that yoga and music is performed in the service regularly to allow the child to stretch, rest and relax while attending the pre-school. The inspector observed some children practising yoga positions on the day of 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 service provided evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available to the children attending the pre-school service. The service provided evidence that two staff were trained in first aid for children and were available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) The service had a first aid box with content items in date. It was stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the playroom.

(b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children 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 fire fighting 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) Written records of fire drills were kept in relation to any fire drills that took place in the premises. Records indicated the last fire drill record was dated on the morning of 7/09/2023.

(b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the last annual service check dated 21/09/2022.

(4)

Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (b)

Records indicated that the last annual maintenance certificate for the integrated smoke / fire detection alarm system was dated 7/05/2021. It was acknowledged by the registered providers that the national school had made arrangements to have an annual service on the 14/9/2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

On the 3/10/2023 the registered providers advised of the following.

Corrective and Preventive Action

A reputable company serviced and maintained the integrated smoke and fire detection alarm system on the 22/09/2023. A contract has been arranged for the maintenance and servicing of the smoke and fire detection alarm system annually.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the maintenance certificate for the integrated smoke and fire detection alarm system.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 26 (1) (b) has been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance with an expiry date 1/01/2024 for a part-time pre-school service with 22 children and included the following -

- public liability insurance.
- insurance against fire and theft.
- buildings insurance.
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.