

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KK034		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Happy Days Montessori		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Fiddown, Piltown, Kilkenny		
<b>Eircode:</b>	E32 TN24		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Debbie Stokes		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	23/06/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Child and Family Agency, Ferrybank, Wexford		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Mc Garry		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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).			
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable		

### Description of service

Happy Days Montessori is located in Fiddown, a rural village in South Kilkenny. The service is registered to provide a sessional service to 22 early years children from 2 to 6 years of age. The service provides the Early Years Care and Education scheme (ECCE) from 9.30am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday for 38 weeks per year and operates from the ground floor of a two-story premises. The service consists of one large early years room, an office area, a small kitchenette, toilets and an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

### Staffing

There were two staff, including the registered provider who were working directly with the children in the service on the day of inspection. All staff held the minimum of level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

### 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:

- Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment,
- Regulation 11 Staffing levels,
- Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child

Regulation 25 First Aid

Regulation 26 Fire Safety

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

Following a discussion with the registered provider and review of documentation in the service it was established that the service continued to employ the same staff since the last inspection.

(1)(a)(b)

The registered provider was the person in charge on the day of inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

There were two written and validated reference available on file from previous employers for one member of staff.

(c)

There was a copy of Garda vetting on file for both staff members.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no employee had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six months.

(4)

All staff members held a minimum of level 5 and above in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ

## Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) (b)

There were no references available on file in the service for one member of staff.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider will ensure all required written references are available on file in the service.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Two written references were received by the inspector and are now available on file in the service.

## Summary Comment

The registered providers response and evidence submitted meets the requirements of the Childcare act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

## 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)

There were at all times an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the early years service.

(3)

During the morning session there were 18 children in the care of 2 staff. The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of staff to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 was maintained at all times during the inspection.

### 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

1)(a)

The registered provider ensured that each child's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of activities during the inspection, including practicing for their graduation, playing musical chairs, relaxing in the rest area and having stories read to them.

The staff were observed to be attentive dealing with the children. The older children were observed practicing for their graduation. They were observed to take pride in singing the songs they had learned in the service. They practiced walking out from behind the curtain, were presented with their scroll and then stood on a mark on the floor that had been put there by a staff member for them to stand on.

The younger children were seated pretending to be the mammy and daddies in the audience. Later during the morning of inspection, a staff member was observed to facilitate a game of musical chairs in the service. The children were observed to have great fun running around the early years room. The children were observed to be generous in praising the children who won the games.

There was a cosy couch for children to relax on. Children were observed to take pride in showing the inspector their favourite books. There was a curriculum in place and observations had been carried out on individual children. Learning journals consisting of observations made by the staff and examples of the children's work had been prepared. Staff who spoke to the inspector said these journals were for the parents to take home after the graduation which was planned for the next day. Children were encouraged to be independent appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, children were encouraged to be independent while putting on their coats and getting their bags ready to go home.

The early years room was well resourced with a range of toys and equipment for the children’s learning and enjoyment. For example, there was a variety of toys such as plastic bricks, dinosaurs, jigsaws, books, and art equipment stored on easily accessible shelves throughout the service. Areas of interest such as the home corner and dress up area were well developed and resourced for the stimulation and enjoyment of the children attending the service.

The outdoor area was well resourced with stimulating play equipment for the children’s learning and fun. There was a house to store toys, a tyre obstacle course, a jungle gym, and a selection of ride on toys for the use of the children. Children were observed at snack time. Staff put out picnic blankets on the ground for children to sit at while enjoying their snacks. Staff sat and chatted with the children making it a fun and sociable time for them.

### 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 entrance door was secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised people gaining access to the service. The front door was secured. There was a small wooden fence inside the front door. This was used to ensure the safe collection of children by their parents. The entrance to the service was directly on a footpath in the village. Access was gained to the service by ringing the bell. The large outdoor area to the rear of the service was safe, suitable and secure. The service was observed to be in good repair with no obvious maintenance work required.

##### Infection control:

The service appeared to be clean and well maintained. There was thermostatically controlled warm water available in all wash hand basins in the service. There were liquid soap, disposable paper towels and foot pedal bins available throughout the service. The children were supported with washing their hands after using the toilet and following messy play.

## 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 was a person trained in first aid immediately 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 position on the premises and was available to the children attending the early years 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 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

(a) There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place in the service on 26 May 2023.

(b) There was a record stating the firefighting equipment was last serviced in June 2023.

(4)  
There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance hallway of the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(b)  
There was no record available in the service of the annual servicing of the smoke alarm in the service.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider will ensure the smoke alarm in the service is serviced annually.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

The inspector received a certificate stating the fire alarm in the service was serviced in August 23.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider's response and evidence submitted meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.