

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015KK051

Name of Service: Little Mischiefs Day Nursery Mooncoin

Address of Service: The Hawthorns,
Roseleigh,
Mooncoin,
Kilkenny,
X91 WY43.

Email Address: littlemischiefmooncoin@eircom.net

Name of Registered Service Provider: Sharon O'Brien

Type of Service Registered: Full Day Care

Date of Inspection: 2 2 0 6 2 0 2 2

No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection: AM 20 PM 13

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Waterford Community Services,
Cork Road,
Waterford.

Inspection undertaken by: M. Ryan
Title: Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection

Governance	Health Welfare and Development of Child	Safety
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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	<p>Little Mischief Day Nursery is a private full day care service located in the village of Mooncoin in Co. Kilkenny, approximately 17 kilometers from Carrick on Suir in Co. Tipperary and 12 kilometers from Waterford City. The service opened in 2006, and presently participates in Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme, the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme, the Training Employment Childcare Programmes and the Universal Scheme.</p> <p>The philosophy of the service was based on the Montessori approach to early childhood care, with a strong emphasis on outdoor play as an important aspect of the service’s ethos. The service caters for pre-school children aged six months to 5 years old from 07.30hrs to 17.30hrs from Monday to Friday. School age childcare is also facilitated for the two local national schools.</p>
Premises	<p>The premises is a detached two-story building in a residential area purposefully adapted for a childcare facility. The service has four childcare rooms, a catering kitchen, sanitary accommodation, office space, storage space, a large veranda and outdoor play area.</p>
Staffing	<p>The registered provider is the owner/manager and employs six childcare staff to work directly with the children in the service on a daily basis. The registered provider holds a Montessori diploma and a level 8 degree in Early Childhood Care and Education.</p>
Methodology	<p>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.</p> <p>The findings on inspection are based on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained through examination of documentation • Direct observation • Discussion with relevant staff <p>This inspection was unannounced and focused on areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that the inspector spends in the service. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of child and regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included time spent in both the indoor and outdoor play areas.</p> <p>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.</p>

Acknowledgements

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

GOVERNANCE

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.

(6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who—

- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and
- (b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date

(6A is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of "paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)" for "paragraphs (5) and (6)", and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): "

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

*(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
(c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information:	<p>(1)</p> <p>(a) The registered provider was the designated person in charge and had a named person who was able to deputise as required.</p> <p>(b) The registered provider was available on the premises throughout the inspection.</p> <p>One staff file was made available for inspection of a staff member that had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection:</p> <p>(2)(a)(b)</p> <p>There were two written validated references from past employers.</p> <p>(c)</p> <p>A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file for this staff member.</p> <p>(d)</p> <p>Not applicable as the staff member had not resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period longer than six consecutive months.</p> <p>(4)</p> <p>There was evidence that all staff employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.</p> <p>(6)(a)</p> <p>Not applicable as no staff member working in the service had signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intended to retire from employment in an early years service before 1 September 2021, and</p> <p>(b)</p> <p>No staff member working in the service had in possession a letter from the minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date.</p>
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Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information:

The registered provider had recently updated and enhanced the policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and amendments. Staff had confirmed in writing that they had read and accepted the policies and procedures. For parents there was a hard copy of each of the policies and procedures available on the premises in a designated folder.

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) On the morning of the inspection there were 20 children aged 1 to 5 years of age being cared for by 6 staff. The registered provider was supernumerary to the staff requirements and was available to help as required.
- On the afternoon of the inspection there were 13 early years children aged 1 to 5 years of age being cared for by 4 staff. The registered provider was supernumerary to the staff requirements and was available to help as required.
- (2) The minimum adult: child ratios exceeded the regulatory requirements in all childcare rooms on the day of the inspection.
- (8)(c) On review of staff rosters it was documented that there were always two staff on the premises during the service hours.

HEALTH WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

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 provisions were in place for facilitating each child's learning development and well-being in the service as observed on the day of the inspection:

BASIC NEEDS:

Since the last inspection the service had engaged a private catering company to provide the dinner or main meal of the day on a two-week cycle menu plan. This meal was offered from 12.30hrs and on the day was observed to be pork meat balls with mashed potatoes and carrots. The registered provider reported that this was working well and there was a notable improvement in children's appetites since they were eating the same food. The service offered breakfast with a selection of cereals and toast with milk or water drinks for all children attending between 7.30hrs and 08.30 hrs.

All snacks were provided by the parents and observed on the day to be sweet and savoury sandwiches, fresh fruit, yogurts, and water or juice to drink. Drinking water was available and accessible to children throughout the day. At mealtimes the children were observed to sit around the table as one group in each room. In the baby area low sized timber baby chairs with trays attached were available to allow the babies to feed them selves.

A purpose built nappy changing unit with steps had been installed in the main children's toilet area since the last inspection. Regular nappy changing was observed throughout the day for all children in nappies. Communication notebooks were used for children under two years of age to document children's feeding, sleep patterns and nappy changing routines and these were sent home daily.

All toilet training was managed in conjunction with parents and their wishes. Parents supplied nappies and barrier cream for their own child. Toilet trained children were observed to be able to access the toilets whenever they needed.

Children had ample space both indoors and outdoors and under the covered veranda. Children were observed moving freely between these areas. In the afternoon the early years children were for the main part cared for on the ground floor where opportunities for siblings to be together were facilitated.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

Since the last inspection all the rooms in the building had been repainted in shades of white and cream which provided a fresh atmosphere throughout the service.

The downstairs area (ground floor) was laid out to accommodate the children under three. The design of the ground floor was adaptable so as to accommodate flexible arrangements for different age groups of children. There were two large windows on either side of the room low enough for the children to be able to see outdoors

The baby area was partitioned so as to facilitate safe crawling and climbing opportunities with soft floor matting, and rubber foam shapes for gross motor developmental opportunities. This area opened on to the veranda allowing babies the chance to crawl outdoors on to the decking.

The toddler and junior early years room had double doors which, when opened up, facilitated flexible care needs of both rooms. Since the last inspection the registered provider had colourful timber, child friendly, room divides made up, to designate an area in one of the rooms for rest and relaxation. There was also a comfortable wicker couch provided that staff and children were observed sitting on and reading a book together.

There was a home corner stocked with children's kitchens and household items such as saucepans and stainless-steel bowls. Large handheld play items were available on child accessible shelving such as trucks, diggers and animals. Black boards were cleverly incorporated on the back of some of the furniture dividing the rooms. Wall mounted mirrors and family trees with children's photographs were observed in all the rooms.

There were two Montessori rooms (upstairs.) The rooms were pleasant, bright, and safe with double doors between the rooms which served to open up the space for freedom of movement between the two. The rooms were laid out with various areas of interest, a home corner, dress up corner, and 'chill out' area. There was a low-level plumbed sink used for water play adjacent to build in sand play units, children were observed enjoying playing with the sand and water. A variety of Montessori equipment/activities and musical instruments were also available to the children in this room.

Outdoor Environment

There were two play zones both with different surfaces, one had sponge matting and since the last inspection the whole outdoor grassed space had been resurfaced with synthetic grass. There was a new covered structure extending along the external boundary wall of the outdoor play area. This feature was painted and decorated with doors and windows to mirror shop fronts such as a post office, shop, garage, and

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

police station. The children were observed using these for pretend play throughout the day. With the exception of mealtimes, the children were outdoors for duration of the inspection.

The soft matted area had a timber playhouse and an extensive mud kitchen. The service had a supply of ride on outdoor toys such as tractors, cars, balance bikes and scooters. There were clay digging boxes and a further sheltered seating area with a perspex canopy for shade. A veranda had a Perspex roof and was railed off from the garden with timber trellising which spanned the full length of the building. Since the last inspection the section for babies had been securely cordoned off and fitted with play mats for the safety and comfort of crawling babies. There were four child height built in sensory baths in the veranda area. The staff were observed to be attentive and supportive with the children and followed the children's lead regarding their outdoor play and care needs. Staff were observed checking in with children with regards to their toilet needs and frequently brought children in doors for nappy changing.

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:

The service had taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending.

GENERAL SAFETY:

Access into the service from the housing estate was appropriately secured at the side entrance gate with a keypad security intercom system. Twist thumb locks and higher chain locks were fitted to both doors, which restricted any unauthorised access into the service. The external play area was secured at the rear of the building from the surrounding residential houses by concrete block walls.

A low handrail was provided on the stairs, and a safety gate was installed at the top of the stairs. Warm water at the taps available to the children was thermostatically controlled. All doors throughout the premises were fitted with finger guards. All electrical sockets were fitted with safety covers.

Attendance records were completed daily for the staff and children attending. The attendance book corresponded with the number of children present on the day of inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

INFECTION CONTROL:

Hand sanitisers were available for the staff in the rooms and on entry into the service. Children were observed washing their hands before eating their food, after toileting, messy and outdoor play. Hand washing was supervised by the staff. The upstairs childcare rooms had built in child height wash hand basins to facilitate children's hand washing and water play in the rooms.

Supplies of tissues were readily available, and foot pedaled lidded bins were supplied for the waste disposal of these. On the day of the inspection the rooms were well ventilated, and windows were open throughout the inspection.

Detailed daily and weekly cleaning records were documented These were completed and up to date. Monthly deep cleaning was carried out by a contract cleaner. Table-tops and work surfaces were observed being cleaned with disposable paper towels and disinfectant spray. The inspector was shown the revised sterilising routine for mouthed toys. Soothers were kept on a shelf in individually labeled storage units for each child. Prompts for hand washing were at all wash hand basins throughout the service. Hand washing was observed prior to eating lunch and after toileting with the children.

SAFE SLEEP:

It was observed that there were four cots in use in the sleep room and a supply of stackable beds for the planned sleep session. There were individual supplies of clean linen and cellular blankets available for each child who required a sleep.

Sleeping children were checked in the sleep room every ten minutes, a log was kept of this procedure. Posters and guidelines for safe sleep practices were displayed on the wall in the sleep room.

There was a glass viewing panel between the baby room and the sleeping room to facilitate easy supervision of children who were asleep. There was a wall mounted thermometer in the sleep room to ensure that the room temperature was maintained at 16-20°C.

The younger children's rest needs were facilitated in line with their individual routines in the toddler room with child friendly moveable partitions and the use of stackable beds.

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 five staff working in the service had certified current First Aid Responder training for children.

(2)

(a) There was a first aid box on the premises stored in a conspicuous position in the downstairs care room.

(b) The first aid box was suitably equipped, available and easily accessible to the staff.

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) A record in writing of fire drills indicated that the last fire drill took place on the premises on the 7 May 2022.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was maintained.

It was recorded that fire equipment was last serviced on 28 October 2021 and smoke alarms were last serviced on 19 August 2021.

(4)

The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in all the rooms.