

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK056
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Name of Service:	Little Sunflowers Too Montessori
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Address of Service:	Prologue, Clonmel Road, Callan, Co. Kilkenny
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Brett
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Child and Family Agency, Ferrybank, Wexford
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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 sessional service is located on the main street of Callan in county Kilkenny. A service is provided to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 12:00. The premises is a detached house which consists of two preschool rooms, toilets, a hallway and an outdoor play area to the side of the property.

Staffing

There are two staff employed in the service. Both 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, and the premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations.

Compliance was assessed under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 management and recruitment

Regulation 11 staffing levels

Regulation 19 health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 first aid

Regulation 26 Fire Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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, 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)

A staff member identified themselves as the person in charge on the arrival of the inspector. The registered provider arrived shortly after to facilitate the inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Following a discussion with the person in charge and on review of documentation, it was established that there were two staff employed in the service. All written and required references were available on file for staff working in the service.

(c)

There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for both staff members. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate regulatory notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for 1 staff member.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period on longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

There were qualifications on file for both staff working directly with preschool children. These staff held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above 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)

There was an adequate number of staff working with the preschool children at all times during the duration of the inspection.

(3)

At 11:00 there were 10 children aged 3 to 6 years in the care of 1 staff.

The registered provider arrived shortly after the inspector and was available to facilitate 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 had ensured that each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. A display of the routines in the service was displayed on the wall of the preschool room to the front of the service. There was evidence of short term and long-term curriculum planning in the service. For example, children were practicing their songs for their graduation day.

Children were encouraged to be independent appropriate to their age and stage of development, for example putting on their coats to go home. Staff had taken the time to display the children smiling photographs over the hooks in the service so they could independently put on their coats and find their own bags when they were going home.

The materials and equipment available included, arts and crafts materials and open-ended materials which were well organised and easily accessible to children. The service was divided into two rooms. The room to the rear of the service was designed for free play activities. For example, there was a dress up area which was resourced with outfits for the children to play with.

The room to the front of the service was laid out to provide more structured play involving tabletop activities. There was a supply of paints, paper and crayons. The area was developed with thought and care for the children attending the service. The shelving units contained a supply of play equipment for the children stored in boxes with the photographs of the contents displayed on the front of each box.

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 external gate was secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised people gaining access to the service. The front door was secured by a lock. Access was gained to the service by ringing the bell. All cleaning agents were stored on shelves which were inaccessible to children.

Infection control:

The service had an infection control policy. The service was clean. Cleaning schedules were maintained daily. The staff member was observed to be vigilant in ensuring the children washed their hands after using the toilet and after messy play.

Non-Compliance Information

The service had not demonstrated compliance with the requirement to have all Garda vetting renewed every 3 years for 1 staff member. It is acknowledged the inspector received confirmation the registered provider had applied for the re-vetting of this staff member shortly after the inspection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The registered provider will ensure all Garda vetting is renewed every 3 years going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the renewed Garda vetting was received for the staff member shortly after the inspection.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is satisfactory to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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 responder course available to the children attending the 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.

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

(b)

There was a record stating the smoke alarm was last serviced in January 2025 and firefighting equipment was last serviced in November 2024.

(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 of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

It is acknowledged there was a template in place to record any fire drill which had taken place in the service. However, the last fire drill was recorded as having taken place in October 2024. Preschool services are required to carry out fire drills monthly to comply with national fire safety standards.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A fire drill was carried out in the service on the day after the inspection. Staff have been reminded to carry out monthly fire drills in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the fire drill carried out and the template now in use was received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is satisfactory to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance in place to cover the number of children the service was registered for.