

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK019		
Name of Service:	Miles of Smiles Preschool		
Address of Service:	Scoil Íosaf, Knockane Road, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick		
Eircode:	V42 E002		
Name of Registered Provider:	Aoife McCarthy		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	15/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM 0
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate , Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick		
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne		
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 relocated to Scoil Iosaf National school, Newcastle West, Co Limerick in September 2022.

The service is open from 09:15hrs to 12:15 hrs Monday to Friday for 38 weeks providing a sessional care to the children.

The children have access to a large playroom, a halla, sanitary facilities for the adults and children and an enclosed outdoor play area , a green area and a section of the school yard for outdoor play.

Staffing

The registered provider and two staff are working directly with the children each day.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations *9, 11, 15, 19 and 28* .These findings are outlined under 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 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)

On the day of the inspection, the registered provider was the designated person in charge and there was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b)

During the period of the inspection, the registered provider and the named deputy person were both present on the premises. The staff roster indicated that the designated persons and the deputy were always available on site.

The staff files of the three adults were reviewed.

(2)(a)

There were five written and validated references from past employers on file for inspection .

(b)

Where past employer references were not available, one reference from a source other than a past employer was available on file.

(c)

Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for the three adults at the service.

(d)

Not applicable as none of the adults had lived outside the state for a period greater than six months.

(4)

The staff working in the service held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 three staff including the registered provider working with twenty-two pre-school children in the morning. The adult to child ratio in the service was correct.
- (3) The written staff roster showed that the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

- (1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*
- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
 - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
 - (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
 - (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
 - (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
 - (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
 - (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*

(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,

(b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and

(c) an authorised person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1)

A sample of thirteen children's files were inspected and it was found that the service maintained an adequate record for these children attending the service, in accordance with Regulation 15(1) (a) to (i).

(3)

(a) Parents/guardians had access to all information and written records relating to their own child.

(b) Records were available to the authorised person in the service.

(c) Records were open and available for inspection to the Tusla Early Years Inspector.

(4)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) was retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

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) **Basic Needs:**

Healthy eating was promoted within the service. Adequate, suitable, nutritious, and varied food and drink was observed to be available for each pre-school child attending the service. Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snack and meal without being rushed.

The privacy and dignity of each child was respected. Toileting and nappy changing were carried out in a sensitive manner.

The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence. Regular hand washing was observed by the children. There were child friendly visual aids to support the children with effective hand washing in the service.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the preschool room and in the outdoor areas.

Physical and Material Environment:

The playroom was bright, inviting and was laid out with uncluttered, clear floor spaces for the children to play safely. The room was adequately resourced with a wide variety of age-appropriate equipment and materials. The children had the opportunity for different types of play and learning in the playroom and in the outdoor areas.

The service had enhanced and developed the outdoor play areas to extend the children's learning. There was an enclosed space, school yard and daily access to a large grassy surface. There was outdoor tables and seating areas, a variety of ride on vehicles, playhouses, wooden kitchens with accessories, balancing equipment, sea saws, clay, turf tray for sand and water play, planted areas, nature tables and a variety of games available for the children. On the day the children were observed spending long periods of time moving freely from the playroom to the various outdoor spaces with the support and guidance of the staff.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The insurance certificate for the service was available and in date on inspection. The required cover was available for a maximum of 22 pre-school children who could attend at any one time.