

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK125				
Name of Service:	Mol An Oige Pre-school				
Address of Service:	Ballyagran National School, Ballyagran, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick				
Eircode:	V35W220				
Name of Registered Provider:	Christina O'Sullivan				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	18/10/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>7</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	7	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick				
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan				
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

Description of service

This private sessional service was established in 2013. It provides a morning session from 09:00 – 12:00 hours Monday – Friday for 38 weeks a year. It offers a play-based curriculum and is operated from a room in the national school where the children have access to a pre-school room, sanitary accommodation area, a sports hall and an astro turf pitch. A school aged service is provided in the afternoon.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service each day and holds a major award in early childhood care and education at level 7 and has engaged in on-going professional development including first aid training.

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 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.

(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) The registered provider was the person in charge and a named person to deputise as required was contactable in the school and also a second person was contactable within a short distance of the service.

(b) The registered provider was on the premises when the inspector arrived at the service and the staff roster indicated that the registered provider was available on the premises at all times.

(2)(a) Two written references from past employers were available for the registered provider and the emergency contact person. The registered provider had validated all references that were on file.

(b) Written and verified references from sources other than past employers were not required as both staff had references from previous employers.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the two staff members.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) The registered provider and the emergency contact person held awards in early childhood care and education on the national qualifications framework.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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.

(8)(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(3) There were 7 pre-school children aged 3 – 5 years being supervised by 1 staff at the time of the inspection. The adult/child ratio on the day of the inspection was greater than the minimum requirements of 1:11.

(8)(c) A second adult was contactable nearby to provide assistance to the person in charge in the event of an emergency in both the school and locally.

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.*

Compliance Information

A sample of 7 records for a preschool child were reviewed on the day.

The following information was available on these records.

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

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

BASIC NEEDS:

Children brought their own packed lunches in line with the healthy eating policy of the service and snacks were refrigerated once the children arrived at the service.

Food observed on the day of the inspection included: sandwiches, a selection of fruit and drinks of water. Drinking water was available throughout the session if a child needed a drink. The children sat together around the table and were given as much time as they needed to eat their food. The registered provider sat with the group and ate her own snack at the same time while creating an opportunity to chat to each other.

All of the children were toilet trained and toileted independently with assistance given to those who needed it. The children were observed to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after toileting and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water and liquid antibacterial soap. Children were encouraged to use a tissue to clean their noses if required.

The children could rest and relax as desired throughout the morning in the library area on the adult sized couch, cushions and on floor mats.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the pre-school room. There was a plentiful supply of play props available to support sensorial play such as sand play. Children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level of choice of activities. The registered provider modelled positive behaviour for the children and the children were praised for their good behaviour.

As the day wet and windy children played games in the hall to support gross motor development and movement.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

This sessional service was operated a room in the national school in a rural setting. The children had access to one pre-school room, a sports hall, sanitary accommodation area and all-weather pitch in the outside play area. The pre-school room was equipped with open shelving units which were child accessible so that the children could access the equipment and materials independently. Shelving units were also used effectively as room dividers to create play spaces, such as the library/quiet area, dress up area, farm area, home corner, sand/lentils/rice/pasta/playdough area, small world area and arts and crafts area and tabletop activities area. Aistear and Siolta based curriculums provided an emergent and inquiry-based programme that engaged the children and supported their individual learning. The theme for the week was Halloween and this was evident in the art and craft materials completed by the children and displayed.

Learning journals and learning stories were available for each child and there was photographic evidence of a family wall. Separate baskets of books were available in the different areas of interest

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) Each pre-school child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by the registered provider. This record was available on the attendance register.

(3)(a) The registered provider ensured that no person other than the following were allowed enter the service.

- (i) Pre-school child attending the service.
 - (ii) A person dropping or collecting such a child.
 - (iii) An employee.
 - (iv) An unpaid worker can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee.
- (b) A record in writing was kept of persons who entered the service on the visitors logbook.

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 registered provider had up to date training in first aid response for children.

(2) (a) The first aid box was safely stored in easily accessible position in the playroom.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms were last serviced in September 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a prominent position at the premises

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was available to cover the number of children who attended.