

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK143
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Name of Service:	Presentation Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Presentation Primary School, Sexton Street, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 P028
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Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Meskell Reidy
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Service type:	Part time and sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	29/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM	5
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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 community-based service provides sessional and part – time care from 09:00 – 15:30 hours, Monday – Friday for 38 weeks of the year for children aged 3 – 6 years, including the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme. The service is operated from a designated modular unit on the grounds of the local primary school which is located in the centre of Limerick city.

The service comprises of the two pre-school rooms, front entrance area, sanitary accommodation area and an outdoor play area to the front of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider for the service is the deputy school principal. A designated person in charge and 6 staff work 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 unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11,19,15,24,25, 26 and 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15.

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 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required. The registered provider was also available on the day of the inspection if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.

(c) There was a clear management structure that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed to work at the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for 3 staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) All staff working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider at all times ensured that the correct number of suitable and qualified staff were available in all areas of the service.

(2) The following were the adult child ratio in the service at the time of the unannounced inspection.

Playroom 1 and 2 there was 26 children and 6 staff including the person in charge present in the morning session.

Playroom 1 there were 5 children and 2 staff present for the afternoon session.

The adult/child ratio in all areas was correct and there were sufficient staff to assist at busy periods and to cover staff break times at both sessions.

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 13 children's registration forms were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars (a) to (i) in each of the forms examined.

(3) Childrens records were open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) A parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of their child.
- (b) An employee.
- (c) An authorised person.

(4) Staff were aware that records in writing referred to in paragraph (1) must be 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

BASIC NEEDS:

A healthy eating policy was available at the service and children brought a healthy snack each day with them to the preschool. Drinking water was accessible to the children at all times.

Many of the children were toilet trained and were independently using the bathroom facilities next to the preschool rooms. Facilities were available if a child needed additional support and assistance with toileting. The staff responded to the children's cues quickly. Tissues and wipes were always accessible to the children and all waste was disposed of properly in lidded bins. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence. The staff were observed guiding and supporting the children who needed more help particularly with hand washing and during meals times.

Couches with cushions and soft mats were available indoors in the playrooms for children to rest if required.

Children had access to an outdoor play area at the rear and front of the premises.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The pre-school operates from a modular unit with two playrooms. The service were updating the indoor and outdoor environments to make them more inviting and safer spaces for the children and staff .

Indoors play equipment and materials were grouped to provide specific interest areas and appealing places for children to explore. There was an art and craft space with lots of paints, brushes and paper accessible, a library area next to the couch and a well-stocked bookshelf, a home corner and a lots of imaginative play areas. Posters were displayed on the walls with family photographs attached. Play materials were stored in clear plastic containers and were clearly labelled and stored on low level shelving to promote children's independence. Toys and equipment were rotated from higher shelves when needed. Low level tables and chairs were accessible for tabletop activities and for dining at mealtimes.

Children have the opportunities to spend long periods of times outdoors. Play equipment and materials were brought from indoors to the outside area each day to facilitate outdoor playtime for the children.

The staff were observed outside with the children at all times during the session.

Non-Compliance Information

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

1. The walls in playroom 2 was overpopulated with children's art work and posters which may cause sensory overload. Much of the topics of interest were not located at the children's eye level throughout the room to help them identify items and extend their learning.
2. The outdoor environment was poorly developed to support children playtime and did not provide activities and opportunities exclusive to the outdoors. No play spaces were defined. There were no opportunities for children to explore, engage and experiment with nature with no water and planting

areas available. No equipment to learn about risky play and learn from risk and challenging the children's own capabilities within safe limits was available to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The service and staff have agreed that some of the children's artwork will be displays be at the child's eye level and upper wall kept free. The children's artwork will be sent home more regularly.
2. There is a plan to erect a new fence in the outdoor area on the Mid Term Break which will provide a more structurally sound play area for the children to work and play. The plan is to develop more defined outdoor interest areas. The service have a range of equipment that is brought outdoors on a daily basis and also the children have access to the school hall for physical activities.

Supporting documentation submitted

No

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 19 points 1 and 2 have been adequately addressed. This will be assessed at the next inspection.

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 child on arrival is checked in by a staff member at the service. Children are signed out of the service at home time. Accurate daily records were maintained of all children present at the facility

(3) The registered provider ensured that-

(a) No person other than-

(i) Pe-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.

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

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 registered provider had ensured that a person trained in first aid response for children was at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. There were 5 staff members trained in first aid response with an expiry dated for July 2025.

(2) A suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) Was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the playrooms in the premises.

(b) 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) Fire drills were carried out monthly and the most recent drill took place on the 29/09/2023.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment was available on the premises with the firefighting equipment serviced in April 2023.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed at the main entrance area of the service and in all the playrooms and the fire assembly point was clearly visible at the front entrance to the school.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) There was no maintenance record available of the most recent servicing of the smoke alarm system for the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The certificate dated 29/08/2023 demonstrates that the smoke alarm system was serviced annually. This will be done annually and certificate obtained when the work is completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of certificate submitted to the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The action as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 26 safety has been adequately addressed.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

(b) safe and secure,

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Non-Compliance Information

(b) The service had no safe and appropriate storage space for play equipment when not in use. It was stored at the back of the premises exposed to the elements of the weather and posed a risk of attracting pests.

(d) The pathway to the main entrance and the rear of the premises required maintenance and cleaning. The area was covered with moss. Part of the outdoor seating which was attached to the wall was broken and paint was chipped.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(b)

The service acknowledges that there is a lack of storage for the play equipment and materials.

The service will review their storage arrangements during midterm break. The service are planning to extend the sheltered area at the back and install a new storage gate along with the new fencing estimated time to be completed October to December 2023

(d)

Debris will be removed and the area will be power washed. The old seating will be replaced and painted.

There are ongoing plans to enhance the outdoor area as it will now be more secure with the new fencing.

Weekly recorded inspection of outdoor area and works will be carried out.

There are plans to have the outside area power washed during the midterm break and also Christmas break and Easter break and also whenever required. Power washing of the outdoor area booked for times when preschool is closed.

Ongoing enhancement and monitoring of outdoor area will take place.

New seating will be treated and varnished to prevent breakages.

Supporting documentation submitted

No

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 points b and d safety will be adequately addressed. This will be assessed at the next inspection