

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK146
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Name of Service:	Rainbows End Montessori School
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Address of Service:	23 Russell Close, Russell Court, Ballykeefe, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 YHE4
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Name of Registered Provider:	Tara Logue
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
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Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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
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Description of service

This sessional preschool service is located in a residential setting close to Limerick city. It provides a sessional service for children aged 2.5 – 5 years for 3 hours a day between the hours of 09.30 to 12.30 pm, Monday to Friday

The service is operated from a purpose-built facility located to the rear of a dwelling house. The children have access to one preschool room, sanitary accommodation and an outdoor play facility located to the front of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider present on the day of inspection works directly with the children. There is a named person who will provide assistance and cover in the event of an emergency.

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 and safety. 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, 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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 designated person in charge of operating the service and was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available to assist in an emergency if needed.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present and the staff roster indicated that this person was available on the premises each day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references from past employers were available for the registered provider and the named emergency person assistant in the event of an emergency.

(b) All references were from past employers and references from other reputable sources were not required.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the registered provider and the named emergency person.

(d) Not applicable as no member of staff had lived in another state for longer than 6 months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) The registered provider and the named emergency person held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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.

Compliance Information

(3) On the day of the inspection there were 9 preschool children present with 1 adult. The adult child ratio was correct. A second person, familiar with the service and with the children, was available 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:

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service and parents were advised to provide children with nutritious snacks each day for break time. Sandwiches, strawberries, water melon slices, oranges, crackers, cheese strings and yogurt pots were observed in children's lunches on the day of inspection. The children had the opportunity to have their lunch in the outdoor setting. Children's drinks were stored out of their bags and were accessible to the children at all times during the session.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets located adjacent to the preschool room. Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were available for handwashing. A change of clothes was accessible for all children if needed.

Protective clothing was available for the children to wear when playing outside in wet weather.

Tissues and wipes were always reachable to the children and all waste was disposed of properly in lidded bins.

The children had the opportunity to move about freely and explore their environment, both indoors and children were observed spending most of their time in this well-resourced outdoor area.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service operates from a well-designed preschool room that had a range of developmentally appropriate well-resourced interest areas for the children e.g. montessori equipment focusing on practical life, sensorial and fine motor skills, home corner/ imagination play area, a rest and relaxation reading area. A sensory tray filled with pasta shells, buttons, sand and water provided opportunity for sensory development and for messy play. Low level tables and chairs were used for dining at break time and for many tabletop activities at all other times. The room layout was changed and equipment rotated depending on the children's interests and stage of development. All the play materials and equipment were organised to be visible and easily accessible to the children on open low-level shelving. Language, literacy skills and development of speech and vocabulary were fostered using stories, songs and conversation. Children had opportunities to enjoy a story and activity on the day which covered the life cycle of the caterpillar. The children were observed to be actively engaged in the story and the making of a caterpillar.

The children's family photos were displayed at a low level on the playroom wall to encourage the children's sense of identity and belonging.

The outdoor play area provided space for more active play opportunities. The garden was safe and secure with fully enclosed fencing surrounding the area. Children had access to slides, a wooden playhouse, picnic benches, climbing frame and a timber structure designed with a door and open shop front. There were ride on toys, a small basketball net for ball play and a turf table for sensory play.

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 front door of the facility was secured, and a staff member was required to allow access to all people entering the building.

The emergency exit was unobstructed.

There was no blind or curtain cords hanging freely.

All toys, furniture and play equipment were in good condition and free from sharp edges or corners. No broken toys were noted on the premises or in the outdoor play areas.

No flexes or cables were located within reach of children

Infection Control:

There was a good standard of operational hygiene noted in the facility. The staff and children were observed to wash their hands following outdoor play and before lunch.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was only given to the preschool children in the event of an emergency.

Outing:

There was an outing policy in place in the event of an outing.

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) The registered provider checked in and checked out every child to the service when they arrived and when they left the premises. The children's arrival time and their departure time was documented each day.
- (3)(a) The service ensured that only children attending, the person who drops and collects children and employees are allowed entry to the premises.
- (b) All visitors to the service must be signed in and signed out by the registered provider.

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 up to date training in first aid response for children with an expiry date of October 2024.
- (2) (a) The first aid box was safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous position at the premises.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times

art 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) There were written records available to show that fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 24th of May 2024.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment was available on the premises with the most recent service carried out in September 2023
- (4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed on the wall of the preschool room.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) There was no maintenance record available of the most recent servicing of the smoke alarm system for the service. The date of the last annual service was 6th April 2022.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action:

The registered provider has stated in the response that:

- (1)(b) The smoke alarm system was serviced on the 27th of June 2024. The system will be checked annually.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of the smoke alarm certification.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 26 Fire Safety point (1)(b)