

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH038		
Name of Service:	Culmullen Montessori Pre-School		
Address of Service:	Culmullen, Drumree, Co. Meath		
Eircode:	A85 R123		
Name of Registered Provider:	Maria Forde		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	04/06/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM 0
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre Commons Road Navan, Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray		
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

Culmullen Montessori Pre-School provides a sessional service from 09:15am to 12:15 pm to children from 2 years 8 months to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). The service is situated in the local community centre beside the church and consists of 2 care rooms:

The Rainbow room and the Butterfly room. Other facilities available in the centre were a kitchen, sanitary facilities and a large hall which the pre-school has access to. An outdoor space consisting of a grass area is located in the near-by primary school which is available to the service.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 3 childcare staff members who were all present on the day of inspection.

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/ premises and facilities. 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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued under Regulation 23, in relation to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 25. A response was received from the registered provider which indicated that training had been scheduled.

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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Four staff files were reviewed.

Eight validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 4 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdictions for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All 4 childcare staff had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) On the day of inspection there were:
- In the Rainbow room, 2 adults providing care and education to 8 children ranging in age from 3 to 6 years.
- In the Butterfly room, 2 adults providing care and education to 7 children ranging in age from 3 to 6 years.

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 following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Throughout the session children had the opportunity to move about freely and explore their environment. The Butterfly room moved into the hall as a change of environment for part of the session. Children were given choices as to the area and equipment they wanted to play with. Children were observed independently selecting play materials, enjoying meaningful sustained play and replacing the materials

when finished. The themes of the month were ““The life cycle of the butterfly” with caterpillars hatching in a Butterfly Garden basket,”Bees” and “Sunflowers” with art work and potted Sunflowers displayed to reflect these themes.

- The children brought their own healthy lunches which they had at 11:15am. Staff members were observed chatting with the children which provided a positive atmosphere for encouraging conversation and building relationships.
- Staff members were observed encouraging the children to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Transitions were handled smoothly as the children were given ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- The adults were observed promoting positive behaviour and supported children to find positive solutions when they experienced challenge in sharing play equipment and materials. During activities children were offered choices and sought out the staff members for praise, encouragement and reassurance.
- The children showed confidence around the staff members and appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(2) A registered provider-

(b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016, shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) Mats were available for a child to take a break from activities and rest if needed.

(2)(b) The service had access to an enclosed grass area beside the local primary school. The service also had use of a large indoor hall.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The care rooms had areas of interest with supporting equipment which incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts and a range of suitable toys. Some of the equipment included, dolls, shop and home area, building blocks, wooden puzzles, reading area, construction table, magnetic shapes, treasure and sensory baskets, toy musical instruments, animal box, dress-up box and nature trays with birds nests and cones.
- Play equipment was available and brought to the outdoor space.

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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The main door to the service and the boundaries of the outdoor spaces were secured. These safety measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The hand washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times. Warm running water was available in the children's sanitary area, along with a supply of liquid soap and hand paper towel for effective hand washing.
- Pedal bins were in use in the service.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules available.
- A fridge was available for the refrigeration of perishable items in the children's lunch boxes.

Fire Safety:

The following fire safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- Regular monthly fire drills were carried out and records maintained. All fire exits were easily identifiable and unobstructed.
- A fire assembly notice was placed on the fence adjacent to the front door of the service.

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

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There was no adult present on the day of inspection who held a First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificate. This posed a risk to the safety of the children if first aid was required. An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider under Regulation 23-Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child in relation to this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) First aid responder training has been booked for the following dates 16th, 23th and 30th of July 2024 for the registered provider. The remainder of the staff will complete paediatric first aid training before the pre -school re-opens in September 2024. The registered provider will ensure that 1 staff member is always on duty with FAR training while the service is in operation on a daily basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

07/06/24 Booking confirmation received for First Aid Responder training for the 16th, 23rd and 30th of July 2024.

Summary Comment

The registered provider in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan has not addressed the non-compliances for regulation 25 (1) as evidence that staff are trained in FAR training has not been submitted. However, the service is closed for the summer and the registered provider has indicated that FAR training will be completed by 1 staff member before the service re-opens in September 2024. This non -compliance remains outstanding.

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) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 14/05/2024.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment was last serviced on 08/08/2023. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 06/12/2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the Rainbow room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 22 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2024 to the 27/03/2025.