

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN002
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Name of Service:	Art Mooney Childcare
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Address of Service:	Lisdoney, Oram, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan
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Eircode:	A75 H921
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Name of Registered Provider:	Michelle Mccreesh
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	16/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	40	PM	30
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange, Plantation Walk, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader
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

Art Mooney Childcare have been operating as a community run childcare service since 2009. They provide full day care, part-time and sessional education and care to pre-school children aged from 0 - 6 years of age. The service is open from 8am to 6pm each weekday and caters for a maximum of 62 children. The service currently has 3 care rooms in operation namely: Baby / Toddler Room and Junior and Senior Preschool Rooms. There is 1 sleep room off the Baby /Toddler Room. There are nappy changing and sanitary accommodations, an office, staff room and a kitchen area. The service has 2 outdoor areas to the side and back of the service.

Staffing

There are 15 adults employed in the service who work directly with the children including a service manager and 2 ancillary staff as cook and caretaker.

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 inspections 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 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,

(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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

From discussion with the person in charge it was stated that there were 4 new members of staff and 1 student employed in the premises since the last inspection. Five Staff files were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for the 4 new members of staff in the service.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for each of the 4 staff members and the student in the service.

(d) Not applicable, following a review of the staff files presented for inspection international police vetting was not required as none of the adults or student had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the childcare qualification for the 4 new adults in the service met the minimum qualification required to enable them to work directly with the preschool children. A childcare qualification was not required for the student.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) The students did not have 2 written and validated references available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) Two written and validated references for student on work placement are now on the premises. Ensure all work placement students in the future have 2 validate reference before they start their placement within our service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence in the form of written references submitted to the Office of The Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate accepts that the registered provider has addressed the non- compliance adequately.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) (1) On the day of inspection when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there were 3 rooms in operation. During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(2) The following adult: child ratios were observed in the care rooms when the inspectors arrived at the premises:

Senior Preschool Room:

There were 12 preschool children (aged 3 - 5 years) attending this room with 2 childcare staff. A student was also present in this room working in a supernumerary capacity.

The child adult ratios were correct at this time.

Baby and Toddler Room:

There were 10 preschool children (aged 5 months - 1 year and 9 months) attending this room with 3 childcare staff. Another adult commenced working in the room at 11.30am and 2 more adults commenced working at 12pm. One other child under the age of 1 years joined the room for a short settling in period from approximately 11.30am to 12.15pm.

The child adult ratios were correct.

Junior Preschool Room:

There were 17 preschool children (aged 2 years and 6 months - 3 years) being cared for by 3 adults.

The adult: child ratios were correct.

(8)(a) Following a review of the available documentation e.g. staff rotas and children's attendance records, the information demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

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

There were 3 rooms in operation on the day of the inspection namely the Baby/Toddler Room, the Senior and Junior Preschool Rooms.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs

- Highchairs were used appropriately in the Baby/ Toddler Room during mealtimes. Staff were observed to sit with the children at mealtimes and this time was also used to encourage conversations between the children. Assistance was given to the older children who required help with opening lunches and certain foods and to the younger children who required feeding. Bibs were put on the younger children before meals and hands and faces cleaned appropriately after the meals.
- Adequate time was given to the older children to finish their dinners.
- Nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with pleasant interactions observed between children and staff.
- The toilet trained children were encouraged to be independent with toileting and discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children after toileting.
- The children were observed to move freely in the care rooms and had a change of environment into the outdoor area. All children were dressed appropriately to go outside.
- In the Baby/ Toddler Room the individual children's sleep routines were followed and staff were observed to offer a sleep to a child displaying signs of tiredness.

Supporting Relationships

- The adults throughout the service were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children in all the rooms and transitions between activities were organised and swift. The staff displayed a good knowledge of the children in their care.
- Staff sat with the children during activities on the floor and at tables, children were observed to actively seek out staff members. Equally children who did not wish to partake in a particular activity were also supported.
- One – one support and reassurance were given to a child who was settling in for a period of time in the morning in the Baby / Toddler Room.
- In the Junior Preschool Room, the children’s independence was promoted with the children encouraged to bring over their plates and drink cups to the sink area once they were finished their dinners.
- The staff were observed to communicate verbally at collection and drop off and daily communication books were in use in the Baby / Toddler Room.
- A key worker system was in operation in the service.

Physical and Material Environment

- Child sized furniture and equipment was in use throughout the service.
- A variety of age-appropriate materials and equipment were available in the care rooms that support many areas of development such as fine and gross motor skills, role play, speech and language and sensory development.
- Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in all rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the older children in the Preschool Rooms and in the Baby and Toddler Room the staff assisted the children in accessing toys.
- There was an adult sized chair and large sofa in the Baby / Toddler Room to allow a staff member to sit comfortably and nurse or feed a child.

Programme of Activities:

- Staff were recording observations and emerging interests of the children.
- Artwork was visible such as cotton bud art and baby grow paintings.

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-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

Compliance Information

(1)(b) There were soft comfortable areas in the rooms which consisted of mats, small sofa and cushions where a child could sit and relax on or take a break from an activity. Soft mats and foam and supportive cushions were available in the Baby/ Toddler Room where babies were able to sit supported or crawl safely.

There was an adult chair in the Baby and Waddler Room where an adult could sit and nurse and baby or small child.

There was a sleep room off the Baby / Toddler Room where there were 5 standard cots available for the children aged under 2 years of age to sleep on.

Additionally, there were daybeds and bedlinen for the children aged over 2 years of age to sleep on.

(3)(a) There were 2 outdoor play areas on the premises:

- **Area 1** There was an enclosed outdoor area off the Baby/ Toddler Room which the children were observed to access and it was shared with the children from the Junior Room. There was an artificial grass surface and a safety surface track around the edge. There was a small plastic climbing frame, tractors, trikes, balls, tables and chairs, and benches. There was also a covered wooden gazebo.
- **Area 2** was located to the back and directly off the Senior Preschool Room. This had a safety surfaced area with a plastic climbing frame, a “buddy bench,” ride -on trikes, scooters, tractors, cars, hula hoops and sand pits. There was also a tarmacked area. Toys were brought outside to play with on the picnic bench. Both outdoor areas were fenced and gated.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Healthy eating was promoted in the service. Breakfast, dinner and evening snack was provided by the service and the parents provided the morning snack. On the day of the inspection the dinner was provided by the cook in the service and consisted of chicken goujons, potatoes, mixed veg and gravy. Dinner was of an appropriate consistency for the different age groups. The evening snack consisted of homemade brown bread and jam and bananas. In the preschool rooms a rolling lunch system was in operation. Potable drinking water was available for the children to access as required in all rooms and in the Baby / Toddler Room the staff reported that bottles of formula milk are brought in by the parents made-up.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. There was no hot water in the sink in the nappy changing area of off the Baby / Toddler Room at approximately 11.15am. It is acknowledged that when rechecked at 1.00pm the water was warm. Therefore, there was not a constant supply of warm water in this area.

General Safety:

2. In the Senior Preschool Room, the lid on the pedal operated bin was broken.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The registered provider will ensure that there is a constant supply of hot running water available in the Baby/Toddler Rooms at all times. Staff will check the hot water status each morning before children arrive and if necessary the heating/immersion will be adjusted to ensure there is a supply of hot water.

General Safety:

2. The pedal bin in the Senior Pre-school Room, has now been replaced.
Staff have been made aware of the broken bin and are asked to inform management when they see any faulty items that need to be replaced.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate is satisfied that the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection and these will be for review on the next inspection.

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 record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service, the last recorded on the 3/5/23.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated the 8/7/22 and 21/12/22.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in 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 cover was in place for up to 62 children expiring on the 27/3/24.