

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN002				
Name of Service:	Art Mooney Childcare				
Address of Service:	Lisdoney, Oram, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan				
Eircode:	A75 H921				
Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Conlon				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	29/08/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>33</td> <td>PM</td> <td>19</td> </tr> </table>	AM	33	PM	19
AM	33	PM	19		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange Plantation Rd 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 has 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 1 - 6 years of age. The service is open from 08:00 to 18:00 each weekday and caters for a maximum of 62 children. The service operates from a purpose-built building in the rural area of Oram Castleblayney Co. Monaghan. The service currently has 3 care rooms in operation the Junior and Senior Preschool Rooms and Baby Toddler Room. There are sanitary accommodations, nappy changing facilities, a kitchen, a laundry/storeroom, sluice room, staff room and an office.

Staffing

There are 17 staff employed in the service - 13 including the person in charge who work directly with the preschool children, 1 employed in administration, 1 employed for the school age children and in a supernumerary capacity in the Baby Toddler Room and 2 cooks.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby Toddler Room and Senior Preschool Room.

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

(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 a designated named deputy person to deputise as required. The person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

There were 17 staff files presented for inspection.

(2)(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for 14 members of staff.
- One staff member had 2 references of which one was validated.
- Two staff members had 1 written and validated reference each.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda vetting disclosure was available for all 17 staff members and the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented on the day of inspection, international police vetting was available for 3 of the 4 staff who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of greater than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that the 13 members of staff, who worked directly with the pre-school children had a minimum Level 5 childcare qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

- Two members of staff did not have a second written and validated reference.
- One staff member did not have their second written reference validated.

(d) One staff member who lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more did not have international police vetting available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

- A second reference has been obtained and validated for two staff members.
- The reference for the other staff member was validated.

(d) International police vetting has been obtained for one staff member.

All required staff documents will be received and in place prior to new staff commencing employment. All staff files will be checked more carefully on a regular basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of validated references and International Police vetting.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the registered provider's response and supporting evidence. The non-compliances have been addressed.

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) During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service in the Junior and Senior Preschool Rooms and the Baby Toddler Room.

(2) When the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there were 3 rooms in operation the Junior and Senior Preschool Rooms and the Baby Toddler Room.

The following adult:child ratios were observed

- Three staff in the Baby Toddler Room with 15 children aged 1 year 3 months to 2 years and 5 months. A fourth adult was in this room from 11am.
- Two staff in the Junior Preschool Room with 10 children aged 1 year and 10 months to 3 years and 2 months.
- Two staff in the Senior Preschool Room with 8 children aged 3 - 5years.

At 2pm the Senior and Junior Rooms joined together and the Senior Room catered for school aged children.

(8) On review of documentation the registered provider ensured that there are 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 inspection namely the Baby Toddler Room, Junior and Senior Preschool Rooms. For the purpose of the inspection the Baby Toddler Room and Senior Preschool Room were inspected in relation to Regulation 19.

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

Basic needs:

- In both rooms the children were observed to move freely in the care rooms and had a change of environment to the outdoor play areas. The children were dressed appropriately to go outside.
- 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 in the various rooms after toileting, outdoor play and before meals. Nappies were changed at regular intervals and in a timely manner.
- Attention was given to personal care, faces and hands were cleaned and bibs were placed on the younger children for mealtimes.
- Morning snacks were provided by the parents and stored appropriately in the fridge. Lunches were observed to consist of a variety of foods such as sandwiches, fruit, crackers, rice cakes and cheese. Dinners and afternoon snacks were supplied by the service and dinner on the day of inspection was beef stew and potatoes. Cheese and crackers were provided for the afternoon snack.
- All meals were observed to be of an age-appropriate consistency and the children had free access to their drinks and water stations or jugs of water that were available in the rooms.
- Child led sleep needs were observed in operation in the Baby Toddler Room and dinners were kept for those children who were sleeping at dinner time.

Supporting Relationships

- Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the staff and children in both the rooms.
- All The staff were down at the children’s level for activities indoor and outside and assisted the children in their chosen play activities.
- There was a staff communication book in operation in the Baby Toddler Room for all staff to access.
- The staff reported that communication with parents is predominately conducted verbally at collection and drop off.

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

Compliance Information

(1)(b) There were soft comfortable areas in the care rooms which consisted of a variety of cushions and a number of mats on the floor and child sized plastic covered sofas.

There was a cot room with 7 cots off the Baby Toddler Room for those children under 2 years of age to sleep in. In addition, there were 3 daybeds with appropriate bed-linen available for those children aged over 2 years of age to sleep on, who required a sleep. These were placed at the top of the care room and a staff member stayed with the children.

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

The Inspectorate is assured that in general with the exception of the non-compliances below adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service, for example the following observations were made during the inspection:

General Safety:

- The entrance doors leading into the premises were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises, a buzzer system was in place.
- The external outdoor play areas were secured and gated. There was a section of temporary plastic barriers in the outdoor area outside the Baby Toddler Room which had a row of small chairs in front of it to prevent access and the staff were observed to supervise children in this area.
- All highchairs were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.
- Cleaning agents were stored up high safely out of the reach of children.
- There were no sharp unprotected edges in the Baby Toddler Room.

Infection Control:

- There was a constant supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap and paper towels in the sanitary areas.
- Staff were observed to wear appropriate disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies and to dispose of appropriately after each nappy change.
- The staff reported that any bottles of formula were brought in made-up by the parents and stored appropriately in the fridge.
- Individual lidded containers were available for the storage of each child's soothers.
- In the sanitary area of the Baby Toddler Room there were individual face cloths for each child stored on a named peg.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the Junior and Senior Preschool Rooms there were sharp edges on some of the brown shelving units and the "Creative Area" table. These are a potential injury hazard.
2. The large floor standing lamp in the back room of the Senior Preschool Room was unsecured and a potential impact hazard.

Infection Control:

3. During nappy changing a staff member was observed not to wash both the child's and their own hands after the nappy change. This is a cross contamination and infection control risk.
4. The nappy bin in the nappy changing area consisted of a handle operated appliance and was not a pedal operated lidded and lined bin. This is an infection control risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. All sharp edges have been covered with safety protective corners.
2. The lamp has been removed from the room.

Staff have been made aware of these risks and they will monitor this on a regular basis.

Infection Control:

3. All staff wash the children's hands and their own hands after nappy changing. Staff have been made aware of the infection control policy and also the nappy changing policy in relation to infection control and hand washing.
4. The nappy bin in the nappy changing area has been replaced with a pedal bin.

Staff have been made aware of these risks and they will monitor this regularly.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photograph

Infection Control:

Copies of Infection Control and Nappy Changing Policies. Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate reviewed the registered provider's response and supporting documentation. The non-compliances have been addressed.

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 ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, on the premises at all times. Seven FAR certificates were reviewed.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available to the preschool children in the service.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

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

Non-Compliance Information

In the Senior Preschool Room the sofa was in disrepair and torn in areas at the seams which does not allow for effective cleaning.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The sofa in our senior room has been removed and replaced with soft bean bags and cushions for the children to sit on. Staff have been made aware of this and are to do a more detailed inspection of the furnishings in their room.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response and evidence is accepted. The non-compliance has been addressed.