

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MO005
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Name of Service:	An Scoil Beag Montessori (Kilmeena)
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Address of Service:	St Brendans NS, Myna, Kilmeena, Westport, Co. Mayo
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Eircode:	F28 R598
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mairead Hastings
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 2 nd Floor, St Mary's HQ, Castlebar, Co Mayo
Inspection undertaken by:	M Farrell
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

An Scoil Beag Montessori (Kilmeena) is a privately owned sessional service located in a rural village in County Mayo. The premises is in a designated section of the local primary school. The service is registered to cater for children aged from two to six years of age and to operate from 08:45-11:45am. The service has one playroom, sanitary facilities and an enclosed outdoor area located directly off the playroom where children have access to outdoor play equipment.

Staffing

There are two staff employed to care for the children. The registered provider provides relief cover and is actively involved in the day to day running of the service.

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/ 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 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

(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

- (2) The designated person in charge advised the inspector that none of the staff members were new to the service since the most recent inspection of 2 September 2021. The vetting files for the three staff members in the service had been reviewed during previous inspections and been found to meet the regulatory requirements.
- (4) The qualifications for the three staff who worked directly with the children had been reviewed on previous inspection and deemed to have met the requirements of this regulation.

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) There were 2 staff members caring for 11 children in the service on the morning of the unannounced inspection. A sample of attendance records reviewed found that there was an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children of 1 adult for each 11 sessional children aged from 2 years and 6 months to six years was adhered to with 2 staff caring for the 11 children present. A sample of attendance records reviewed showed that the minimum ratios were met at on the days sampled.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- A sample of 10 children's records were selected for review from the children currently enrolled in the service. The following details were recorded on the sampled children's electronic record files:
- (a) The names and date of birth of the children.
 - (b) The date the child started in the service.
 - (c) Not applicable as all children were still attending the service.
 - (d) The name, address and contact details for parents/guardians when the child was present in the service.
 - (e) Details regarding authorisation for collection of the child.
 - (f) Information regarding any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child.
 - (g) The name of the child's registered medical practitioner and their contact telephone number.
 - (h) Details of the children's immunisation status.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (i) There was no consent in writing from parents for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

- (1)
- (i)

Corrective and Preventive Action

The parents have all completed this form electronically on an electronic record system.

The service has created this form on an electronic system for the current children and it will remain there for all future children also.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the consent for appropriate medical treatment in the event of an emergency to be completed by the children's parents/guardians was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate by the service.

Summary Comment

The action taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider was reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and found to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured written records were kept of the following information in the service:
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of each staff member and unpaid worker.
 - (b) Information on the type of service type and ages of children that the service is registered to provide services to.
 - (c) The adult: child ratios provided in the service.
 - (d) The service's type of care or programme.
 - (e) The facilities available in the service.

- (f) The service's hours of opening and fees.
 - (g) The service's policies, procedures and statements as required under Regulation 10 that were kept in a service policy folder and were also available in electronic form. The service policies had been last updated by the registered provider in July 2023.
 - (h) Details of the daily attendance of each pre-school child recorded on daily attendance sheets.
 - (i) Details of the staff daily working hours recorded on attendance sheets.
 - (j) There was a record book to record any medication administered to children while attending the service to include signed parental consent. This information was also to be recorded by staff on an electronic system in the service.
 - (k) Accident/incident forms with details of any accident, injury or incident involving children attending the service were recorded on an electronic system and to be signed by staff.
- (3)
- The records referred to in paragraph (1) were made available in the service to the inspector by the staff on request.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The service provided access to the information detailed from (b) to (g) in Regulation 16(1) via the electronic application used by the service to communicate to parents. The information in relation to the (a) name, position, qualifications and experience of the staff was available in the service to parents.

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 entrance door to the service was secured on the inspector’s unannounced arrival and remained secured during the inspection preventing unauthorised access and children from leaving unnoticed. There were securing mechanisms on the internal door and on the gate leading from the service to the primary school allowing staff to control access. The enclosed outdoor area had gates with securing mechanisms to prevent children from leaving unnoticed and people from entering without authorisation. The toys and play equipment were maintained in good condition. Cleaning supplies were stored out of reach of children in cupboards in the playroom. There were blind cords with securing mechanisms on the windows in the playroom. Whole grapes provided in a child’s snack were chopped appropriately by staff as they presented a choking hazard.

Infection Control:

Suitable handwashing facilities were provided for children and staff with warm water controlled under 43°C, liquid soap and paper towels at wash hand basins. The children and staff washed and dried their hands at appropriate times for example after messy play and using the toilet facilities and before eating. The premises was observed to be clean during the inspection. Cleaning schedules were in place to provide direction to staff on cleaning procedures. The staff kept electronic records of cleaning and disinfecting procedures that were carried out in the service. Children’s lunches containing perishable items were stored in the refrigerator below 5°C. Foot pedal operated bins were provided and used to dispose of waste such as paper hand towels for drying hands.

Administration of Medication:

There was a medication administration policy in place in the service. The staff advised the inspector that none of the children in attendance at present required medication to be administered to them whilst in the service.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exits were free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

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) A certificate of the completion of First Aid Response (FAR) training course with an expiry date of 1 March 2025 was available for one staff member who was present on the day.
- (2)
 - (a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible location in a labelled cupboard in the playroom.
 - (b) The first aid box was readily accessible to the staff if a child required first aid treatment.

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 a sessional service with a maximum of 22 children attending with an expiry date of the 27 March 2024.