

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D.: TU2015RN038

Name of Service Millmount Childcare Ltd

Address of Service: Sli an Coiste, Old Tuam Road, Athlone, Co. Roscommon N37 C2F7

Email Address: info@millmountchildcare@ie

Name of Registered Provider: Deborah Downes

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed change: Change in number of children from 70 to 85
Change in number of staff employed from 11 to 13

Proposed Number of Children: 85 children

Recommended Change Following Inspection: Approve proposed change in number of children to attend from 70 to 85 and number of staff employed from 11 to 13.

Registered change: Change in number of children to from 70 to 85
Change in number of staff employed from 11 to 13

Date of Inspection:	1	2	1	2	2	0	2	5
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Inspection undertaken by: A. Kennedy

Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Early Year’s Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.

Rationale for Inspection: Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 85 Children
Date of Registration	22 nd December 2025

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Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	<p>This detached full day care service is in a housing development in Athlone, Co. Roscommon. The service operates a full day care service from 8.00hrs to 17.30hrs. An Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care pre-school programmes are also offered. The service caters for children aged between 0 to 6 years. The service is presently registered for a maximum number of 70 pre-school children, at any one time. The service provides an after-school programme for school aged children.</p>
Premises	<p>There are five play areas, the Baby/ Wobbler room and the Toddler room are on the ground floor, and the Senior Preschool /Junior Preschool room and School aged room, are on the first floor. There is a designated kitchen where the main meals are prepared, cooked, and stored on site. Quiet rest areas are available for children to opt out of an activity if he/ she wishes to do so. There are two sleep rooms (four cots in the sleep room adjacent to the Baby / Wobbler room and two cots in the sleep area adjacent to the Toddler room), available for younger children requiring sleep provision. Additionally, there are six stackable beds for older children’s sleep provision. There are outdoor play areas to the rear of the premises.</p> <p>The registered provider is proposing to extend the number of children to attend from 70 to 85 children with the addition of a converted apartment into a preschool room on the first floor of the premises with a dedicated entrance from the side of the premises.</p>
Staffing	<p>There is a named designated person in charge and a person able to deputise. There will be three staff working directly with the children on a daily basis in the proposed new room. The staff working directly with children have at least a major award Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. The staff have documentary evidence of on-going training and education.</p>
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the</p>

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	<p>following themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge who was 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.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a) The service has a designated person in charge and a named person who can deputise as required.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement was met.

(1) It is proposed that there will be three staff working directly with the pre-school children. The registered provider will ensure that the adult child ratio is adhered to. One adult to eleven children aged 2 years 6 months attending the sessional service and one adult to 6 children aged 2-3 years proposing to attend the full day care service.

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
 - (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day,
- (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.

Requirement met:

(1)(a) The design, organisation, and resourcing of the indoor and outdoor environment will be able to support each child's wellbeing, learning and development, within the ethos and philosophy of the service.

The playroom was designed and arranged to

- maintain a space that was clean, organised, and free of clutter,
- divided into areas that were supplied with materials organised in a way to support proposed children's play, development, and learning,
- give all proposed children access to the same facilities, activities and play opportunities, to promote their welfare and development.

The equipment was stored on low-level shelving and was thereby readily accessible to the proposed pre-school children.

The play equipment and materials were age and stage appropriate, and designed to offer a child manipulative activity, to encourage hand eye co-ordination, to develop fine motor skills and logical thinking.

There were opportunities for imaginary play with dress up clothing, role play construction and kitchen areas.

There were messy water and sand play areas. There was a selection of transport vehicles, mark making, reading materials.

- Creative play with art and craft materials, paper, paint, glue, glitter, pencils, crayons, stencils, and recycled materials.
- Language and literacy play with visual aids, books flashcards, matching games,
- Gross motor play with footballs, slides, tractors, and push cars in the outdoor play areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine motor play with pegs, scissors, magnets, threading, stacking, mix and match, puzzles, jigsaws, and blocks. • Displayed on the walls was a notice board for children’s art and craft work. <p>The person in charge advised that toys, materials, and equipment would be rotated on a seasonal theme basis.</p> <p>(1)(a) A rest quiet area was provided in the form of soft matting and poofs to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he or she chose to.</p> <p>The person in charge advised that a stackable bed is also available if required.</p> <p>(2)(b) Outdoor area</p> <p>The person in charge advised that the outdoor area was an extension of the indoor environment. The children would have the opportunity to be outside as often as possible, in all weather conditions.</p> <p>In the outdoor area, the children have access to rockers, digging opportunities, play slides, mud kitchens, and a selection of tractors/ bicycles.</p> <p>The designated outdoor play area was to the rear of the premises.</p>
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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.

Requirement met:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service had a healthy eating policy. • It is proposed that the service will provide food for the children’s snack and mealtimes. • A four-week menu plan is in place. • The person in charge advised that the children would be provided with breakfast between 8 and 9am of a selection of cereals, juice and water. • At 10 30hrs they would be provided with toast and a selection of fruits. • At 12.30hrs a hot dinner would be served. • At 14.45hrs an evening snack would be provided. • It was advised there will be a supply of food for any child requiring additional food. • A drinks table/shelf is available in the playroom during play to allow the children the opportunity to ‘self-serve’ their drinks.
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- Perishables items will be stored in designated fridge in the playroom.

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.

Requirement met:

General Safety

- The designated entrance was secure to prevent unauthorised entry and prevent unsupervised children leaving the pre-school.
- The office and staff room adjacent to the playroom, were secure and thereby inaccessible to a pre-school child.
- The external play area was secure so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area.
- The fire doors were unobstructed.
- All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to the children.
- The playroom temperature was maintained between 18°C to 22°C.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water not exceeding 43°C to facilitate hand washing without risk of scalding the children, was available to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
- Heavy equipment and furnishings were anchored appropriately.
- The openable windows were high and thereby inaccessible to a child.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- The service had a risk assessment system for checking that toys and equipment were not broken, in a clean condition and maintained in a good state of repair.
- The person in charge clearly identified to the early year's inspector, the drop off and collection procedures for children.

Infection Control

- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and a hand towel dispenser.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The person in charge advised that the outdoor play equipment would be cleaned prior to/ after a child's use, with documented records maintained. A refrigerator was provided in the playroom for the storage of perishable foods. The playroom was observed to be kept adequately ventilated whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels. There was a cleaning schedule and cleaning records for the materials, equipment, and furnishings. Waste is disposed of in the sanitary area and playroom in foot pedalled lidded bins and thereby inaccessible to the pre-school children. <p>Administration of Medication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The person in charge demonstrated clear knowledge of safe practices regarding the administration of medication. <p>Fire Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All exit routes from the service were free from obstruction during the inspection.
Requirement not met:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> There was a rodent bait box on the footpath of the outdoor area. potentially accessible to children. There were sections of the wicker fencing missing and not secured which could pose a potential safety concern.
Response from Registered Provider	<p>The registered provider submitted a written response to the office of the early years inspectorate to advise that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The rodent bait box has been removed from the footpath in the outdoor area. The wicker fencing has been removed.
Summary comment	<p>The Early Years Inspector has assessed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems the requirements of Regulation 23 have been met.</p>

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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The service provided evidence that a person trained in first aid responder is available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

Six staff members had current training in first aid for children.

(2)(a) On each floor, there was a wall mounted cabinet/box with first aid content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.

(b) The service demonstrated that the first aid cabinets/boxes were fully equipped and available to the children

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) Arrangements were in place to record monthly fire drills.

(b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service dated 21st of March 2025. The smoke and fire detection alarm system for the premises had the last annual service dated 26th of September 2025.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the playroom.

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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

An insurance quotation was submitted to the registration office prior to the inspection.

The services had an insurance quotation with a commencement date of 4th of

December 2025 and an expiry date 27th of March 2026 for a full day care service for 85

children and included the following: -

- public liability insurance,
- insurance against fire and theft,
- buildings insurance,
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

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

(a) of sound and stable structure,

(b) safe and secure,

(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,

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

(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Requirement met:

The requirements have been met.

(a) From a visual inspection the indoor playroom was of sound and stable structure and there were no observable indications of defects.

(b) The playroom and the outdoor play area were safe and secure. The main entrance door to the premises has a securing mechanism in place with a keypad access security system. The internal door to the office and staff room was secure with a securing device to prevent children accessing these areas.

(c) There was natural lighting in the playroom from high openable windows on the two outer walls. There was a window in the sanitary area.

The playroom was well ventilated by means of the openable windows and doors.

The pre-school service was adequately lit with natural light provided from the windows in addition to three artificial lights on the playroom ceiling. The tube light

	<p>fittings in the playroom and the light fittings in the sanitary area had protective covers in place.</p> <p>The heaters were connected to an electric heating system that was thermostatically controlled to allow the recommended room temperature of between 18°C and 22°C for the playroom.</p> <p>On the day of inspection, the room temperature was maintained at 20.6°C.</p> <p>The warm water in the sanitary areas was maintained at a safe temperature of 38°C and the person in charge advised it would be no greater than 43°C.</p> <p>(d) In the proposed indoor playroom the play and work equipment were clean and in good repair. Cleaning equipment was safely stored away from / inaccessible to pre-school children.</p> <p>From observation, the furnished playroom was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.</p> <p>There was evidence that there was a professional rodent proofing service and the premises was last checked on 2nd of December 2025.</p> <p>(e) Adequate and suitable sanitary facilities were provided.</p> <p>There were two designated children’s toilets with one designated children’s wash hand basins.</p> <p>There was a designated nappy changing area with a wash hand basin adjacent to the preschool room.</p> <p>It was advised by the person in charge that four children are in nappies thereby adequate sanitary accommodation is available.</p> <p>There were three designated adult only toilets in the building and a designated wash hand basin, in each area.</p> <p>Liquid soap dispensers and paper hand towels in designated dispensers were within easy access to a pre-school child.</p> <p>Foot pedal lidded bins were provided in the sanitary areas and the nappy changing area.</p> <p>The service uses a public water supply and sewage system.</p>
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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.
- (4) Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides—
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and
 - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).

Requirement met:

- (1) Adequate floor space was provided for the free movement of children to work and play.
- (2) The registered provider will ensure that the minimum clear floor space is adhered to for pre-school children.
- (4) The measurement of the proposed playroom floor space was 36 square meters, thus, ensuring a minimum of 2.35 square metres of clear floor space will be available for each child proposing to attend the full day care service.