

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO006
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Collooney Montessori School
-------------------------	-----------------------------

Address of Service:	Church View, Collooney, Co. Sligo
----------------------------	-----------------------------------

Eircode:	F91 X6W7
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Veronica Muldowney
-------------------------------------	--------------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date(s) of Inspection:	15/09/2023
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Office, Child and Family Agency, St. Conals Campus, Kilmacrennan Rd, Letterkenny, Donegal, F92 FW6Y.
Inspection undertaken by:	N.McEndoo, Y.Coyne
Title:	Early Years Inspector and Inspection and Registration Manager

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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Collooney Montessori is a private owned preschool that is in operation since 2011. It is located in the small town of Collooney, 10km west of Sligo town. The service provides a morning sessional service from 9:00 to 12:00, Monday to Friday. It is registered for children aged greater than 2 years and up to six years of age. The service caters for a maximum of 22 children.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service along with another adult and there is also two relief persons familiar with the service if required. All staff and the registered provider holds a qualification in early childhood care and education at Quality and Qualifications Ireland, (QQI) at level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 Management and recruitment, 11 Staffing levels, 16 Record in relation to a pre-school service, 20 Facilities for rest and play, 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of children, 26 Fire safety measures, and 28 Insurance.

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 inspectors wish 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) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premise throughout the period of inspection.
Samples of attendance records available for inspection showed that the designated person in charge or the deputy were present in the service whenever the service was in operation.
- (2) The records of four staff employed in the service were reviewed.
The following vetting information was available for all four staff members:
- (a) Three written validated references from past employers for two staff members.
 - (b) Five written validated references from a source other than a past employer for three staff members.

- (c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána for four staff.
- (d) The required international police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4) Certification of a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 7 on the National Qualifications Framework or above was available for the four staff members.

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) When the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service there was 2 staff working directly with 14 children.

(3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio for a sessional service of 1 adult to each 11 children aged above 2 years and 6 months to 6 years was adhered to on the day.

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;

(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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A record of experience and qualification and experience and photographic identification was available for two staff members and two relief staff members.
- (h) Details of each child's attendance were available within the services attendance book.
- (i) Staff rosters were available within the services attendance book.
- (j) Details of medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent was available from the service.
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service were available within the 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 19 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, 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, or*

Compliance Information

- 1 (a) The service was carried out over two indoor rooms: a sunroom and a care room. There was also a large outdoor area to the rear of the building. The sunroom consisted of coat storage, cubbies for the children's bags, shoes, and slippers. The area was also used by the children to put on and take off their outdoor play gear. The care room was large and well laid out, with an abundance of Montessori equipment. There was adequate space in the room for children to manoeuvre around each of the well-defined areas of interest. The children enjoyed a change of environment during the day with outdoor play.

(b) The children had access to an adequate rest area in the corner of the care room. This consisted of two child size rattan chairs with padded cushion.

(3)(a) The children had daily access to a large outdoor play area to the rear of the premises. This area was naturally grassed and contained several trees. There was an adjoining shelter to the rear of the building, a climbing hill, a slide, bikes, a playhouse, and fruit planters towards the back of the area.

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:

On arrival the main entrance door to the service was found to be locked, preventing unauthorised entry or unsupervised exit from the service. One staff member was observed to remain at the door during collection times.

All materials and play equipment were found to be in very good condition and suitable for the age and stage of development for the children in the group. All furniture and shelving within the service was child sized and at a low-level giving ease of access to the children and was not at risk at tipping over.

CCTV equipment including flexes were stored up high, away from children's reach.

Storage facilities were inaccessible to the children, with cleaning agents being stored up high out of reach from children.

Infection Control:

The premises presented as clean and very well kept.

Warm water, soap, paper towels and foot pedal bins were readily available to support effective handwashing.

Perishable foods were stored in the children's lunch boxes within the low-level fridge. Plates and cutlery were available for the children to use.

Administration of Medication:

A care plan was in place for a child who may require medical intervention. Staff were fully aware of the signs and symptoms the child may demonstrate, along with the procedure involved of administering the required medication, and what to do if further intervention is needed.

Fire Safety:

All exits routes were found unobstructed during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Children were observed to climb a dividing fence between the service and a neighbouring garden. When this occurred, staff spoke to the children and re-directed them to play in other areas. It is acknowledged that at the time there was adequate supervision of the children by the staff. It is also acknowledged that when brought to the attention at the closing meeting that the registered provider advised measures would be taken to address the fencing.

Infection Control:

Children were observed not to wash their hands prior to snack time or after coming in from the outdoor area. It is acknowledged children washed their hands upon arrival to the service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

A new fence has been erected in this area. It is 5ft high and made of tight grid, plastic coated mesh. The children cannot climb this fence.

Infection Control:

The children are now all back to our usual schedule of washing hands on arrival, prior to eating, on coming in from the garden and any other time as necessary. Washing of hands will be closely monitored.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence submitted.

Infection Control:

None submitted

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed and are deemed to address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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 detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place on 16th June 2023.
 - (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment and fire detection and alarm system had been serviced in October 2022 and January 2023 respectively.
- (4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had on display a certificate of insurance valid until the 27th November 2023 showing that adequate insurance cover was in place for the service's maximum number of children.