

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY074
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Name of Service:	Templemore Montessori
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Address of Service:	Church Avenue, Templemore, Co. Tipperary
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Eircode:	E41 VY97
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Name of Registered Provider:	Elizabeth Byrne
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	12/12/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	North Tipperary Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
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Inspection undertaken by:	L McGeeney
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

This sessional service was established to provide care and education to children aged between 2 and 6 years. The service operates Tuesday to Friday, 8.45am to 12.15pm for 38 weeks of the year. Places are funded under the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) for eligible children. The service is operated from a ground floor room in the registered provider's residence, a detached two-storey house in the town of Templemore. The children have access to the ground floor room, sanitary accommodation and an enclosed outdoor play area.

Staffing

The registered provider and one member of staff, employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM), work directly with the children in the service each day. Another member of staff is available to call on when required. All staff hold recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5 or 8 on the national framework of qualifications.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(2)(4), 11(1)(3)(8), 15, 16, 19(1)(b), 24, 26 and 28.

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 registered provider, 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

The staff files of the three members of staff were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

(2)(a) A written, validated reference from a past employer was available in respect of one member of staff.

(b) Written, validated references from a source other than a past employer were available in respect of the three members of staff.

(c) Garda vetting had been carried out in respect of each member of staff and relevant documents were kept on file. The service had a system in place to ensure that staff were re-vetted on a three yearly basis in line with best practice guidance.

(d) Not applicable to this service as none of the staff had lived outside the state for a period exceeding six consecutive months.

(4) Staff held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5 or 8 on the national framework of qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) A second written reference was not available in respect of one member of staff.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(b) A second written reference has been acquired for the member of staff. Written references will be sought prior to any new member of staff starting to work in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of a written reference for one member of staff from a source other than a past employer was received by the offices of the early years inspectorate via email on 25 January 2025.

Summary Comment

All evidence submitted meets the requirements Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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.

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

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) There were 8 children aged between 2 years 10 months and 5 years old being supervised by 2 staff on the day of the inspection.

(3) The adult to child ratio was maintained at 1 to 4 on the day of inspection, which was greater than the minimum requirements of 1 to 11.

(8)(c) There were two staff working in the service on the day of inspection. Relief staff were available to call on if required in the event of one member of staff being absent.

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.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and
- (c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

The records of each of the ten children enrolled in the service were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

- (1) The required information as detailed under parts (a) to (f) and (i) of this regulation was available in respect of each child.
- (3) The records were available on the premises for inspection by an authorised person.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) A record in writing of the following information was not available in respect of each child attending the service:
 - (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;
 - (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registration forms for the service have been updated to include the required information

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the updated registration form was received by the offices of the early years inspectorate via email on 25 January 2025.

Summary Comment

All evidence submitted meets the requirements Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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) There was a record in writing of the information required in relation to the service and detailed under parts (a) to (k) of this regulation.

(3) The records were available on the premises and open to inspection by an authorised person.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) The following practices were observed on the day of inspection which supported the health, welfare and development of the children:

The children and staff sat together around the large oval shaped table in the centre of the room for snack time. This enabled the staff to assist the children as needed with opening their lunches and drinks as well as supporting conversation and a relaxed dining atmosphere.

The staff were observed to follow the children's lead in terms of their interests and what they wanted to do next. For example, on the day of inspection, the staff had planned a Christmas wreath craft activity for after lunch but the children expressed their wishes to make shapes with modelling dough and to go outside to play. In response, the staff put aside the planned activity for another day and brought out the modelling dough instead. After they had finished with that activity the children got ready and went outside to play.

The children were supported to be independent with selfcare skills such as using the toilet, washing their hands, dressing for the outdoors and tidying up after play. Many of the children present on the day of inspection were young, aged almost or recently turned 3 years old and were still learning these tasks. The staff were observed to be patient and kind in teaching, supervising and assisting the children according to each child's needs.

The service used a group texting application to share information and photographs with the parents of the children attending the service. Photos were taken during the day while the children were engaged in activities or particularly when they had made something they were proud of. Staff were observed asking the children who presented them with their work 'will I take a picture of it and send it to your mammy?' to which the children excitedly said 'yes' and posed with their creations for the photo, which was then shown to the child and sent.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider met each child on arrival into the service and recorded their arrival time on the weekly attendance register. The registered provider also supervised the departure of each child from the service and recorded each child's departure time on the attendance register.

(3)(a) Visitors to the service were met at the front door by the registered provider before being allowed to enter the service if appropriate.

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 held current certification in first aid response (FAR), valid until May 2025.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available on a shelf in the service.

(b) The first aid box was available if required by a child attending 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 current insurance cover for a sessional service catering for up to 11 children valid until 27 March 2025.