

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WD003
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	An Duine Beag, Montessori School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ballynageeragh, Dunhill, Waterford
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Elaine Walsh
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	06/06/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	17	PM	12
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Ryan.
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector

<b>Authority to Inspect</b>
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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

An Duinne Beag is a privately run service operating from a rural location in a purpose-built premises on the grounds of the registered providers home. The service is four kilometers from the Dunhill village in county Waterford. The service opened in September 2008 and presently offers two Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) sessions from 09:00hrs to 12:00hrs and 12:30hrs to 15:30hrs, Monday to Friday. An Duinne Beag has one early years room that can accommodate 22 early years children. The building accommodates a kitchenette, sanitary facilities and a storage room for toys and equipment. The dwelling is built on approximately one acre of ground with secure outdoor play spaces at the rear and front of the premises

### Staffing

The registered provider works as part of the staff complement and employs three staff to work directly with the children in the early years service on a daily basis.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11 19, and 22.

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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge. The service also had a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) At all times during the inspection the deputy person in charge was on the premises.

On review of the staff files, it was evident that one new staff member was employed to commence working in the naionra in September 2023

The following was observed on the new staff member's file:

(a) There were two written validated references from past employers.

(b) Not applicable as all written references were from past employers.

(c) There was evidence of a completed Garda vetting disclosure certificate from An Garda Síochána.

(d) Not applicable as the staff member had not resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

There was evidence that all staff employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 and 6, on the National Qualifications Framework. There was evidence of continuous professional development and qualification certificates on file.

## 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.*
- (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)(2)

In the morning session of the inspection, there were 17 children, 2 years 8 months to 5 years of age, being cared for by 3 staff. In the afternoon session of the inspection, there were 12 children, 2 years 8 months to 5 years of age being cared for by 3 staff.

(3)

The staff: child ratios exceeded the requirement for the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

### 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

(1)(a) Regulation 19 was assessed through direct observation, review of records and discussion with staff. The following was observed in relation to providing a programme of care and activities for the children attending the service.

The person in charge informed the inspector that the service had a mixed Montessori approach to the curriculum, with play and early literacy. It was documented in the service's statement of purpose, that the focus of the service was on the whole child catering for each child's individual developmental needs.

In the childcare room there was a range of Montessori equipment with practical life, threading and pegging activities available and accessible to the children, on low level open shelving units. The person in charge on the day demonstrated to the inspector some of the workbooks being used with the children for developing penmanship, early numeracy, and early literacy with the use of jolly phonics. The room was extended to accommodate a cloakroom for children's storage for bags, coats and outdoor clothing as well as a soft area for children to use if required.

On the day children were outdoors practicing for upcoming sports day on the extensive grassed area at the front of the registered provider's home. Activities such as hopping, sprinting and potato and spoon races were observed to be popular and enjoyable for the children. All children were wearing hats and were observed having sunscreen applied before venturing outdoors.

After the sports day rehearsal children remained outdoors for free play, enjoying balance bicycles, tractors and the selection of swings. On return to the early years room the children had 'circle time' with a staff member who encouraged conversation about what each child looked forward to doing during the summer holidays.

For the second ECCE scheme session children arrived from 12:30hrs onwards with free play outdoors until all children had arrived. This session started by encouraging and supporting children's toileting and hand washing. This was followed by lunch before moving outdoors for their sports day rehearsal.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

There was a food preparation area with a sink, fridge, and microwave in one corner of the room. This area was separated from the childcare room by a built-in countertop. Each week the children took turns, as nominated by the staff, to serve the food. During this routine, the children were handed the plates and cups from the countertop to place on the tables, this was observed to be a task of importance and enjoyment for the children.

There was a healthy eating policy available in the service. The food was supplied by the service at no extra cost to the parents. On the day of inspection, the food observed was toast with ham and cheese, milk or water was available for children to drink with their snacks.