

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW087				
Name of Service:	Tiny Feet Montessori				
Address of Service:	Brockagh Resource Centre, Laragh, Glendalough, Co. Wicklow				
Eircode:	A98 D3H1				
Name of Registered Provider:	Suzy Kenna				
Service type:	Sessional and Part-time				
Date of Inspection:	06/02/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>30</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	30	PM	N/A
AM	30	PM	N/A		

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Bray Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke and S. Faherty (IRM)
Titles:	Early Years Inspector and Inspection and Registrations 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

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Description of service

This part time service is located in the rural setting of Laragh Co. Wicklow. A service is provided to children aged between two and six years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 9 am and 2 pm (including a sessional service from 9 am to 12 midday for 38 weeks of the year). A school age service is also provided in the afternoons. The premises is located within a resource centre. It consists of two adapted care rooms, each with its own sanitary area, a kitchen/staff room and a small office. The service has a secure outdoor area to the front of the premises. A change in circumstances is to be submitted to the registrations office to correct the service type listing on the Early Years Register.

Staffing

The registered provider employs five adults and also works in the service. Five adults were present on the day of inspection.

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.

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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information

Following a discussion with the registered provider and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that six adults are employed in the service, these files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The registered provider was present in the service and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of three adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for six adults employed in the service.

(d)

International police vetting was not required as no adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Six staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent.

(6A)

Two adults were employed in the service pursuant to the Access and Inclusion Model.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were not available in respect of three adults.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

All references identified have been verified.

In future all references will be verified before employment commences.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b)

Photographic evidence of validated staff references was supplied with the CAPA response

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted with the CAPA response have addressed the non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b) and will be reviewed on next inspection

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.

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

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were five adults employed and present with thirty children on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)
The registered provider ensured that there were two adults on the premises at all times. This was confirmed by reviewing the staff roster.

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.

(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)(a), (h), (i), (j), &(k),

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the above information in relation to the service.

(3)

The registered provider ensured that these records were available for inspection to 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 registered provider ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place.

The transition between one activity and the next was smooth and unhurried, aided by the language used by the adults to the children. Positive reinforcement of children's behaviour contributed to a pleasant environment for the children in the service.

One to one attention was given to a child when required, in addition, support was given to children so that they remained included in activities they maybe have been unsure or unfamiliar with.

A strong ethos of teamwork was evident from observing how staff members worked together. The relationships between the adults and children reflected a sense of belonging, inclusion, connectedness and diversity.

The snack time was relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience for children, all children sat on low level chairs at a table, and conversation was encouraged. The adults sat with the children and had their own snacks during this time.

Children were addressed by their name and were given plenty of time to eat their food. All food was provided by the parents of the children in the service.

Children have access to an outdoor area but on the day of inspection, following a risk assessment by the registered provider, the outdoor area was deemed unsuitable due to icy weather conditions.

The service had a cosy area in both the Montessori and Pre-school rooms, with rugs and soft furnishings for children to use should they require it during their day.

Children's parents are spoken to on an individual basis at collection time. Parents are encouraged to make direct contact with the service, should they have any concerns or issues.

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 main door to the premises was securely locked on arrival of the inspectors to the service.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in the service.
- All toys examined were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in both the Montessori and Pre-school room were free from obstruction.
- A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous place in each service room.

Infection Control:

- Cleaning schedules for both care rooms and for the remainder of the premises were available and maintained.
- Both care rooms had a suitable sanitary area, with toilets, warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- A foot pedal bin was available in the sanitary areas for the safe disposal of used paper towels. Foot pedal bins were also available in both care rooms.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

On the day of inspection, it was observed that both the adults and the children in the Pre-school room did not wash their hands before sitting down to their snack. Hand washing, by both adults and children, is an essential practice for the prevention of the spread of infection and for infection control purposes.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

There was a revision of hand washing practices with the children and the book 'Wash your hands Rufus' was used as a guide. All staff revised hand washing policy. One staff member will remain in bathroom before snack time to ensure all children wash their hands thoroughly.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

A photo of the revised hand washing with Rufus signed by all staff members and dated that it was read to the children attending the service was submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The above practices will address the non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 23 Infection Control and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that each child attending the service was checked in and checked out on each day of attendance.

(3)(a)(i)-(iv)

The registered provider ensured that no person other than the above list of people were allowed access to the pre-school service.

(b)

A record in writing was available of any person having had access to the pre-school service from the above list.

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 ensured that there were adults trained in FAR first aid available to the children at all times during their day.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid bag was located in an accessible place within the Montessori and Pre-school rooms.

(b)

A first aid bag was available to the children attending the service at all times.