

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW096
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Name of Service:	Mini Hands Montessori
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Address of Service:	Kilmacanogue National School, Kilmacanogue, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A98D602
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Name of Registered Provider:	Isabel Costello
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	07/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	8
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Condon.
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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 service is located in a pre-fabricated building in the grounds of Kilmacanogue National School. The service provides part-time day care and a sessional service to pre-school children who are presently aged between 3 years and five years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09.15am and 13.15pm.

Staffing

Three adults are employed to care for the pre-school children. On the day of inspection three adults provided direct care to twenty-two pre-school children. A student was also present.

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.

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

(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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2)
- Files for three staff and the student were reviewed:
- (a)(b) Eight validated references were available.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the three staff members staff members and the student. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Not applicable as no adult present had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six months as adults.
- (4)
- Documentary evidence was available to confirm that three staff members had 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.

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.

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.

(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) At all times during the inspection an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twenty-two children attending the service being supervised by three adults on the morning of inspection. In the afternoon two adults supervised eight children.

(8)(a) The staff roster demonstrated two adults are on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

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-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

Ten files were examined.

In relation to the files examined, the record required in writing in relation to (a)-(i) above was kept for each child.

The children's files were located in a secure place in the service.

(3) (c) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) (a)-(i) was open to inspection on the premises by the inspectors.

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 entrance door and the side entrance gate to the service was secure. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying in the sanitary area. The staff members supervised children's and handwashing routines were well established. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues. Written cleaning schedules were available for the room environment and sanitary area.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The staff members were familiar with required safe practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the outdoor area the wire perimeter fence at the back of the garden was damaged causing sharp wire to protrude into the garden area at a child's level. This non-compliance was identified on inspection on 14/06/2022. The corrective and preventive actions taken then were not sufficient to prevent this non-compliance from re-occurring.
2. The garden area which had been covered in grass was in poor condition causing mud underfoot where children were playing. This was a safety hazard as it increased the risk of a fall.

Infection Control:

3. The two pedal bins in Montessori room required cleaning.
4. The cushions in use in the rest area in the Montessori room were soiled and stained and therefore required cleaning.
5. The fridge in the Montessori room was not clean with stains and debris on shelving.
6. The small toilet insert was not stored adequately. It was located on the floor beside the mop bucket.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Actions

General Safety

1. The wire fence has been professionally removed totally along with all shrubbery. The original tall metal fence is now the secure perimeter. The new available area has now been covered with wood chip providing a wonderful new space for the children. Going forward this area will be maintained to present high standard.
2. This area has now been professionally landscaped with a thick layer of wood chipping being applied. This area will be maintained at its present high standard.

Infection Control:

3. The two bins have been thoroughly cleaned and these bins will be cleaned on a daily basis.
4. Cushions have been cleaned. The cushions will be taken home every Friday for laundering.
5. The fridge has been thoroughly cleaned and will now be cleaned on a daily basis
6. The insert is now stored on a hook on the bathroom wall. This is now our ongoing practice.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Photographic evidence of the work carried out to address the non-compliances numbering 1-6 above.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified on inspection in relation to regulation 23.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) An adult trained in First Aid Response was present and immediately available to the pre-school 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.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) A record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 12th February 2024.

(b) Records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms dated December 2023 and March 2023 respectively.

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

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

During the inspection the children attending were supervised by the staff members at all times while in the indoor and outdoor areas.