

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW102
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Name of Service:	Knockeevin Montessori School & Nature School
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Address of Service:	Knockeevin, Church Road, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 WF97
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Name of Registered Provider:	Gill Gray
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	28/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	44	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona 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 the village of Greystones, County Wicklow. The service provides part-time day care and a sessional service to pre-school children aged between two years and six years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09.00am and 14.00pm. The premises is located in pre-fabricated buildings in the grounds of a detached house which has a large garden available for use by the pre-school. There are three rooms provided for the care of children.

Staffing

A total of nine adults are employed to provide direct care for pre-school children. On the day of inspection seven adults provided direct care to forty-four pre-school children.

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.*

(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 of operating the service and another adult was able to deputise as required.

(b)

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

(2)

A total of nine staff files were reviewed.

(a) & (b)

Sixteen written and validated references were available for eight adults.

(c)

The required Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the nine adults employed.

(d)

International Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months as an adult.

(4)

Seven adults employed held major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at National Framework for Qualifications. Two adults had received letters of eligibility which deemed that their qualifications were equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(a) & (b)

Two written and validated references were not available for one adult.

(d)

International Police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months as an adult.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

(2)(a) &(b)

We now have two validated references for the employee. Going forward we will ensure we have two validated references for all new employees are in place.

(d)

We now have International Police Vetting for the employee from her home country. Going forward we will ensure we have International Police Vetting from relevant countries for any employees that have lived outside the jurisdiction for 6 months or longer.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of two validated references for one staff member.

Copy of the Police Vetting record for one staff member.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the Registered Provider and the documentation received have been considered by the Inspector. The Registered Provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 9.

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 was an adequate number of adults working directly with the pre-school children.
- (2) The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection. On inspection there were seven adults providing direct care to forty-four pre-school children.
- (8)(a) There were more than two adults present in the premises throughout the inspection and the staff roster confirmed there are at least two adults present at all times.

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 Inspector observed that staff were attentive to the personal care of the children. Staff assisted children in the bathroom used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

Staff sat with the children when eating. They provided them with help when needed whilst supporting their independence. Drinks of water were offered regularly and were always available both indoors and outdoors.

All children were given the opportunity to play outdoors for long periods during the session. Each child had their own outdoor water-proof suits and boots so that they would be comfortable outdoors in all weathers. The children had access to a large nature garden with several areas to explore and play. Children were observed playing with sand, using a hammock, using equipment for example swings, slides, climbing and balance beams and natural wood shapes for building. Staff encouraged each child's independence while dressing, assessing risks outdoors and assisting them while distributing the picnic lunch.

Staff interacted with the children in a positive manner, encouraging them to play together, turn-taking and assisting them when needed. The staff provided the children with comfort when they became upset - holding them, giving clear and simple explanations, and talking to them in soft tones.

Circle time at the end of the session was used to read stories and review the session with the children in a fun, inclusive way.

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 outdoor play area was fenced. The main entrance to the premises was secured. An inter-com system was used to communicate between care rooms and while the children were outdoors.
- All cleaning products were stored out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- In the sanitary areas warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels were available.
- Pedal operated bin was available for the safe disposal of used paper towels in the sanitary area and in the care room.
- Table cleaning was observed before lunch time.
- Hand washing by the adult and children was observed after using the toilet and before lunch.

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.
- Temperature reducing medication was available, in date and stored safely.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed.

Outings:

The registered provider stated that no outings are undertaken from the service.

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) Two adults trained in First Aid Response was present and immediately available to the pre-school children.

(2)

(a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school room.

(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children

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

All children were supervised by the staff members at all times during the inspection