

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW249
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Name of Service:	Knockeevin Montessori & Nature Schools
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Address of Service:	El Pinar, Kindlestown Hill, Delgany, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 A251
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Name of Registered Provider:	Maeve Murtagh
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Service type:	Part time
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Date of Inspection:	08/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlin town Health Centre, Loughlin town Drive, Loughlin town, 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 a rural area outside Delgany village in County Wicklow. The service provides education and care to pre-school children using a combination of the Montessori method and forest school programme. The service is currently opens from Monday to Friday between 09.00am and 13.30pm and currently caters for children aged between two years and 8 months and five years of age. The premises is located in two prefabricated rooms in the grounds of a detached private house which has a large garden available for use by the pre-school.

Staffing

A total of four adults are employed in the service including the registered provider. On the day of inspection four adults provided direct care to twenty-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 inspections 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

(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 service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.
 - (b) At all times during the inspection the designated person in charge was present.
- (4)
- A total of four adults are employed in the service. Three adults employed hold major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at National Framework for Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) One adult employed in the service with direct access to children did not hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at National Framework for Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be the equivalent.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) This adult no longer works with the children. In future no adult shall be employed unless they hold the relevant qualification.

Summary Comment

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) During 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 four adults providing direct care to twenty-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 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.*

Compliance Information

(1)

The registered provider ensured that a written record in relation to each child attending which included the particulars (a) and (d) to (i) was kept.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) and (c)

The registered provider did not keep a record of the date that the child first attended the service and the date the child ceased to attend the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A start date and finish date have now been added to all current registration.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the updated registration form which includes a start and finish date for each child.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection in relation to regulation 15.

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:

- (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.*

Compliance Information

(1)

(h) A record was available of each child's attendance which included their time of arrival and time of departure.

(j) A record was available regarding parental consent for the administration of medication in each child's registration form. A method to record medication administration was in place.

(j) A staff roster was available.

(k) A detailed written record of accidents/incidents which occurred to a pre-school child was available. The individual record was signed by the relevant staff present at the time of the accident/incident and the parent of the child.

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)

Basic Needs of Children

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service. The food choices provided by parents for their child were nutritious. Snack time was observed to be a relaxed and sociable experience for the children and the staff sat and had their own snack with the children and chatted with them during this time. Sufficient time was allowed for eating and the children were not rushed. Children enjoyed freedom of movement in the pre-school room and outside. All children had waterproof all-in-one suits, jackets and boots for use in the outdoor area. Children's behaviour was managed positively by the staff caring for them and children were praised and encouraged throughout the morning. Children were observed washing their hands before snack, following outdoor play and toilet use.

Supporting Relationships around Children

The atmosphere in the pre-school was happy, relaxed, friendly and child centred. Staff members were respectful and kind towards the children in their care and each child was listened to and given time to chat and express their thoughts and feelings. It was evident by the interactions with the children that the staff knew each child very well. Adults were observed assisting the children while they engaged with Montessori equipment, doing puzzles, dressing and undressing for the outdoors. Smooth transitions were observed with notice given by staff regarding a change of activity and children were very settled as a result. Information was shared with parents and guardians at the collection time.

Physical and Material Environment.

The pre-school room was equipped with low level tables and chairs and low-level shelving units with Montessori equipment, toys and materials easily accessible to the children. Children were observed playing with puzzles, bricks, colouring and using Montessori equipment. A porch area was used for the children to change prior to going into the garden. The outdoor play equipment included water play, a slide, mud kitchen, playhouse and a planting area. Separately in the outdoor area a large "nature garden" was available where children were observed interacting with nature for example swinging on trees, splashing in puddles, playing with twigs and watching birds.

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 in and gated. The main entrance to the premises was secured and had a bell system.
- When staff were in separate areas, they kept in touch using an electric device.
- While in the outdoor area staff were observed doing regular head counts of the children in their care.
- The cleaning agents were inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in the service.
- All heavy furniture was secured.

Infection Control:

- Children were encouraged to wash their hands regularly including before lunch and after using the toilet. Effective hand hygiene practices were observed and in accordance with the services infection control policies and procedures.
- The care rooms and sanitary areas were clean and well maintained. The environment was clean.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. There was no anti-febrile medication available on site for use should it be required. It is acknowledged that the registered provider sent evidence that the anti-febrile medication was in place the following day.
2. The three toilet seats in the sanitary areas were very loose posing a risk of a child falling off them or creating a sense of insecurity while using the toilet.

Infection Control:

3. There was no splash back/tiling behind the sinks in the sanitary areas to allow for effective cleaning of the areas.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety

1. Anti-febrile medication was purchased. This medication will be checked monthly.
2. The toilet seats have been tightened. Each seat will be checked weekly and tightened as required. This action has been added to our weekly checklists.

Infection Control:

3. Splash backs have been added behind the sink areas

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photo evidence on medication including expiry date.

Infection Control:

Photo evidence of splashbacks in place behind the sinks.

Summary Comment

The corrective actions, preventive actions and supporting evidence have been considered by the inspector. The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection in relation to regulation 15.

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)
One adult who had completed Pre-hospital emergency care council (PHECC) training were immediately available to the pre-school children. The three other adults employed had completed a qualification in paediatric first aid.

(2)
(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position within the service.
(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 19th of April 2023.
- (1)(b) A record was available detailing the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms dated June 2022 and May 2022 respectively.
- (4) A notice was displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

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 all children were supervised by staff members while indoors and outdoors at all times.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27th of March 2024. The insurance provides cover for up to 25 children attending for part-time care .