

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX021		
Name of Service:	Cairde Beaga Montessori		
Address of Service:	Ferns Community Centre, Main Street, Ferns, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford		
Eircode:	Y21 X5W9		
Name of Registered Provider:	Lisa Warren, Susan Doyle		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	10/06/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM NA
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspector Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank Wexford		
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Ryan		
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		

Description of service

Cairde Beaga Montessori is a privately operated preschool service offering a Montessori and play based programme of care. The service operates from 9.00am to 12.30pm and can accommodate up to 22 children. The service is located within the community center with a playroom designated for the sole purpose of the preschool service. The service consists of one playroom, sanitary accommodation, lobby area and outdoor and indoor play areas.

Staffing

The service has a total of three staff. There are two registered providers who work directly with the children in the service every day. The staff working directly with the children attending the service held a major award in Montessori Education and Early Childhood Care and Education at the minimum Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and Recruitment,
Regulation 11 (1)(2) Staffing levels,

Regulation 17 Information for parents,
Regulation 20 Facilities for Rest and Play,
Regulation 21 Equipment and materials,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,
Regulation 25 First aid,
Regulation 26 Fire Safety and
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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)(b)

On the day of the inspection the two registered providers were the designated people in charge of the service.

(2)(a)(b)

The staff files for three staff employed in the service were reviewed. There were validated references for the three employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every three years.

- (d)
Police vetting disclosures were not required as none of the staff had lived outside the state for more than six consecutive months.
- (4)
Certificates of qualifications for three staff members working directly with the preschool children were available 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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(2)
Throughout the period of the inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with children ensuring that the correct adult to child ratios were maintained at all times. During the morning there were 16 children being directly cared for by 3 staff.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

- A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).*

Compliance Information

- The registered providers supply the parents with a parent handbook which includes an overview of the service. The handbook outlined to parents the curriculum, the hours of operation, contact details and the facilities available within the service. It provides parents with information on the day-to-day requirements and running of the service: settling in, healthy eating, drop off and collection policy and first aid. The registered providers also

invite parents and children to a meet and greet afternoon in the service before children start in playschool which allows parents an opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

The service consisted of one large playroom which was located upstairs in the local community centre. The room was bright and warm, with natural light from openable windows. The room was well equipped with a range of toys, materials and furniture suitable to the age and stage of development of the children attending the service. There were child sized tables and chairs for tabletop activities such as Montessori work, playdough, puzzles and eating at snack time. The room provided sufficient space for children and staff to move around and enjoy various activities and play.

On two walls there were open shelving units allowing children to freely access what they wanted to choose to play with such as Montessori work, jigsaws/puzzles and imaginative play toys. There were sufficient variety including manipulative play materials, art materials, cars, a home/kitchen, books, fine motor materials and life skill materials. A relax/rest area was available to the children and consisted of a small sofa and cushions. On the day of inspection, the children had all left their teddy bears from home on the windowsill behind the sofa as they were having their teddy's bears picnic.

Children had their own designated play area outside, which was fully enclosed beside the centre. The children also had access to the indoor community hall on wet days. The outdoor area had a mulch surface and equipment included items such as a mud kitchen, playhouse, a climbing frame, seating, digging areas, sand and water play, and footballs.

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)

There were staff trained in FAR and first aid for children available to the children attending the preschool service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

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 firefighting 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)

Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill was carried out on the 24 May 2024.

(1)(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm were serviced in May 2024.

(4)
There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available to demonstrate that insurance was in place.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

(3) A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)
There was adequate floor space available to the children to play and move freely in the room.

(3)
The room was measured on inspection. The room measured 45.6 square metres, which was well above the minimum requirement of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space per child attending the service.