

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX085
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Name of Service:	Little Treasures Montessori Preschool and Afterschool Club
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Address of Service:	143 Bridgemeanows, Milehouse Road, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
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Eircode:	Y21 E2T9
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Name of Registered Provider:	Kent Ashmore
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Dates of Inspection:	29/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	12
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency Early Years Inspectorate Ely Hospital Ferrybank, Wexford
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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

Little Treasures Montessori Preschool and After school Club is a privately owned and operated service which is registered to provide a full day care service to children aged from 3 to 6 years of age. The service is one of two services owned by the registered provider situated in the housing development of Bridge Meadows in Enniscorthy. The services are operated from two separate buildings but work closely together. The service is operated from a two-story building, which consists of two preschool rooms, a kitchen, a hallway, toilets, nappy changing facilities and an outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The service employed a total of 11 staff. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. The service also employs a chef who cooks all the meals and snacks in the service. All staff who were working directly with the children held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or 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.

The inspection focused on the following regulations:

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

Regulation 10 Policies and Procedures,

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 15 Record of preschool child,

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,

Regulation 22 Food and Drink,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,

Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4).

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 person in charge, 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)

The manager was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection. There was also a person available to deputise as required.

(2)(a)(b)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 11 staff employed in the service. All staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection. There were 22 required written references available on file for staff members.

(c)

There was evidence of Garda vetting available on file in the service for all staff members. The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for 10 staff.

(4)

All staff working directly with the preschool children who held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

There were written policies, procedures, and statements, as specified in Schedule 5 available for the service. The policies reviewed for this inspection were the policy on managing incidents and accidents, the healthy eating policy and the policy on management of infection control in the service. These policies and procedures were complete and specific to the setting.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1)

There was at all times an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the preschool service.

(3)

At 11:00 am

there were 31 children in the care of 5 staff.

At 2.45 pm

there were 12 children in the care of 4 staff.

The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of staff to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 was always maintained during the period of inspection.

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

A sample of 10 children's enrolment forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

There were two preschool rooms in the service the captain's room downstairs and the voyager room was located upstairs. Both rooms were well equipped and furnished with a variety of furniture, toys and materials. There were child sized tables and chairs suitable for tabletop activities, Montessori work and snack time. There was sufficient space for children and staff to move around and enjoy free play in both rooms.

Areas of interest were well developed. For example, in the voyager room there was a full-length mirror for children to look at themselves in. Around the mirror, staff had written several affirmations. For example, “I am kind, I am proud of myself”.

Staff in the voyager room were observed providing children with soft mats to enjoy their yoga session. Open shelving units ran along walls in both rooms which were used to display the play materials for the children’s work and play. They were easily accessible to the children to see what they wanted to choose. There was a sufficient variety including manipulative play materials, fine motor skills and life skill materials. The materials were of good quality and the rooms also had cosy rest areas for the children to relax in.

There was a variety of original artwork displayed in the rooms. For example, in the captain’s room the children had painted Christmas stockings. There was a supply of dress up outfits. The children were observed getting into the outfits and dancing to “Move it Move it “with their friends.

Outdoor equipment included items such as a mud kitchen, playhouse and a jungle gym. The service’s pet goldfish “Betty” was observed to be of great interest to the children.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service promoted healthy eating and had a healthy eating policy. All snacks and meals were prepared in the service by a chef employed directly by the service. The meals for both services are prepared in the main kitchen located at 155 Bridge Meadows and brought across by the chef. The dinner was served at mid-day and consisted of fish fingers, beans, mashed potatoes and spaghetti hoops. There was a plentiful supply and children who wanted more were given extra portions. The children had trays of trail mix and freshly made ham wraps in the afternoon. There was a 4-week rotating menu on display in the service. The staff sat with the children and chatted to them during their meal. Two children asked the chef for gravy. The chef made a large jug for the children, and they were observed to finish and enjoy the dinner that was made for them.

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 external door and internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the service. The service was accessed through a front door which was secure on arrival and remained secure for the duration of the inspection. All cleaning agents were stored on high shelves which were inaccessible to children. The pillar in the center of the captains room had been wrapped in a soft rubber material to soften the impact of any child who might fall against it.

Infection Control:

The service had an infection control policy. The service was clean and maintained. All toilets had access to warm thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap, disposable hand towels and pedal operated bins. Children were observed washing their hands before eating, after toileting and after messy play.

Administration of medication:

The service had an administration of medication policy. The policy was reviewed by the inspector and was found to be in line with best practice guidelines for the safe administration of medication in a preschool setting. A previous record of medication that had been administered in the service was reviewed by the inspector. It was clearly documented; the consent was signed by the parent and the administration procedure was verified and signed by two staff members.

Non-Compliance Information

The service had not demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for 1 staff member.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

An application to renew the staff members Garda vetting was sent immediately following the inspection. The renewed Garda vetting is now available on file in the service. The manager has initiated a check list involving all staff files to ensure the service is alerted when the staff members vetting is due to be renewed in line with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for staff members.

Evidence received

The inspector received a copy of the staff members renewed Garda vetting.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is satisfactory to meet the requirements of the The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool service.

Non-Compliance Information

There was no staff member trained in a first aid responder course working in service. It is acknowledged there were staff available to the children who were trained in paediatric first aid available. However preschool services are required to have a person trained in a first aid responder course available to the children at all times when attending a preschool service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Two staff members were booked to complete a first aid responder course. This is to ensure there is a person trained in a first aid responder course available to the children at all times when attending the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

A document confirming two staff were booked to attend a first aid responder course was received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is satisfactory to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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)

There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill had taken place in the service in November 2024.

(b)

There was a record available on file stating the firefighting equipment was last serviced in August 2024 and smoke alarm was last serviced in June 2024.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was insurance in place to cover the children who were present on the day of inspection.