

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX136
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Name of Service:	Tus Maith
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Address of Service:	C/o Donard National School, Poulpeasty, Clonroche, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
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Eircode:	Y21 V091
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sinead Parnell
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	10/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	5
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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

Tus Maith is a community-based part time preschool service which is managed by a board of management. The service operates an Early Years Care and Education scheme (ECCE) Monday to Friday for 38 weeks per year. The service is located in a classroom which has been developed and resourced to provide a preschool service. The preschool children have their own designated toilets and outdoor play area within the school grounds.

Staffing

There were two staff employed. Both staff held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),
Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),
Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child (1) (a),
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,

Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),
Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures,
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.

(2)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were two staff employed in the service. Both files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)(b)

There were four written and validated reference available on file from past employers for the two staff members.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for both staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Both staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework

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 an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the preschool service for the duration of the inspection.
- (3)
At 11.00am.
There were 9 children aged 2 to 6 years of age in the care of 2 staff.
At 1.00pm.
There were 5 children aged 2 to 6 years of age in the care of 2 staff.

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)
The manager ensured that each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of appropriate activities during the inspection including eating together and enjoying free play in the outdoor area. Interactions between children were well managed by the

staff who were caring for them. The children were observed playing in the outdoor area. Staff were observed to be always attentive to the children, encouraging them to share and take turns with their friends. Of particular note was how staff encouraged the older children to help the new children settle into the service. Children were encouraged to help the younger children settle in by holding their hands while walking to the playground and letting them go first on the slides.

Children were encouraged to be independent appropriate to their age and stage of development, for example, by tidying up and putting away their lunch boxes. During activities staff used opportunities to extend children's learning and development. Staff were constantly engaged with the children, encouraging them to explore and enjoy their free play in the outdoor area. For example, there was great interest shown by the children in the bugs and spiders they found in the grass in the outdoor area.

Children were observed enjoying a variety of healthy snacks which were provided by parent's, staff sat with the children making it a sociable and relaxed time for them.

The outdoor area in use on the day of inspection was set up for the exclusive use of the preschool children. This consisted of an enclosed grassed area. The area was well resourced with play equipment for the use of the children. For example, there was a slide, a seesaw, a picnic table a mud kitchen and some hula hoops for children to play with.

The classroom was well resourced with play equipment for the children. There were dolls and buggies, jigsaws, story books, plastic bricks and a supply of art materials. Of particular note was a collage of pictures of the children entitled "all about me". Staff had spoken to the children and written down aspects of their life like "my favourite food". Staff who spoke to the inspector said this exercise helped them to get to know the children.

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 manager took the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the preschool children attending the service:

All cleaning agents were stored in a safe and secure area which was inaccessible to children. Access to the service was gained through the front door of the national school which was secure on arrival by the inspector.

It was a particularly hot day on the day of inspection. Staff were observed reapplying sunscreen to the children and making sure they were wearing their sun hats before they went outside to play.

INFECTION CONTROL

The service appeared to be clean and well maintained. Daily and weekly cleaning schedules were recorded and maintained in the service. There was warm water to support hand washing, liquid soap, disposable hand towels and foot controlled lidded bins available throughout the service. Good hand washing practice was observed on the day of inspection. Children were observed washing their hands prior to snack time, after using the toilet and after messy play. Tables were cleaned and sanitised prior to snack time. All snacks were stored in the fridge which was situated in the preschool room in 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)
There was a person trained in a first aid responder course available to the children attending the preschool service.
- (2)(a)(b)
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool 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 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 fire drill was recorded as having taken place in March 2024.
- (b) The annual record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm in the premises was carried out in January 2024.
- (4)
There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the entrance door to 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 adequate insurance in place to cover the children who were present on the day of inspection.