

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016CC017
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Muin Vincents
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	C/O St. Vincents Primary School, St Mary's Road, Cork, Co Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	T23 PC43
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Kate Gaffney
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	06/10/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	12	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	B Fraher
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Muin Vincent pre-school is a registered privately owned early years service located in a classroom on the ground floor of St Vincent's primary school. The service is registered to cater for children from 2-6 years offering a sessional service. The Early childhood care and Education (ECCE) scheme runs from 9:00 to 12:00. There is a registered school age service in operation in the afternoon. The children's toilets facilities are directly off the care room and the adult toilet facilities are located within the national school.

### Staffing

There were eight staff attached to the service and a total of four staff were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider is not service based.

### 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 children, person in charge and staff 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

*(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 service had a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named deputy in the service that could deputise as required.
- (b) The manager from a sister service and deputy were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy was on duty at all times during the hours of operation.
- (c) There was clear evidence on inspection of the management structure in place and the specific roles of each staff member. This was on display on the notice board.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to eight adults, seven of whom were employed in the service and the registered provider were the subject of inspection.
- (a) Of the 16 required references, 10 were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the 16 required references, 6 were from a source other than a past employer with required records of validation on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were obtained and were on file for the eight staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was required for one of the eight adults as they lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) The seven adults who worked directly with the children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

## 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.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

The following policies did not meet the regulatory requirements:

1. The Infection control policy does not outline the following:
  - Respiratory practices and procedures for children.
  - Management of perishable foods.
  - The infection control measures for nappy changing.
2. The healthy eating policy does not outline the following:
  - Inclusion of specific dietary, cultural or religious requirements.
  - Supporting parents and guardian’s choices.
  - How food is safety stored and served.

Therefore, the above policies and procedures may not adequately guide the staff in their care practices

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The Infection Control Policy has been updated and will be reviewed annually.
2. The Healthy Eating Policy has been updated.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

1. The updated Infection control policy was received in the office of the inspectorate.
2. The updated Healthy eating policy was received in the office of the inspectorate.

#### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was deemed to meet the regulatory compliance under Regulation 10.

### 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) At the time of inspection, there were the adequate number of adults required, responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at all times.
- (3) The service exceeded the minimum ratio required as per regulation in the care room. The 12 children attending the service were supervised directly by 4 adults.

### 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) (a-e) Sixteen early years children were enrolled the service, and a sample of 10 records were reviewed. Each of the children's records were found to contain the required information in (a) to (e) above.

## Non-Compliance Information

(1) (f-j) Out of 10 enrolment forms reviewed on the day of inspection:

- Ten were missing details of a child's illness or allergies and the name of the registered medical practitioner assigned to the child.
- Two were missing immunisation records.
- Four were missing parental consent for medical treatment in the event of an emergency.

It is acknowledged that the person in charge forwarded these the day after inspection. Not having children's records complete and available to the staff may hinder the care and safety of the children in the service if this information is required in an emergency.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

All current forms have been printed and parents have been asked to re-complete forms. A new form has been developed in the service and will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

A copy of the new form was received in the office of the inspectorate.

## Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under 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:*

*(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

#### Compliance Information

(j) The deputy on duty informed the inspector that no child in the service was currently prescribed medication. An administration record was available to use if medication administration was required.

### 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

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of relevant documents.

#### Basic needs:

- The layout of the care room supported the children to move freely within their environment and to actively engage in their chosen tasks.
- Food was prepared by the parents or guardians and was observed to be healthy and nutritious in the service.
- Children were observed accessing the toilet under the supervision of the staff who were available to assist if needed.
- Children who wished to rest while they attended the service could avail of a soft seated area in the room.
- Staff sat at the tables during snack time, interacting with the children and providing assistance when needed to open food items.
- Drinking water was readily available to the children.

- Outdoor play was promoted and observed at the time of inspection with the adults observing and assisting children during play. The inspector observed children playing in a tunnel, with a ball and on a climbing frame.
- Children’s independence was promoted by staff in the care room. An example of this was children put on their own coats and tidying up after play.

### Supporting relationships:

- During snack times, a social environment was promoted, as the adult’s encouraged conversation and the children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their food.
- The adults were observed to demonstrate patience and kindness in their interactions with the children, as was noted when the children’s efforts were readily acknowledged.
- The adults were observed to sit with the children and interact with them through play, art, song and storytelling which supported positive relationships with the children and language development.
- A variety of communication methods were stated as being used to communicate with parents/guardians including email, text messages and meeting parents at drop off and pick up.
- The staff were seen to promote positive behaviour among children, encouraging them to take turns as observed in the outdoor area on the slide.

### 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

- An adequate number of low-level chairs and tables were provided for the children for indoor use.
- The care rooms were suitably resourced with age-appropriate interest items, which were stored on low level shelving at the children’s eye level. Examples included puzzles, books, construction toys, dolls, a buggy, a kitchen, and a shop with play items.
- All indoor equipment and material assessed were found to be in good condition.
- The equipment used in the outdoor area was in good condition and was able to be stored under a roofed area when not in use. A timber climbing frames with a tunnel, a selection of ride on toys, a balance game and a connect 4 game were available for use.
- The care room had a cosy rest area for children to relax and take some time away from the larger group.

### 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 entrance door was secured appropriately. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevent the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor area was enclosed mainly by a stone wall, metal gates and with one timber area and was observed to be a safe and secure space for the children. This prevented children gaining unsupervised access to an unsafe area.
- Blind cords were on restrictors.

##### Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before meals and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- Fire extinguishers were secured to the walls.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Infection Control:

1. During observing the nappy changing procedure, the following practices posed a risk of contamination and cross infection.

- An apron was not worn during the procedure.
- The Nappy was disposed of into the bin used in the care room rather than the nappy bin.

2. A child was observed to put her lunch box into the bin with no lid in the care room and a staff member was observed to put her hand in the bin to remove the lunch box. The child or staff member did not wash their hands.

This posed a risk of cross contamination and cross infection.

3. On the day of inspection, children's perishable snacks were observed to be stored in their bags on hooks on the wall. A refrigerator was available in the care room but was not in used by the children on the day. This posed a risk of food spoilage.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

1. A meeting was held with staff and infection control measures were discussed. A new nappy bin was obtained.
2. Hand washing and infection control procedures were discussed at the staff meeting. A staff return to work form was also introduced.
3. The infection control policy has been updated, and parents have been asked to put perishable food items in a zip-lock bag.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

1. A copy of the staff meeting notes and a photograph of the bin were received in the office of the inspectorate.
2. A copy of the staff meeting notes and the new return to work form were received.
3. A copy of the infection control policy, child record form and a copy of the text message issued to parents were received.

### Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The attendance book was available and the inspector observed that all the children present on the day had their check in and out times completed.

(3)

(b) A daily record of visitors to the premises was maintained. The inspector was signed in and out on a record sheet.

### 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

Children were supervised primarily by sight at all times, with enough qualified staff on-site to effectively monitor the preschool children. Closer supervision was provided during risky activities like using the climbing frame and balance game. The layout of the indoor and outdoor environments facilitated visual and sound supervision of all children by staff while also allowing children some quiet space.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the services was adequately insured. The insurance policy commenced on 01 September 2025 and will expire on 27 March 2026.