

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016CC030
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Sunday's Well Montessori Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	C.B.S, Blarney Street, Cork, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	T23 H968
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Niamh Cotter
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	04/06/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	13	PM	
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M Creagh & J Russell
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors

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

Sunday's Well Montessori Preschool is a private sessional service that commenced operations in 2016. It is situated in an urban area of Cork city and operates from a building on the grounds of Blarney Street C.B.S. National school. The early years service operates a morning session between 8.45am and 11.45am, and an afternoon service between 12.30pm and 15.30pm, Monday to Friday. Places are funded under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) for eligible children. The service has capacity to accommodate 14 children, aged between 2 and 6 years. The service consists of a small entrance area, the main care room, with adjacent child and adult sanitary facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area. The children also have access to the national school 'halla'.

### Staffing

The service employs two staff members, including the registered provider who is based in the service and works directly with the children. There is an additional relief staff member available if required. All adults have the required qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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.

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 inspectors wish 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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge of operating the service and was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available to deputise if needed.
- (b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present, and the staff roster indicated that this person was available on the premises each day.
- (2) Recruitment records in respect of the three staff members attached to the service were assessed. The following information was obtained:
- (a) Five of the required written and validated references were from past employers.
- (b) One written and validated reference was from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three adults. 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 not required for any staff working at the service.
- (4) The registered provider along with both staff attached to the service held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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) The registered provider ensured an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at the service.

(3) On the day of the inspection there were 13 preschool children present with two adults. The adult to child ratio was correct.

### 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 sample of 10 children's record were assessed, and all records were completed and contained the required information outlined from (a) to (i).

## 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;*

*(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) The details of the attendance of each child were recorded daily on the attendance list. Time in and out were recorded.

(j) Three records of medication administration were assessed, and each record contained all the required details. The records had requests for administration completed by parents/ guardians, with two staff signatures on the administration form.

(k) The accident and incident record book was reviewed, and 11 records were assessed. All 11 records were completed, signed and dated by both staff and parents/ guardians.

## 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

##### BASIC NEEDS:

- The service adheres to a healthy eating policy, advising parents to provide nutritious snacks for their children each day. On the day of inspection, children's snacks included sandwiches, bread rolls, a variety of fruits cut up, yoghurts, pasta and cheese. Children were given drinks of water at snack time and water was available from jugs and cups in the care room throughout the day.

- Mealtime atmosphere was observed to be sociable and relaxed; plenty of time was afforded for children to enjoy their snacks and staff were on hand to support the children's eating and drinking. No child attending the service needed to be fed.
- Cutlery and crockery were provided as appropriate for snack time.
- The mobility of children was encouraged with children moving freely in all spaces accessible to them. The children had several opportunities for outdoor play during their time in the service and there was a 'halla' available to them, utilised during poor weather conditions.
- The staff supported play time individually, in pairs and in small groups. They spoke to the children in a kind, comforting, warm manner and were responsive to their needs.
- Children had unrestricted access to toilets, situated adjacent to the preschool room and were observed accessing the toilet area independently, with staff assisting when required.
- Children were reminded to wash their hands and helped when needed.

### **SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:**

- The children knew and were accustomed to the staff and were observed to seek their support when required and engage with staff.
- The staff sat with the children at the different tables and assistance was given as needed with table-top activities and opening the packaging of snacks.
- Transitions from indoors to outdoors was supported by giving children adequate notice of the transition and singing 'clean up' songs to ensure each child was aware of the transition.
- Parents/ guardians were spoken with at drop off and collection daily, two yearly individual formal meetings, and as required through face-to-face meetings, phone calls, and text messages.
- General information regarding the services' activities was displayed on the notice board in the foyer.
- Staff referred to a recent visit from the local primary school teacher, which had been organised to support the children's transition to primary school.

## 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 to the premises was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the premises unsupervised.
- Storage was inaccessible and out of reach to the children.
- The cleaning products observed on inspection were stored out of reach of the children.
- Safety clips were in place to secure blind cords.
- The windows were not accessible to children.
- There were no cables accessible to children.
- The toys were suitable and those assessed had no evidence of pinch or crush points that may cause injury to a child.
- The emergency fire exit door was clearly identified and free from obstruction.

##### INFECTION CONTROL:

- The perishable items contained in the children’s snacks were stored in the fridge and were handed out at snack time. This prevented contamination and growth of potentially harmful bacteria.
- Tables were cleaned with suitable disinfectant after play and before snack time.
- Adequate ventilation was ensured through open windows.
- Wash hand basins were supplied with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels. Handwashing was observed after use of the toilet facility.
- There were pedal operated bins available throughout the service.
- All coats and bags were stored off the ground on wall hooks, minimising contact and cross infection.

##### ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

- No medication was observed to be administered.
- Medication held at the setting was found to be inaccessible to children, in- date and appropriately labelled.

##### FIRE SAFETY:

- Firefighting equipment was suitably fixed to the walls.
- The emergency fire exit door was clearly identified and free from obstruction.

## Part VI – Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had a current insurance certificate which outlined that adequate insurance was available for 22 preschool children to attend the sessional service. The insurance cover commenced on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and expired 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026.