

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2016GY017

Name of Service: Mary's Day Care Service

Address of Service: Clonlahan, Kiltormer, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway

Eircode: H53 X6K6

Name of Registered Provider: Mary McGoldrick

Service type: Full Day

Date(s) of Inspection: 31/03/2026

No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	11
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	F Kelly.
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

This full day care service is in a rural area near the village of Kiltormer, Co Galway. The service operates a full day care service from 07:30 to 18:00. The service caters for children aged between 0 and 6 years. The service is registered for a maximum number of 21 pre-school children at any one time.

There are two playrooms, the Giraffe and the Minions room. There was a designated kitchen area where the main meals are prepared, cooked and stored on site. There was a sleep room with three cots available for younger children requiring sleep provision. Additionally, there were stackable beds for older children's that require sleep. There was an outdoor play area at the sides of the premises.

Staffing

There were seven adults employed to work in the service. The registered provider worked in the service on a daily basis.

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. 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 registered provider, 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.*

(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 was the designated person in charge on the day of inspection and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the registered provider was in charge and facilitated the inspection. Following a review of the service files and discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that there were seven staff employed in the service, which included the registered provider who worked in the service on a daily basis.

These files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) Of the required 14 written and appropriately validated references, 13 of these references were from a previous employer.

(b) Of the required 14 written and appropriately validated references, 1 of these references were from a reputable source other than the previous employer.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all the staff working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting for staff members every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as the adults working in the service had not lived for a period longer than six consecutive months outside the jurisdiction.

(4) All adults working directly with children have obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education ranging from level 5 to level 8 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.

(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) During the period of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.

(2) On the day of inspection, the following care rooms was in operation.

At 10.15

- Minion playroom- there were 2 adults working with 7 preschool children aged between 1 year and 2 years 6 months.
- Giraffe playroom- there was 1 adult caring for 8 preschool children aged between 3 and 5 years of age.

At 11:30 and 12:00, two other staff members arrived at the service to care for the children and provide cover for staff breaks.

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.

Compliance Information

Basic Needs:

- The older children were independent with their toileting needs. However, on occasion some children needed a gentle reminder from staff.
- Children washed their hands prior to lunchtime and after using the toilet. Hand washing took place on a number of occasions during the inspection.
- Mealtime was a social event; the children ate their snacks from small plates and the staff sat with the children speaking and interacting with the children.
- Children got the opportunity to move freely around the playrooms and they played in the outdoor play area each day.
- A child was assigned to be “the leader of the day” and this child had various responsibilities each day such as handing out drinks and helping the staff members.
- The staff used positive approaches when dealing with minor issues that arose during the sessions from sharing of toys to where they sat at the dinner table.
- Nappy changing was carried out regularly and when required, it was handled in a positive and sensitive manner. Staff members were heard speaking to the child during this time. One staff member was heard asking a child if they could change their nappy and also if it was OK to apply cream.

Outdoor play area:

- The outdoor play area had a selection of areas to explore and use such as slides, climbing frames, timber house and had a range of toys and equipment suitable for use outdoors.
- The older children on the day of inspection went on a walk down a lane adjacent to the premises. The children could explore the countryside, watching the farm animals in the nearby farm and pick wildflowers growing on the verges of the lane.

Indoor play area:

- The play area was divided into two separate playrooms offering different experiences for the children. The playrooms were bright and well laid out with a variety of distinct interest areas. Wall spaces were effectively used to display photographs of the children and their families, art works and posters relating to the current curricular plan.

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- All of the play and educational resources were accessible to children on open shelving at their height. The children were observed on various occasions taking toys and puzzles off the shelves playing with them and before playing with a different toy or puzzle they returned the first toy to where they got it without any prompts or direction from the staff members.