

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016TY005		
Name of Service:	St. Mary's Montessori School		
Address of Service:	Glennconner Road, Clonmel, Co Tipperary		
Eircode:	E91 WV63		
Name of Registered Provider:	Rosemary Moore		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	01/10/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	35	PM 22
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y		
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher		
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	N/A		

Description of service

This purpose built early years service is in Clonmel in county Tipperary. The service is registered to provide a part-time early years service for 44 children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. The service operated from 08:30 to 16:00. Children who attend on a sessional basis attend from 9:00 to 12:00 in the morning or 12:30 to 4:00 in the afternoon. The service offers the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE). There are two large care rooms, two cloak rooms, a hallway, toilets, a kitchen and a large outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The service currently has six adults employed in the service, including the registered provider.

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, registered provider 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*

(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 person in charge and there was a named deputy in the service that could deputise as required.
- (b) The registered provider and deputy were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived. The staff roster indicated that either the registered provider or the deputy was on duty at all times during the hours of operation.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to six adults, including the registered provider were the subject of inspection.
- (a) Of the 12 required references, 6 were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the 12 required references, 6 were from a source other than a previous employer with required records of validation on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were obtained and were on file for the six staff. The person in charge was aware of the re-vetting timeframes outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was available for two of the six adults as they lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) All four adults who worked directly with the early years children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (d) Police vetting was not available in respect of one staff member who had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months. This posed a possible safety risk to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A request for police vetting in the UK and USA has been submitted. An addendum has been added to the recruitment policy. The registered provider will forward the police vetting's when received.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of the application submitted.

Summary Comment

Evidence of applications for one of the staff for International Police Vetting was reviewed however, a copy of the completed International Police vetting has not been submitted for one of the staff to the inspector to date. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt. The noncompliance in relation to regulation 9(2)(d) remains outstanding.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at the time.

(2) The service maintained the minimum adult to child ratio required as per regulation. The ratio was as follows:

- Part time room, there were 3 adults caring for 19 children in the morning and there were 3 adults caring for 18 children in the afternoon.
- Sessional room, there were 3 adults caring for 16 children in the morning and there were 3 adults caring for 4 children in the afternoon.

(8)

(a) The service operated with at least two adults at all times. This was observed on the day of inspection and was evident through examination of the staff roster.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) The service has 51 early years children registered and a sample of 10 records were inspected. They were found to contain the required information as listed (a) through to (i).

(3)

(c) The records, as identified above, were made available to the inspectors for review.

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:

Basic needs:

- All snacks had been prepared by the parents and were observed to be healthy and nutritious. Children were observed to eat fruit, crackers, yogurt, sandwiches and waffles for snack time. The food was stored in the refrigerator. The service has alternative food available if required.
- Drinking water was available to the children throughout the morning in both care rooms.
- Children were observed accessing the toilet area under the supervision of the staff who were available to assist if needed.
- Children that wished to rest while they attended the service could avail of a soft seated area in each of the care rooms.
- Outdoor play was promoted and there was a large outdoor play area at the rear which the service used on the day of inspection.
- The children had ample space to move freely within their care room environment and actively engage in their chosen tasks.
- A staff member was observed assisting a child using a tissue, dispose of the tissue and washing their hands afterwards.

Supporting relationships:

- All children were observed to be actively encouraged by staff to participate in activities. Materials and resources were available which accommodated each child's individual needs such as puzzles, peg boards, bricks, toy kitchens and books. Children whose first language was not English were observed to be spoken to in a way to help understanding.

- The adults in the care room were noted to interact with the children in a caring manner throughout the inspection. For example, the adults sat at the table at the children’s level completing artwork, observing block building and engaging with the children.
- Staff engaged with the children in both group and individual activities by getting down to their level and maintaining eye contact while discussing topics with the children and helping them with their chosen tasks. Group activities such as yoga were observed on the day of inspection.
- The children were encouraged to tidy up after completing tasks, which promoted a sense of responsibility.
- The staff promoted positive behaviour among the children encouraging them to take turns.
- Parents or guardians were communicated with through text messages, by email or at pick up and drop off.

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:

- Entry to the service was via a keypad, with a doorbell in use for parents and visitors. Exit through the same door was controlled by a release handle, which was located at adult height. These safety mechanisms ensured that the risk of unauthorised access and the risk of a child exiting the premises unsupervised were minimalised.
- The toys were suitable and those assessed were in good condition.
- Cleaning products were inaccessible and out of reach to children in both care rooms.
- The outdoor play areas were secured by a combination of concrete walls with fencing and secured gates.
- Visibility markings were provided on glass panel doors at children’s height, reducing the risk of a child sustaining a collision injury.
- First aid boxes were kept out of reach to children and were accessible to staff when needed.
- Blind cords in the rooms inspected were secured and not accessible to the children.

Infection control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available to the children and staff. Water temperatures were recorded between 36.5°C and 38.5°C in the handbasins in the service. Hand washing by the children was observed to take place under the supervision of the adults prior to mealtimes and after using the toilet.
- Lidded pedal operated bins were used throughout the service.

- Coats and Bags were stored off the ground, on hooks.
- Perishable foods were stored in the refrigerator to prevent food spoilage.

Fire safety:

- The firefighting equipment was safely tethered to the walls.
- Emergency fire exit doors were unobstructed in the care rooms and corridors on the day of inspection.
- The fire assembly sign was visible in the outdoor play area.

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 registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service.

(3)

(b) A daily record of visitors to the premises was kept in a visitors book. The inspector was requested to signed in and out from the service.

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 28 November 2024 and will expire on 27 November 2025.