

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018CC512
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Name of Service:	Eager Einstein's
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Address of Service:	Preschool Montessori, C/O Whitegate National School, Whitegate, Midleton, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P25 AO62
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ailbhe Young
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	28/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440
Inspection undertaken by:	Ms. M. O'Reilly
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
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Description of service

Eager Einstein's Preschool Montessori is a registered early years sessional and part time service that caters for children aged between 2 years and 8 months to 6 years of age and for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme ECCE. The service is open each day Monday to Friday between 9am and 1.30pm

The service operates from one of the classrooms located in Whitegate National School which is a rural village in east Cork. The service has a designated secure outdoor area which is located within the grounds of the national school. The playroom is spacious and well equipped. There are two designated children's toilets and one designated adult toilet for the service.

Staffing

The service has three adults who work directly with the children in the room. This includes the registered provider/person in charge. The three staff hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. There was a student on work placement present in the service at time of inspection.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider/ person in charge, staff, student 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) There was a named designated person in charge and a person to deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge was present when the inspector arrived on the premises on the day of the inspection and remained for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

The Inspector concentrated on vetting the three staff associated with the service this included the registered provider and the two staff that work directly with the children. There was a third level student on work placement present in the service at time of inspection The last inspection was a Fit for Purpose inspection that took place on the 17th April 2023. Prior to this inspection the last inspection was carried out on the 25th May 2021.

(a) There were five references with a corresponding written validation on file from past employers in respect of the three adults and student.

(b) There were three references with the required written validation on file from a source other than a previous employer.

(c) A completed Garda vetting disclosure was received for each of the four adults.

(d) Not applicable as no adult had worked outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

The three adults that worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The student is currently on placement as part of her course in obtaining an Early Childhood Care and Education qualification.

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) The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at all times.

(2) On the day of the inspection: the following adult child ratios were observed:

There were 9 children aged between 2 years 8 months and 6 years with two adults and a student on work placement in attendance. The adult child ratio was correct at time of inspection.

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.*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (h) There was a role book that indicated when the child commenced and departed from the service each day.
- (i) There was a weekly staff roster in place that indicated when each staff member commenced and finished each day in the service.
- (k) A sample of six accident and incident forms were reviewed and were completed correctly with the dates of the incidents, the names and date of birth and the staff signature and the parents signature were complete.

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 service promoted healthy eating and the food and drink provided by the parents and guardians for the mid-morning snack was observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Independent use of the toilet was encouraged. The staff members were observed to supervise and assist where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying, and it was observed that the children were supported and encouraged prior to eating and post toileting.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The staff members were observed speaking with the children during snack time and using it as an opportunity to enhance social interaction with the children which promoted a relaxed atmosphere.
- Staff helped children to recognise and understand sharing and working together as a group as seen on day of inspection when children were involved in various activities. The children were observed waiting their turn, sharing the experience in relation to Montessori group activity. The activities fostered the children's confidence in language development through speech as observed through lots of 1:1 interaction with staff and individual time given to each child during the inspection.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The room had a range of play based materials and specialist Montessori equipment that offered stimulation, exploration, and imagination. They were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving which nurtured independence, facilitated choice, and encouraged curiosity, spontaneous play and movement.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

On day of inspection the food provided by the parents/guardians for the mid-morning snack were observed to be healthy and nutritious with age-appropriate size quantities of food for example freshly cut fruit such as strawberries, apples and sandwiches, and yogurts with water to drink.

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:

- Access to the main entrance door was adequately secured that prevented unauthorised access by an unauthorised person or exit by a child.
- The play materials, resources and equipment were all in good working condition.

Infection Control:

- Personal waste including used tissues and all cleaning waste was appropriately disposed of in foot operated pedal bins in the service.
- The children had access to sufficient toilets and wash hand basins.
- A supply of liquid soap, paper towels and an electric hand dryer and thermostatically controlled hot water and bins for disposal of paper towels were available in the service.
- Hand washing was observed prior to mid-morning snack and after going to the toilet.
- Perishable foods were refrigerated in the service refrigerator.

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) One staff member present at time of inspection held a certified, First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificate. The other two staff members held certified, Paediatric First Aid training certificates.

(2) (a) There was a sufficiently stocked first aid box available in the service, which was safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) At all times when the service was in operation, first aid supplies were accessible to the adults if in the event that a child may require treatment.

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) A record of monthly fire drills carried out was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place on the 10th October 2023

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced on the 13/10/23 and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced on the 26th October 2023

(4)
The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The services' insurance certificate was available on the premises and demonstrated that the service was adequately insured. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of children covered which was 22 for a part-time day-care service, the start date, which was 28 October 2023, the end date, which was 27 March 2024 and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding, contents, public liability and fire and theft cover.