

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2018LS504		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Maples at Stradbrook		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Stradbrook, Stradbally Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois		
<b>Eircode:</b>	R32TKX4		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Monica Delaney		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day Care		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	24/04/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	24	PM 13
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore Co. Offaly		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D .Molloy.		
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

This full day care service is a privately operated service in a residential area in the town of Portlaoise and has been operated by this registered provider since 2018. The service caters for children aged range of children from 0 to 6 years. A sessional service operates each day from 9am to 12 noon, Monday to Friday.

The service is operated from the ground floor of an apartment block. The premises is used for the sole purpose of operating an early years' service.

An enclosed outdoor secure playground is provided to the back of the service. The service consists of, two playrooms, the preschool room and the baby room, an office, a kitchen, a designated sleeping room, a store room, five sanitary accommodations and wash hand basins, and a staff toilet. An entrance hall reception area and greeting point which opens directly from the main front entrance.

Car parking and set down is to the front of the service.

### Staffing

The registered provider was not present, and the inspection was facilitated by the person in charge. There were five adults present in addition to the person in charge.

All staff hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 to 8 on the national framework of qualifications.

### 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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under:

Regulation 19 (1)(a) - Health, welfare, and development of child.

The scope of the inspection included the sessional play room, the sanitary accommodation the sleeping room, and the outdoor play facility.

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. 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.

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### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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, 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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.

(6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who-

- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and

*(6A) is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “*

*(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”*

## Compliance Information

(1) (a)

The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

The designated person in charge was present during the inspection.

(2) (a) (b) (c) (d)

Not applicable, the designated person in charge stated that no adults were employed since the last inspection on 10.11.2021.

(4)

Five employees were present and were working directly with children attending the service.

All staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 – Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework

(6) (a)(b)

Not applicable as no employee had signed a declaration on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 to the effect that they intended to retire from employment in a pre-school service.

(6A)

No employee was working directly with children under the Access and Inclusion Model

### 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)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection. The registered provider ensured that there were sufficient adults working directly with the children. Records showed that the adult child ratio was upheld in the service.
- (2)  
The registered provider had ensured that the adult child ratio was correctly maintained throughout the inspection and records showed that sufficient adults were rostered to work in the service each day.
- (8)  
(a) The registered provider ensured, and staff rosters reflected that two adults were on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service .

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 17 – Information for parents

*A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had devised a parent's hand booklet and was in a position to provide all information to parents or guardians proposing to enrol their children in the service and to other persons as required.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

*A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker, or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had ensured that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations was available on the premises and could be viewed by

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker, or contractor, and
- (c) an authorised person.

### 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:**

Healthy eating was promoted, healthy food and snacks were supplied by parents for the morning snack for children availing of sessional care in and were in keeping with the services healthy eating policy. Should a child forget their lunch the registered provider was in a position to provide nutritious snack. It was noted that a specialist dairy free dietary need was accommodated by the service. Breakfast was available on arrival for children in the service.

A five-week menu was on display and meals were cooked on site each day. The main meal of the day was chicken curry and rice, and it was noted that children were offered additional servings if they wished. Scrambled egg and toast were on the menu for the evening meal.

Children were supported to become independent and self-caring and were encouraged to take care of their own belongings including hanging up their coats and opening bags and lunch boxes and tidying up their toys.

Children could move freely throughout the rooms, and some children chose to relax in the rest areas.

It was noted that children availed of outdoor play in the outdoor play facility and had opportunity to take fresh air on a daily basis.

For children who were toilet trained it was observed that when a child required special attention, help was available. Nappy changing was carried out as was needed on an individual basis.

##### **SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:**

Staff were kind and caring towards the children and it was observed that they were familiar with the children .

An inclusive ethos was fostered as staff were aware of children's individual backgrounds and engaged in conversations about home activities and family.

Children received encouragement and positive reinforcement and were encouraged to allow other children to join in games and play together.

Team meetings were held regularly, and staff were actively encouraged to bring fresh ideas to the planning sessions.

**PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:**

The premises was clean and well maintained and decorated in a child friendly manner.

The rooms were well stocked, and the ECCE room had areas of special interest including a home corner, a library area, art and crafts and a construction area. Children were engaged in pretend play involving the dolls and buggies while others were using the blocks and building equipment on the floor and on the child sized tale tops.

The toys and equipment were developmentally focused and were properly maintained.

Cosy rest areas were available for children to relaxed and rest in the play rooms. Artwork completed by children was used to decorate the wall.

The outdoor play facility which was located behind the service had all weather surfacing, and a selection of toys and equipment including ride ons, push along and pull along climbing and balance equipment and a sheltered area beneath the new climbing platform.

**Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service**

**Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play**

*(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages, and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*

*(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*

**Compliance Information**

(1)  
(a) The setting provided facilities for the children to play indoors in the play rooms and outdoors in the securely enclosed outdoor play facility. The play area was accessed directly from the back of the setting.

(b) A rest area was provided for children’s use in both playrooms.

A designated sleeping room which was well ventilated and restfully decorated was provided and was available for children’s use throughout the opening hours of the service.

## 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 service was secured for the safety of the children within. The main front door provided access to the setting was operated on a controlled entry system from inside and the back gate leading from the play area was secured from within. A fence was in place around the perimeters of the outdoor play area.

All cleaning, sanitising products and equipment were stored in safe place out of reach of children.

A professional pest control system was employed to safeguard against pests and records were retained

##### Infection Control:

Clear guidance on handwashing was outlined for children and staff in the service. Children were observed washing their hands regularly and adults were familiar with the infection control policy. Cleaning was carried out on an ongoing basis and staff were aware of their role in maintaining high standards of hygiene. On enrolment, parents were asked for their child's immunisation record, this information is recorded on the child's record card and updated as required.

##### Administration of Medication:

Staff were familiar with policy and practice in relation to the safe administration of medication.

A site-specific medications policy designed to assist staff and to help reduce potential adverse outcomes for children receiving medication while attending a pre-school was available in the service.

No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

##### Safe Sleep:

The staff were aware of safe sleep practices. Sleeping checks and physical monitoring were carried out on children and records were retained. Cots were maintained in proper state of repair and checked regularly. Bibs and restrictive clothing were removed before children who were put down to sleep. The sleeping room was well ventilated and had an air purifying system in place.

##### Fire Safety:

The fire exits were unobstructed.

The fire exit was fitted with exit display signage.

A notice of the fire assembly point was on display to show fire assembly point

**Outing:**

The registered provider stated that no outings were conducted from the service

**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)  
Staff had up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and were available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)  
(a) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible location on the premises.

(b) The first aid box was readily available in the service at all times

### 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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
  - (b) an employee, and
  - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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 written record was available of the fire drills carried out in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as being carried out on 20 April 2023 .

(b)

The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The fire alarms were serviced on 18 January 2023, the firefighting equipment was checked on 18 January 2023

(2)(a)(b)(c)

The record was available open to parents, guardians, employees, and the authorised person.

(3)

The person in charge stated that records were retained for a period of 5 years after creation.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the premises.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

A copy of up-to-date insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. was available in the service. The insurance certificate was valid until March 2024.

## Part IX - Inspection and Enforcement

### Regulation 33 – Furnishing of information to agency

*A registered provider shall furnish the Agency with such information as the Agency may reasonably require for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations and the information shall be in such form, if any, as may be specified by the Agency.*

#### Compliance Information

The person in charge facilitated the inspection and provided access to all information as was required for completion of the inspection.