

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2020MO002
<b>Name of Service:</b>	An Scoil Beag Montessori
<b>Address of Service:</b>	St Colmcilles NS, The Quay, Westport, Co. Mayo
<b>Eircode:</b>	F28 W267
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Mairead Hastings
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	2 February 2023
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM 17 PM -
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Farrell
<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

An Scoil Beag Montessori is located on the grounds of St Colmcille's National School in Westport, Co. Mayo. The service is registered to provide sessional services to children aged from two years and eight months to six years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 8:30 and 11:30am. The premises is a single storey, demountable building with one playroom and sanitary facilities. Children have access to enclosed outdoor play areas to the rear and front of the building.

### Staffing

There are three staff working in the service including the registered provider who works directly with the children.

### 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 and safety*. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 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*

*(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 designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence in the service.
  - (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premise throughout the period of inspection. A sample of attendance records viewed showed that the designated person in charge or the deputy were present in the service whenever it was in operation.
- (2)
- It was confirmed by the person in charge that there were three staff members working in the service. The vetting documentation for one staff member had been reviewed during previous inspection.
- The following documents were available on file or not required for the two new staff members:
- (a) There were two written validated references from past employers, including the most recent employer for one staff. One staff member had one written validated reference from a previous employer on file.
  - (b) One written validated reference from sources other than past employer was available for one staff.
  - (c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána for the two new staff.
  - (d) International police vetting documentation was not required for two staff whose vetting documentation showed that they had not lived outside of the State for more than six months as adults.
- (4) Evidence was available in the service to show that the three staff held the required awards at (QQI) level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education or higher.

## 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) On the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children with 2 staff working directly with 17 children.

(3) The registered provider ensured that the relevant minimum adult to child ratios were followed in the service. 2 adults worked directly with the 17 children present in accordance with the minimum ratio of 1 adult to each 11 children aged over 2 years and six months for a sessional service. A review of a sample of attendance records found that the registered provider ensured that there was always an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

## 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;*

*(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) (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) & (i)

A sample of 11 records was assessed and were found to be compliant and contained the required details as laid out under the regulation.

(3) (c)

The required information detailed in paragraph (1) was made available by the service for inspection by the inspector on request.

### 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:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters 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.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured written records were kept of the following information in the service:
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the staff members.
  - (b) Information on the type of service type and ages of children that the service is registered to provide services to.
  - (c) The adult: child ratios provided in the service.
  - (d) The service's type of care or programme.
  - (e) The facilities available in the service.

- (f) The service’s hours of opening and fees.
  - (g) The service’s policies, procedures and statements as required under Regulation 10 that were kept in a service policy folder.
  - (h) Details of the daily attendance of each pre-school child recorded daily in an attendance book.
  - (i) Details of the staff daily working hours recorded in an attendance book.
  - (j) Forms to record any medication administered to a child while attending the service to include signed parental consent. Medication administration was also to be recorded on an electronic application system to inform parents.
  - (k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving children attending the service were recorded on electronic application systems and signed by the parents.
- (3)
- The records referred to in paragraph (1) were immediately made available in the service by the staff to the inspector on request.

### 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 entrance door to the service was secured during the inspection preventing children from leaving the service unauthorised. The gate to the outdoor area were secured when the children were playing outdoors. A staff member carried out a risk assessment of the outdoor space before the children played outdoors.
- Accurate daily records of attendance were observed to be kept for all the children and adults in the service. Details of the inspector’s attendance in the service were recorded in a visitor book.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children on high shelving.
- The toys and play equipment were in good condition and suitable for the age and developmental stages of the children using it.
- Window blinds were secured with restrictor devices out of reach of the children.

##### Infection Control:

- Facilities for handwashing were provided with warm water recorded below 43°C, liquid soap and paper towels available at the wash hand basins. Hand sanitiser was available to the staff in dispensers in the service. The

staff prompted the children to clean their hands at appropriate times such as after using the toilet and before eating.

- Foot pedal operated waste bins were provided for the disposal of waste in the service and observed to be used appropriately by the children and staff when disposing of items such as paper towel following handwashing.
- Boxes of tissue were stored at a low level so children could access them to use to clean their noses.
- Cleaning schedules were in place in the service. The staff cleaned down surfaces such as tables on a regular basis. Records of cleaning were recorded on an electronic application system.
- A refrigerator was provided in the playroom to store children's snack foods below the required temperature of 5°C.

#### **Administration of Medication:**

- The person in charge told the inspector that there were no children requiring medication during service hours at present. There was a book to record the details of any medication given to children whilst attending the service and the staff were aware of the correct procedures for the storage and administration of medicines.

#### **Fire Safety:**

- Fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis by the staff. The emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed during the inspection.

## 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-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The staff members checked the children in and out to the service. Accurate attendance times for the children were found to be recorded by the staff member on the day of inspection.

(3) (a)

The inspector's entry to the service was approved by the person in charge.

(b)

A written record was kept of visitors to the service which the inspector completed during the inspection.

## 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 had undertaken First Aid Response (FAR) training courses with the certificate of completion available in the service.

- (2)
- (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was safely stored in easily accessible locations in the playroom.
  - (b) The first aid box was easily accessible to the staff in the playroom if children required first aid 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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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) Fire drills were conducted monthly in the service with written records of the fire drills kept by the staff. Records showed that the most recent fire drill was recorded as undertaken on the 20 January 2023.
  - (b) The registered provider kept records of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system. The records showed that the firefighting equipment was last maintained on the 29 August 2022 and the 27 September 2022.
- (2)
- (c) The records were open to inspection by the inspector in the service on the day.
- (4)
- Notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed on the wall of the playroom near the main entrance door.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance in place until the 27 March 2023 for a maximum of 22 children registered in this sessional service.