

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2020SO001
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Mini Einsteins Montessori and After School
-------------------------	--

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Preschool, Cregg House, Cregg, Rosses Point, Co. Sligo
----------------------------	--

<b>Eircode:</b>	Non applicable
-----------------	----------------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Joanne Mooney
-------------------------------------	---------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
----------------------	----------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	09/10/2023
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	36	PM	36
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L Costello
<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
---------------------------------	----------------

## Description of service

Mini Einsteins is located within Cregg House near Rosses Point in Co Sligo. It caters for a maximum of 44 preschool children and operates on a full day care basis from 8am to 6pm.

## Staffing

On the day of inspection there was six adults employed in the service to work directly with children. The registered provider worked 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 announced and focused on the area of governance and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 Management and Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels and Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and development of the Child.

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, 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.*

*(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) (b).

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(c).

There was a clear governance structure in the service with evidence of room leaders in the care rooms.

2 (a) (b).

The records of all six adults working in the service were reviewed.

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer were available in respect of all adults employed in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for the six adults employed in the service.

(4). Six adults employed in the service had attained major awards in Early Childhood care and Education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration, and youth affairs (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirements.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2) (d).

International police vetting was not available for one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months as an adult.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (d).

International police vetting submitted for the one adult who had lived outside the state.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence submitted

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the actions submitted by the registered provider through the CAPA process and the non-compliances found on inspection have been addressed.

## 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 registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times. On the inspectors' announced arrival to the service there were five staff providing direct care to 36 children.
- A sample review of attendance records showed that adequate numbers of adults were provided to work with children whenever the service was in operation.

(2).

The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the announced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.

(8) (a).

A review of rosters evidenced there was always at least two staff members on the premises.

## 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*

*(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

*(2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

There are three care rooms in operation in the service. Two care rooms for preschool children and one for school aged children. The service operates from a building that has recently be redeveloped from a care facility to a preschool. The care rooms are large and spacious and decorated with child friendly images end educational posters throughout. Materials and resources across all rooms had a range of play based materials and specialist Montessori equipment that offered stimulation, exploration, and imagination. These were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving which encouraged independence and facilitated choice. The children’s artwork decorated the walls in all care rooms, evidence of the curriculum of learning was displayed through the children’s art work including autumn, hibernation and Halloween.

The morning routine in the service facilitated free play for the children, who were able to choose what they would like to do. Children played both in groups and individually. Staff members were observed to demonstrate warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with children. For example, the staff members in room one preschool were observed to support a new child with no English language. The child wished to complete a puzzle, the staff member broke down the task and prompted with praise and encouragement, resulting in the child completing the puzzle. The staff members were observed to have various words of the child’s first language and used a translating application when having any difficulty with communication. The service promoted inclusivity, one child who was nonverbal was included in all activities as the staff members supporting were trained in lamh and all activities in the room were communicated both in word and lamh. All the children in the care room were learning their songs and numbers in lamh.

Children’s language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection. The book collection in the preschool was large and diverse, with themes including diversity, inclusion, family and relaxation, creating opportunities for discussion and learning. The outdoor play area provided an alternative change of environment for the children. This area was a large open area with a variety of toys and resources. Opportunities were provided for challenge and safe risk for example, pre-school children were observed engaging in energetic play on the all-weather synthetic grass surface which contained purposely designed climbing frames, boats, Swings, and slides. Gross motor skill development was encouraged with football pitch, bikes, and trikes. Opportunities for role play with an outdoor playhouse and shop were available. A large sand pit area was available to children, that was covered when not in use. A mud kitchen and muddy area was available for messy play. Children were provided with a wellies and outdoor jackets to ensure outdoor play was accessible in all weathers.

Healthy eating was promoted in the service and all children brought their morning snack from home. These snacks from home included sandwiches, fruit and cheese, yoghurts and crackers. All perishable items were stored in the service fridge on arrival. For those children remaining in the service for part time and full day care service a menu plan was available which provided meals and snacks in line with the service healthy eating policy.

The third care room was used in the mornings for yoga and relaxation sessions, this extra room provided an opportunity for those children who required some relaxation time away from their main care room and gave children an alternative environment to explore.

The curriculum and learning goals for both care rooms were planned for the short and long term. The ongoing observations and assessments were documented, which helped create a complete, well-rounded picture of each individual child. These observations informed the planning for the curriculum. The curriculum was observed to be flexible in accordance with the emerging interests of the children, their needs, and preferences. This was evidenced in room 2, where all children were learning lamh signs.

The staff members worked well as a team; good communication was observed between staff members. Staff members were aware of the curriculum and the learning goals focus for the week. Staff were observed to have a good relationship with families. Communication at handovers were clear and effective. The registered provider informed the inspector that families receive a news update weekly with activities completed and goals achieved for the week, this was completed through an application.

Children's independence was promoted as much as possible. Toileting was completed independently with staff members supervising from a distance ensuring support could be given if required. At mealtimes children had various jobs to complete, ie getting lunch boxes, handing out drinks and cleaning up after.

Children were observed to be treated with respect and on the day of inspection all care practices were observed to be in line with the services policies promoting children to reach their full potential.