

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023CE003		
Name of Service:	Little Learners Kilshanny		
Address of Service:	Smithstown, Kilshanny, Co. Clare		
Eircode:	V95 TH77		
Name of Registered Provider:	Majella Foy		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	20/02/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E		
Inspection undertaken by:	A.McCarthy		
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

Not applicable

Description of service

Little Learners Kilshanny was registered with Tusla in 2023, as a sessional pre-school service, in Smithstown, Kilshanny, North Clare. The service operates Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 12:30. The childcare facility is located in one care room within a bungalow structure and the children have their meals in a dining room. The outdoor play area is located to the side and rear of the building.

Staffing

On the 20 February 2024 the registered provider worked directly with the children in attendance. A second adult familiar with the service was available within close proximity in the event of an emergency.

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 initial inspection was announced and focused on the areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child. 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. 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 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)

The registered provider was the person in charge and a person was available within close proximity in the event of an emergency.

(b)

The registered provider was available throughout the inspection.

(2)

Two files were available and reviewed by the inspector. The findings included the following:

(a)

Two validated references from past employers were available.

- (b)
Two validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c)
Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the registered provider and the emergency contact person.
- (d)
International police vetting was not required, as the registered provider and the emergency contact person had not lived in another state for a period longer than six months.
- (4)
The registered provider held an Early Childhood Care and Education qualification at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
 - (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
On the 20 February 2024 an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the service.

- (3)
The registered provider ensured that the adult to child ratio was maintained at all times. The registered provider worked directly with the five children in attendance.
- (8)
(c) The registered provider operates the service single-handedly. A second person familiar with the operation of the service, is available within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

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

- (1)(a)
The registered provider ensured that children's learning, development and wellbeing was facilitated through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials and equipment with regard their age level and development.

Basic Needs of Children:

The registered provider treated the children with positive regard by interacting in a kind and caring manner, by speaking in soft gentle tones of voice, at the children's height, by listening attentively and by using positive behavioural strategies during interactions. The children were continuously praised and encouraged to take turns, to be independent when caring for their belongings, during toileting and at mealtime.

Physical and Material Environment:

The indoor and outdoor environments provided enriching and challenging spaces for the children to explore, play and learn. The children had access to a care room and a dining room within the service. Child sized chairs, tables and shelving were available and accessible to the children. The care room was appropriately resourced with a large range of play and learning equipment and materials. Defined areas of interest included a pretend hairdresser, a home corner, a construction area and an art area. The shelving units stored containers with a large range of games, jigsaws and shape sorters. On arrival the children were engaged in a range of play based activities such as cooking in the pretend kitchen, serving food to friends, building blocks, colouring, pasting and cutting exercises. A group discussion followed thereafter in relation to schools that the children would be attending next year and family. The children transitioned to mealtime in the dining room where they sat and conversed amicably together and ate their nutritious lunches. After mealtime the children engaged in open ended play. The service walls displayed the children's individual artwork, and a section of the care room displayed the children's gratitude area called "Our Thankful Thoughts".

The enclosed outdoor area which is located to the side and rear of the building provided a large area for the children to freely move. The play area had a large range of toys and equipment. These included a pretend playhouse, rocking toys, a climbing frame, balance games, sand table and supporting equipment, cars, tractors, trailers, a painting easel, a mud kitchen and outdoor seating.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

The children were consulted with regards to the programme of care and learning during the inspection. Any transitions in the programme were notified in advance and completed with ease. The adult demonstrated a good knowledge of the children's individual personal interests, preferences, and capabilities. Children were supported in individual and group-based activities. An informal communication approach is adopted between parents and the registered provider. Parents were greeted in a kind manner as their children were dropped off at the service.