

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2023LK002
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Mountcollins Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Saint Marys National School, Mountcollins, Co. Limerick
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V94 K036
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Eilish McEnergy
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/03/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	6	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspection Services, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M Riordan
<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

Mountcollins Preschool is a sessional preschool service based at St. Mary's National School in Mountcollins, Co. Limerick. It caters to a maximum of 11 children aged 2 to 6 years and operates Monday to Friday from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. The preschool operates from a dedicated classroom, has designated sanitary facilities, and a secure outdoor play area for the children.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the owner/manager of the service. Relief staff are available if required. A second person is available to assist close to the service if needed in an emergency. All adults who have access to the children have the required childcare 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 announced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety. 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 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 designated person in charge of operating the service and was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available to assist in an emergency if needed.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present, and the staff roster indicated that this person was available on the premises each day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references from past employers were available for the registered provider and for her assistant in an emergency.

(b) All references were from past employers and references from other reputable sources were not required.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all adults in the service who would have access to the children. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required for any adult in the service.

(4) The registered provider held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

## 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) The registered provider ensured an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at the service.

(3) On the day of the first inspection there were 6 preschool children present with 1 adult. The adult child ratio was correct.

(8)(b) A second person, familiar with the service and with the children, was close by and could be called to attend the preschool in the event of an emergency.

## 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;*

*(c) the date on which the child ceased to attend 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1) All children's registration forms were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of the children.

(a) The name and date of birth of the child.

- (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) Provision was made to record the date on which the child ceased to attend the service.
- (d) The name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian 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, received by the child.

### 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:**

A healthy eating policy was in place, with parents encouraged to provide nutritious snacks. A refrigerator was available for safe food storage. Children's drinks were easily accessible throughout the session. Unrestricted toilet access, with hot water, liquid soap, and paper towels for handwashing were available. Nappy changing facilities and a wash hand basin in the preschool room were also accessible. Protective clothing was available for messy play and outdoor activities, including cycling helmets. Tissues and wipes were easily reachable, and waste was properly disposed of in foot pedal-operated, lidded bins. A sheltered outdoor area allowed children to play outside in all weather conditions.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The preschool operated from a large, well-designed classroom with different activity areas such as construction area, home corner/imagination play area, reading/rest area with a 2-seater couch and low-level tables and chairs for dining and tabletop activities. There were educational posters on numeracy and literacy displayed on the walls at a suitable height for children to engage with. Equipment was rotated based on children's interests and development and the planned theme for the month. Children's activity photos were exhibited on the walls. The outdoor play area was enclosed, safe, and well-resourced, featuring a low-level slide for younger children, a covered outdoor play area with sand and water trays.

This environment indoors and outside ensured a safe, engaging, and developmentally supportive environment for the children.

### 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:

Adequate measures were taken at the service to ensure a safe, secure, and well-monitored environment for all preschool children.

**Controlled Access:** The preschool door was securely locked, with entry managed by a staff member to prevent children from leaving unsupervised.

**Emergency Exits:** All fire doors were unobstructed and clear.

**Safe Play Equipment:** Toys and play materials were age-appropriate, well-maintained, and free from hazards like pinch points, crush points, or sharp edges.

**Proper Waste Disposal:** Waste was kept inaccessible indoors and outdoors, with foot pedal-operated, lidded bins ensuring safe disposal.

Chemical Safety: Cleaning agents were stored out of children's reach on a high shelf.

Outdoor Safety: Exit gates were secured to prevent children from accessing unsafe areas, and supervision was continuous during outdoor play.

**Infection Control:**

A high standard of operational hygiene was observed throughout the service. Tabletops were cleaned and disinfected prior to snack time. Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were available at all sinks to ensure hygienic hand washing by staff and children.

**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) The registered provider and a second staff member had an up-to-date certificate in first aid responder training. Both certificates were in date until March 2025.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was stored within easy reach of the staff in the preschool room.

(b) The first aid box was available for use 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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

#### Compliance Information

- (1)(a) Fire drills take place on a monthly basis. The most recent fire drill took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2025.
- (b) All fire extinguishers and smoke alarms were serviced on an annual basis. The most recent check of the smoke alarm was carried out on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2024.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had a current insurance certificate which outlined that adequate insurance was available for 11 preschool children to attend the service. The insurance cover commenced on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 and expired on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.