

# 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 McEnery
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	13/10/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	4	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 new sessional preschool service located on the grounds of Mountcollins Primary School outside the village of Mountcollins in Co. Limerick. The service can accommodate a maximum of 22 preschool children between the ages of 2.8 years to 6 years. The facility operates from Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 12.30pm for 38 weeks of the year. The children have access to their own pre-school room, designated sanitary facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

### 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/ premises and facilities. 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, her relief staff and 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.

(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 4 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 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:**

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service and parents were advised to provide children with healthy snacks each day for break time. A refrigerator was available in the room to ensure the safe storage of all perishable foods in the lunches. Childrens drinks were stored out of their bags and were accessible to the children at all times during the session.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets located adjacent to the preschool room. Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were available for handwashing. A nappy changing facility was available if required. A wash hand basin in the preschool room was used by all children for washing of hands if needed. A change of clothes was accessible for all children if necessary. Protective clothing was available for the children when engaging in messy play activities.

Tissues and wipes were always reachable to the children and all waste was disposed of properly in foot pedal operated, lidded bins in the preschool room.

Outdoors the children had access to a well-resourced school yard. A designated play area was also accessible if the school children were using the playground. Children had the opportunity to play outside every day at the service.

##### **PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:**

The service operates from a large well-designed classroom. The room had a range of developmentally appropriate well-resourced interest areas for the children e.g., a construction area, home corner/ imagination play area, a rest and relaxation reading area. A comfortable 2-seater couch provided a rest area for the children to relax if tired. A tepee with soft cushions was accessible in the room and provided a quiet, cosy hiding place for children to play in. Low level tables and chairs were used for dining at break time and for many tabletop activities at all other times. Education posters with colourful charts displaying information on numeracy and literacy were displayed on the walls.

The room layout was changed and equipment rotated depending on the children's interests and stage of development. All the play materials and equipment were organised to be visible and easily accessible to the children on open low-level shelving. Pictures of the children engaging in lots of different activities both indoors and outside were displayed on the wall, for the months of September and October.

The outdoor play area provided space for more active play opportunities. The school playground was safe and secure with walls and secure gates surrounding the playground. Children had access to their own area of the playground with a low-level slide, blackboards and ride on equipment accessible. A covered area was also accessible outside. Here the children had sand and water play trays. The large school playground provided space for lots of ball games and activities.