

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024CN001		
Name of Service:	Mini Me's Creche Butlersbridge LTD		
Address of Service:	Drumahurk, Butlersbridge, Cavan, Co. Cavan		
Eircode:	H12 VK71		
Name of Registered Provider:	Eugenia Sheridan		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	06/12/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM 5
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84		
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Mc Kenna		
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

Mini Me's Creche Butlersbridge Ltd is a private operated service, providing full day, part-time and sessional care to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service operates from a two-storey building on the outskirts of Butlersbridge Co Cavan. Operating hours are 8.30am to 6pm each weekday, catering for a maximum of 54 children. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. A school aged service is also provided. The service consists of 2 pre-school care rooms and 2 school aged rooms, kitchen, staff room, sanitary facilities and a storeroom. Outdoor play spaces are located to the front and side of the building. Car parking is available to the front of the premises.

Staffing

There are eight staff employed to work in the service, to include the registered provider. Seven staff work directly with the children, and one adult is employed as a chef.

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. 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, deputy 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,

(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 service has a designated person in charge, and a named person to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation the designated person in charge or a named person in charge are on the premises.

(2) The staff files for eight adults were reviewed.

(a) (b) Two written and validated references were on file for the eight adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all eight adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all employed staff.

(d) A review of the employment history for the eight adults, demonstrated that one adult had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. The required police vetting for the one adult was available on file.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the seven adults employed to work with children, held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications. A qualification for one adult was not required.

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult to child ratios were observed:

Three adults cared for ten children aged 3 years to 3 years 9 months in the Tornado Room.

Three adults cared for ten children aged 3 years 3 months to 4 years 7 months in the Adventurers Room.

In the afternoon one adult cared for 5 children in the Tornado's Room, where the children from both preschool rooms join each day from 12.15pm.

In addition to the above the registered provider was on site throughout the inspection and was available to assist in the care rooms if required.

(8) A review of the staff roster demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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.

Compliance Information

The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that the children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

Basic Needs

The service had an onsite chef who prepares snacks and a hot meal daily for the children. A 3-week rolling menu is in place. The children attending the preschool rooms take in their own drinks and morning snack which is stored in the designated fridges in each care room until snack time. The children had access to their drinks throughout their day. Snack and meal times were observed to be relaxed, with children given adequate time to enjoy their food, while having opportunities to talk to their friends and the adults.

The children were observed to use the toilet independently by themselves. The toilets in the Tornados room were located within the care room, and the toilets for the Adventurers room were located off the hallway outside the care room. When the children in the Adventures room used the toilet, the adults were observed to remain close by this area providing support if needed. A nappy changing area was available, in a designated area off the hallway on the ground floor. The children's nappies were changed in line with each child's care routine.

Care was given to children's appearance with the use of aprons at messy play times, children's clothes changed when soiled, and a self-care nose cleaning box which included a mirror, and tissues which encouraged children's self-care practises. The children were observed to wash their hands before snack and meal times, and after using the toilet.

Stackable beds, with suitable bed linen was available for children that may require a sleep during their day. Areas of rest were provided in each care room which had soft seating and cushions. The adults advised the inspector that if a child needs a sleep or rest, they will set a stackable bed up in a quiet corner of the care room.

No disagreements between children were observed. The adults were observed to consistently interact with the children on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Positive behaviour practises were encouraged, with adults

observed to use positive words of encouragement such as “well done”, “gentle hands” and “helping hands” during interactions with the children, which encouraged children to play well with their peers.

Supporting Relationships

A Key worker system is in place, with emerging interest displays that included comments and interests from each child, which was incorporated into the curriculum planning and to the areas of interest within the care rooms.

There was minimal staff changeover observed, and the children appeared familiar with all adults present on the day of inspection. The adults demonstrated sensitivity and warmth in their interactions and care towards the children. Parental wishes were respected, and children’s preferences were valued and observed in practice. The adults used soft tones in communicating with the children and each other. In each of the care rooms during the inspection the children were observed to seek out adults for support where required, such as adding toys to a certain area, helping set up activities, or to clean up when they were finished playing in an area.

Communication with families is through a digital application, which includes the children’s meals eaten, nappy changes, activities carried out, photos of children in their play environments and observations. Conversations in person also occur upon arrival and collection time. Families were observed to be given adequate time upon arrival and collection times to speak to staff about their children. The adults were observed to work well as a team, with transitions throughout the day observed to be organised, relaxed and smooth.

Physical And Material Environment

The indoor environments within both preschool rooms were warm and inviting. Christmas decorations along with an emerging interest branch, a daily routine, soft coloured lights, birthday charts and family photos were displayed creating a colourful and welcoming background in the care rooms. The care rooms were spacious, with designated interest areas available. The play materials and equipment were placed on low level shelving, easily accessible to the children in attendance. The interest areas provided were well resourced with adequate quantities of materials available for the children. Areas of interest included home corners, shop play, office play, small world toys, dress up and soft areas to relax and read a book or rest. A creative area was provided to include paper, paint, colouring, cutting and sticking activities. Floor play areas allowed for play opportunities such as building blocks, push-a-long trucks, small ball games and playing with dolls. Table top toys to include jigsaws, stacking toys, a light box with coloured building pieces and connecting toys were also available and observed to be used by the children. Themed curriculum activities were in place in both rooms that included playdough with glitter and an ice cube painting activity in the Tornados room, with Santa hat making, and sensory exploration trays with in the Adventurers room. Many opportunities to engage in sensory play was promoted by the adults and enjoyed by the children throughout their daily routine.

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Two outdoor areas were provided, one of which is currently out of use due to construction work. The play space that was available for children's use included an area of concrete, soft floor mats, artificial grass and stone gravel surfacing. The outdoor area was surrounded by walls and fencing with a secured gate. A play house, ride on toys, push-a-long toys, a mud kitchen, benches, climbing structures and exploration trays were provided for children's use in the outdoor area.