

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC273
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Name of Service:	Momma's View Childminding Service
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Address of Service:	9 Cross Lane, Youghal, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P36 XC79
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Name of Registered Provider:	Agnes Hennessy
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Service type:	Childminder
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Date of Inspection:	28/08/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurranabraher Cork.
Inspection undertaken by:	D Prendergast
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
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Description of service

Momma's View Childminding Service has been in operation since 2013. It is registered to cater for a maximum of 5 children, aged 0 to 6 years, at any one time. Registered daily hours of operation are from 8.00am to 5.00pm, each Monday to Friday, however, the service currently operates from 8.00am to 4.00pm.

The service is located in Youghal, Co. Cork and is provided from a two-storey terraced house. The ground floor living room functions as a playroom for the children and there is an adjacent sanitary facility. On the first floor, there are two designated sleep rooms and the children have the use of an outdoor play space at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The childminder and a volunteer/emergency person are attached to the service. The childminder holds a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of the child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

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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, voluntary assistant 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.*

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(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 in charge of operating the childminding service.
- (b) Throughout the duration of the inspection, the registered provider was present.
- (2) The files of the two adults who worked at the service were reviewed. The following information was obtained:
- (a) All four of the required written and validated references were from past employers.
- (b) None of the written references had been obtained from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting was on file for both adults.
- (d) Review of staff employment history records demonstrated that police vetting from other jurisdictions was not required for either of the adults.
- (4) The registered provider had achieved a level 6 award in Early Childhood Care and Education and a copy of the relevant certificate was available.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency*

Compliance Information

- (8)
- (b) The named second adult was at the service when the unannounced inspection commenced and assisted the registered provider in a voluntary capacity. This adult was available to attend the service and provide assistance, in the event of an emergency.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

- (a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,
- (b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and
- (c) there is a working telephone on the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) There were five pre-school aged children in the care of the childminder when the inspection commenced. The ages of the children present ranged from 8 months to 2 years and 8 months.
 - (c) A working mobile phone was available for use.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) Upon the inspector's arrival, there were 3 children aged under 15 months in the care of the childminder. One of these children was collected shortly after the inspector arrived. However, there should be no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in the care of a childminder at any given time, unless such children are siblings of each other. It was confirmed that the children were not siblings.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider responded to state that a parent had been late collecting their child and that the importance of time slots was discussed with the parent. Each parent was subsequently given a letter in relation to time keeping.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the letter was forwarded as evidence.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance identified under this regulation has been adequately addressed.

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Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1)

(h) Daily attendance records, which included each child's arrival and departure times, were maintained and presented for review.

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)

Basic needs:

- Mealtimes were organised so that there were no gaps longer than three hours in between. The childminder also confirmed that snacks would be offered to children, if they expressed hunger outside of the designated mealtimes.
- A signposted *water station* was visible to the children in the main play area and was used to store their reusable water bottles.
- Nappy changing was required for most of the children in attendance and the childminder advised that this was carried out as the need arose.
- A cushioned window seat and sofas, with an adjacent supply of books, were provided to meet the children's need for rest and relaxation.

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- Within the indoor play environment, there was sufficient space for the children to freely explore their chosen activities and interest items. The older children were also observed to move freely between the indoor and outdoor play spaces, during the morning.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The childminder consistently communicated with the children in advance of initiating new activities and care practices, such as nappy changing and sleep routines, which supported the children to prepare for transitions. As a result, the children appeared calm, confident and actively engaged in their environment.
- The children's interests and efforts were acknowledged. For example, one of the adults sat with and chatted warmly to the younger children, as they explored play materials and later in the morning, the older children were encouraged and supported with jigsaw making.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) There were two separate upstairs rooms designated for sleep. Each room was furnished with one standard cot and a safety mattress. Two stackable beds and linen were available to accommodate the rest needs of children aged over two years, as required.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- Appropriate furniture was available for the children to use during table top activities and mealtimes; low-level tables, child sized chairs and high chairs were provided.
- A broad range of interest items were within easy reach for the children, in the main play area. There was a selection of hand-held vehicles and sound making toys accessible on a floor mat, along with a large furnished dolls house, a well-equipped play kitchen, dolls and buggies, at floor level. Adjacent shelving was used to display additional play resources, such as plastic bricks, building blocks, animal figures, barn houses and dolls' accessories. Books, jigsaws, connectable shapes and additional hand-held vehicles were provided in the interconnecting area.
- Outdoors, the enclosed play space consisted of a shock absorbing surface and was equipped with a variety of play materials. These included ride on toys, a caterpillar tunnel, a climbing frame with a slide, fence mounted blackboards, a sand tray and two playhouses.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- A Healthy Eating policy was in place and this was noted to be appropriate for the type of service provided.
- The meals and snacks offered to the children who attended were supplied by their parents or guardians.
- For the mid-morning snack, the children were observed to have bananas, cereal and cheese, with water to drink.
- The childminder advised that none of the children had any specific dietary requirements or food allergies.

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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:

- The risks of unauthorised entry to and unsupervised exit from the service were minimised through maintaining the security of the main entrance door.
- The outdoor play environment was securely enclosed by walls.
- The shock absorbing surface in the outdoor play area reduced the risk of serious injury to a child, during active play and games.
- High-level storage of cleaning agents was ensured.
- Safety clips were in place to fix and secure blind cords.
- Access to the fireplace was prevented through use of a suitable fire guard.
- The shower within the sanitary facility was secured and inaccessible by children.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary area was equipped to facilitate hygienic handwashing and drying; warm running water was available, along with liquid soap and paper towels.
Hand hygiene by the children was supported and encouraged by the childminder, who assisted the children as they washed and dried their hands before eating.
- Single use aprons and gloves were readily accessible for nappy changing procedures.
- The premises appeared clean and well maintained. Tabletops were sanitised before the mid-morning snack.

Administration of Medication:

- The administration of medication was not observed over the course of the inspection. Further to this, the childminder advised that none of the children were in receipt of medication.

Safe Sleep:

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- The 10-minute interval sleep checks, which were conducted by the childminder, were maintained in writing. These records included details of each child's breathing, colour and position as they slept.
- The air temperature of one of the sleep rooms was recorded at 19.9°C, while occupied by a sleeping child. This fell within the required range of 16°C to 20°C, for safe sleep practice.

Outings:

- No outings were observed at the time of inspection.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The childminder had completed First Aid Responder (FAR) training, which was valid until 18 February 2025.

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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) The fire drills which had been conducted at the service during the previous months were recorded and maintained on file. The most recent fire drill documented was dated 11 August 2023.
- (b) According to the records displayed, the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm were last serviced by a fire safety company on 9 November 2022.

(4) A fire evacuation notice was available.

Part VI - Safety

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Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The childminding service had insurance cover to cater for up to five pre-school children, with an expiry date of 6 October 2023.