

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE087
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Name of Service:	Little Pals Montessori Pre-school
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Address of Service:	Crossmore, Knockalough, Co. Clare
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Email Address:	pphickey5@gmail.com
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Name of Registered Service Provider:	Ms. Pauline Hickey
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Type of service registered:	Sessional	☒
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Date of Inspection:	2	0	1	0	2	0	2	0
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No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:	AM	16	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Child & Family Agency, River House, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
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Inspection undertaken by:	M. Ní Nialláin
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health, Welfare and Development	Safety

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	Little Pals Montessori Pre-school first opened in 1997 as a sessional Early Years Service. The service caters for up to a maximum number of 25 pre-school children, between the ages of 2.5- 6 years. The service is open Monday-Thursday 09.15hrs - 12.45hrs.
Staffing	The Registered Provider operates the sessional service assisted by one adult who was present on the day when the inspection was carried out. An emergency relief adult is also available in the event of an emergency.
Methodology	Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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. The findings on inspection are based on; • Information obtained through examination of documentation • Direct observation • Discussion with relevant staff This inspection was an unannounced and focused on areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service and advance notice had been given to the service of the planned inspection. This minimised disruption to service provision while services focus on re-opening and familiarising staff and children with new ways of working. 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.
Additional Information	Not Applicable.
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the Registered Provider, staff member and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

GOVERNANCE

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

- (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.
- (7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:
- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information:

- (2) Documentation was reviewed in respect staff members who commenced in the service subsequent to the last date of inspection on 10th May 2018. The following vetting documents and records which were furnished to the inspector in respect of the one new staff member met the regulatory requirements:
- (a) Two references from a past employer in respect of the adult working in the service.
 - (b) Not applicable as the references for the adult were from past employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures from The National Vetting Bureau for one adult working in the service.
 - (d) Not applicable as the adult had not lived outside the State for a period exceeding six consecutive months.
- (7) (a) The registered provider ensured that the adults were provided with appropriate information and training on the policies, procedures and statements specified in schedule 5 as evidenced by the following:
- A record of staff training was maintained in the service in respect of the adults, including updated training on revised procedures relating to COVID-19 including:
- Drop off and collection procedures
 - Procedures for enhanced cleaning and infection control
 - Risk and hazard management
 - Handwashing procedures

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information:	The registered provider ensured that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in schedule 5 were in place for the service. Policies, procedures and statements had been reviewed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and were verified upon review of documentation and during discussions with the adults working in the service. The adults demonstrated a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to implementing new and revised policies, procedures and statements in the service.
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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) thereof 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 staff roster demonstrated that at all times an adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection. (2) On the day of inspection the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to. Sixteen pre-school children attending the service were supervised by two adults in one pod.
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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:

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

The adults interacted with the children in a kind and respectful manner.

The children were treated with positive regard by the adults speaking to the children at their level, listening and playing with the children individually or in groups in accordance with their preference.

Prior to reopening the service, parents were contacted regarding the new COVID-19 policies and procedures.

Messages and information to parents were conveyed at drop off and collection times of the children and via telephone if necessary.

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 entrance to the service was secured to protect the children within. Completed risk assessments were available demonstrating the measures taken to reduce the risk of incidents within the service.

All fire escape routes were free from any obstructions.

All hazardous equipment and cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children.

The outdoor play area was directly accessible to the children from the pre-school rooms of the premises. This area was safely enclosed by fencing and a surrounding wall.

Infection Control:

Both the indoor and outdoor environment was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. Completed cleaning schedules were in place demonstrating the daily and weekly procedures taken by the service.

The sanitary facility was equipped with warm water, wash hand basins, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and pedal operated bins.

Illustrations on the sanitary facility walls demonstrated good hand hygiene and toileting practices.

The children and adults washed their hands at appropriate intervals during the day. The children's personal belongings were stored individually in the cloak room. Accurate records were available of the adults and children in the service to support contact tracing.

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Part VI - Safety

An isolation area was identified in the event that a child or staff member should become unwell and a box was available with a range of medical and personal protective equipment.