

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL210
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Name of Service:	Madeline's Pre-School
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Address of Service:	153 Grange Abbey Grove, Baldoyle, Dublin 13, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D13 E3P3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Madeline McGowan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	26/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5, The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	E Hosford
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

Madeline's Pre School is a private service which provides sessional education and care to children aged from 2 to 5 years of age. The service operates from 9:15-12:15pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.

The service is located in an urban area of Dublin city and operates from a purpose built care room situated to the rear of the registered providers residential home. The service has access to an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service is operated by the registered provider as a single-handed service. The service has two emergency contact people who are available and familiar with the service in the event of an emergency. The registered provider was working with the children on the day of inspection.

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 children, safety, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,23,25 and 26.

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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.

Additional Information

- An Immediate Action notice was issued to the service on the 27 March 2025 in relation to Regulation 25- First Aid.

On the 27 March 2025 the registered provider responded to the immediate action notice with the measures implemented within the service to mitigate the risk. See body of report for details.

- Following submission of their corrective and preventive actions on the 2 May 2025, additional information was requested from the service which was received on the 6 and 12 May 2025 and is included in the report.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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

The files of the registered provider and two emergency contacts were reviewed.

- (2)
- (a) The following references were from a past employer.
- Two validated written references for one emergency contact person.
- (b) The following references were from a source other than a past employer.
- Two written references for the registered provider.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and two emergency contact people. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

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(d) International police vetting was not required as on review of documentary evidence and on discussion with the registered provider who confirmed that neither the registered provider or the two emergency contact people had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The registered provider had documentation to demonstrate that they held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) Two validated written references were not available for one emergency contact person.

(3) The registered provider did not ensure that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in respect of a person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to the early years' service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) In response to the non-compliance the service has stated that references have been reviewed and updated for the emergency contact.

(3) Going forward files will be checked on a yearly basis to verify documents are compliant or any training that needs to be updated.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b) Documentation submitted on the 12 May 2025 relating to an emergency contact person who is available to the service in the event of an emergency.

Summary Comment

Following completion of the corrective and preventive process and the request for additional information the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified.

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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) 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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there was one adult working with eight children aged between 2-5 years of age.

(3) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection at all times. The adult child ratios were maintained as follows;

Main care room: One adult to 8 children aged between 2-5 years of age.

(8)(c) The registered provider ensured that a second person who was familiar with the service was available at all times to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

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;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)

(h) The daily attendance of the children to the service was recorded on arrival at 9:15am and on departure at 12.15pm.

(j) The service had a system in place to administer medication to a child if required. No medication has been administered since the last inspection in December 2022 and on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(k) On review of two accident and incidents records that were available for inspection the following was observed.

- A parental signature was not obtained following one incident that occurred to a child within the service.
- The surname and date of birth of a child was not recorded on one incident record.

These non-compliances were identified on the last inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)

(k) The registered provider has stated that accident forms have been updated, and staff will sign and check to ensure parent signs also.

Registered provider will check weekly records to ensure accidents/incidents are recorder correctly.

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Supporting documentation submitted

(1)

(k) Revised template for accidents and incidents.

Summary Comment

Following completion of the corrective and preventive process and the request for additional information the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified.

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

- Parents provided the food eaten by the children at snack time and it was observed to be in keeping with the service healthy eating policy and consisted of crackers, sandwiches, yogurts, fruit, vegetables, and water to drink. The children were encouraged to eat at their own pace and independently tidied away their belongings when they had finished.
- Staff promoted independence but were on hand to assist and comfort children when required. The children had the space to move throughout the care room while expanding and creating their games and interests.
- A suitable rest area was available in the care room to enable children to rest and take a break from activities if required. The rest area consisted of a large soft padded mat with books and cushions.

Supporting Relationships around Children:

- Daily informal contact was maintained between the service and parents at drop off and collection.

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- The children were observed engaging and participating in the activities available during the session and appeared confident and happy in their surroundings. The staff used supportive language when speaking with the children with clear instructions given when it was time to tidy their play materials away before a snack.

Physical and Material Environment

- The furniture provided in the care room was low level and age appropriate for the children attending with toys and play materials accessible and stored on low level shelving.
- The care room was bright and laid out in a variety of designated interest areas including: home corner, construction space, rest area and tabletop. Each area was well equipped with supporting materials to enable the children to engage and expand their play opportunities and interests.
- The outdoor play areas consisted of concrete paving and stones. The children had access to climbing frames, climb tunnels, balance beams and a playhouse. A separate area was available that was surfaced with pebbles and this enabled the children to use ride on diggers and trucks, buckets and spades. The children spent an extended time outdoors during the inspection due to dry weather conditions.

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:

- Children were supervised while in the service and entry and exit from the service was restricted by a locked gate which was positioned out of children's reach.
- The outdoor area was secured with a locked gate, high wall, and fence.
- All cleaning agents and sharp equipment were stored out of reach of the children in locked cupboards or on high shelves. Blind cords and cables were all observed to be secured or out of reach of the children.
- The children had access to a cleaning product in an unlocked cupboard.
- Radiators within the care room were covered with secure covers to prevent children from having direct access and reduce the potential risk of burning.

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Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water was available at the sinks in the sanitary facility used by the children. Liquid soap and paper towels were provided.
- The service was observed to be clean, and the tables were cleaned before the children sat down for snack.

Fire Safety:

- The service maintained a record of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded drill took place on the 11 February 2025.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The children's perishable food items from home such as cheese and yogurts were not refrigerated on arrival to the service. All the children's food was stored in their bags within the care room. This increased the potential risk of food borne infection. This non-compliance was identified on the last inspection.
2. Handwashing practices within the service were not observed to be in line with the service infection control policy or best practice guidelines. For example.
 - Children were not encouraged or prompted to wash their hands before eating their snack or after using the toilet.
 - Children were assisted to wash their hands before going home with cold water from the sink in the outdoor area. This is not an effective way to wash hands.

Fire Safety:

3. Yearly maintenance certificates were not available for the fire extinguishers and smoke alarms in the service. Fire extinguishers were last serviced on the 9 January 2023 and the available documentation stated that smoke alarms were serviced on the 8 July 2021. This non-compliance was identified on the last inspection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. In response the service has stated that staff will ensure each child removes lunch boxes from school bag on arrival and places in fridge.
2. To address the non-compliance children will now wash their hands before eating and using the toilet in warm water in hand basin in preschool. Water will be checked on a daily basis to ensure at right temperature.

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Fire Safety:

3. In response the service has stated that the registered provider will check to ensure fire extinguishers and smoke alarms are serviced yearly. Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms have been serviced.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Photographic evidence of children's lunches in fridge.
2. Corrective actions.

Fire Safety:

3. Documentary evidence of fire extinguisher maintenance certificate dated 8 April 2025 and smoke alarms maintenance certificate dated on the 10 February 2025.

Summary Comment

Following completion of the corrective and preventive process and the request for additional information the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

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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

(2) The first aid box within the service was suitably equipped.

(a)(b) The first aid box was available, stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that a staff member with the First Aid Responder (FAR) training or paediatric first aid was available to the children during the session. This non-compliance was identified on the last inspection.

- An immediate action notice was issued to the service on the 27 March 2025.

In response to the immediate action notice the registered provider responded that they have placed an order with a training company to update their Paediatric First Aid.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. In response to the non-compliance the registered provider has stated that they will be permanently closing the service on the 27th of June and therefore would not be completing a 3 day FAR course. However, the register provider has updated their Paediatric First Aid certificate.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Paediatric certificate dated with an expiry 16 April 2027.

Summary Comment

Although the registered provider has now obtained updated Paediatric First Aid training, a person trained in First Aid Response training is a regulatory requirement. The non-compliance remains outstanding.

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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) A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last documented fire drill was the 11 February 2025.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was present in the service. Fire extinguishers were serviced on the 30 November 2021, smoke alarms were last serviced on the 8 July 2021.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

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Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)

The service had a complaints policy available, and it had the required statements and procedures documented.

(2)

(a) The service maintained a record of complaints made in respect of the service.

(b) The registered provider was aware of the requirement to maintain documentary evidence of all complaints received to ensure they were dealt with according to the service complaints policy.