

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE043
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Name of Service:	Playdays Montessori
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Address of Service:	Nurney Demesne, Kildoon, Nurney, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	R51 DA21
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Name of Registered Provider:	Joan Loughman
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/02/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	6	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre Ballymore Eustace Road Naas Co. Kildare, W91 X38W
Inspection undertaken by:	F.Maher
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

Playdays montessori pre-school is a privately run service that is located in a rural setting and operates from a purpose built premises to the rear of the registered provider's private home. One large pre-school room with sanitary accommodation and a large secure play area to the rear of the pre-school is provided.

Sessional care and education is provided to children from 2-6 years of age. Opening hours are from 9:30am-12:30pm for 38 weeks of the pre-school year.

Staffing

This is a single-handedly run service, the registered provider was present and working directly 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 child and safety. 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-

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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 the 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.

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Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge.

(b) The registered provider remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

The records of the registered provider and the emergency person listed were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and verified past employer references or verified references from a reputable source other than a past employer were available in respect of each adult whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and the emergency person.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no adult had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

The registered provider, who was working directly with the children and the named emergency person, held a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

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Compliance Information

- (1)
There were 6 children attending the service being supervised directly by the registered provider.
- (3)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the inspection as specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6.
- (8)(c)
The service was operated single-handedly; the emergency person lived close by and was available to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency occurring.

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.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)(h)
The attendance record for the service was reviewed and children's attendance in the morning and on leaving the service at the end of the session, were recorded in real time; any child who was absent was recorded as such in the attendance record.

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(j)

No medication had been administered to any child attending the service, however, an administration of medicine book recording the details of the child and any medicine administered with staff and parental signatures to be recorded was available if required in the service.

(k)

The accident and incident record book was reviewed.

A sample of three recorded incidents, over the course of the previous two years, were inspected and contained the relevant information and details.

(2)(b)

The registered provider advised all records are retained in storage for the required periods of time as dictated by these regulations.

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

There was a wide variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys, materials and equipment available both indoors and outdoors for the children to use and play with, throughout the morning. Low level open shelving units displaying the pre-school materials and equipment, ensured the resources were freely available and easily accessible to the children at all times in the pre-school room.

Child sized tables and chairs were maintained in good condition and provided areas for the children to sit comfortably for tabletop activities and when eating their snack.

There were plenty of art and craft materials available including, paint, paper, crayons, play dough and materials for gluing, cutting and sticking.

The resources and materials facilitated all types of play and learning and encouraged each child to experiment and use their imagination. The children were observed engaged, active and involved throughout the morning as they chose their play and learning materials and made St. Valentines day cards. The children had daily access to the large outdoor play area, which was equipped with a water wall, sand play, playhouses and areas to run and hide. Balance beams and logs encouraged gross motor activities and there was a variety of ride in/on equipment.

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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 entrance door to the service was secure and controlled by the registered provider to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

Children's hand washing routines were well established and children were observed washing their hands before snack time.

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towel, dispensed from wall mounted units were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues, paper towel and any waste. The registered provider was responsible for all cleaning duties and cleaning schedules were in place for the room and sanitary environments which were observed in a clean condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child.

Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out. The fire exits were not obstructed.

Outing:

Outings do not take place from the service as confirmed by the registered provider.

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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

(1)

The registered provider was trained in first aid response (FAR) with an expiry date, 1 October 2024. The registered provider was immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)

The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the pre-school room.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available at all times to the children attending the service

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 fire fighting 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 record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises, the last recorded fire drill was dated 15 January 2024.

(b) There were records available detailing the maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire/smoke detection system in the service dated October 2023 and January 2024 respectively.

(4)

Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The children were observed to be supervised by the registered provider at all times in the pre-school room during the inspection.