

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK120
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Name of Service:	Magic Minds
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Address of Service:	25 Thornfield, Monaleen, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 AC6K
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Name of Registered Provider:	Noelle Clancy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	18/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	8
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Estuary House, Henry St. Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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).

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Description of service

This private sessional service was established in 2013. It operates a morning session from 08:45 – 11:45 hours and an afternoon session from 12:00-15:00 hours Monday – Friday for 38 weeks a year. The service operates from a domestic dwelling and has access to sanitary facilities and an outdoor play area at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service each day and holds a major award in early childhood care and education at level 6.

A named second person is available in the event of an emergency.

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, safety/ premises and facilities. 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

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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 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.*

(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 sole operator and person in charge in the service.
- (b) The registered provider was on the premises when the inspector arrived at the service.
- (2)(a) Two written references from past employers were available for the registered provider and emergency contact person and had been checked on previous inspections of the service.
- (b) Written and verified references from sources other than past employers were not required.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and emergency contact person and were dated within the last 3 years.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as the registered provider had not lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The registered provider working directly with the children attending the service held an award in early childhood care and education at Level 6 on the national qualifications framework.

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

There were written policies and procedures available in the service which the registered provider were currently in the process of updating.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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.

Compliance Information

(3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service. There were 9 pre-school children aged 3 – 5 years being supervised by the registered provider for the morning session and there were 8 pre-school children aged 3 – 5 years being supervised by the registered provider for the afternoon session.

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:

The service ensured that each child's learning, development and well-being was supported, taking all children's individual interests, needs and stage of development into consideration.

Children brought their own packed lunches in line with the healthy eating policy of the service and snacks were refrigerated once the children arrived at the service.

Food observed on the day of the inspection included: sandwiches, a selection of fruit and drinks of water. Drinking water was available throughout the session if a child needed a drink. The children sat together around the table and were given as much time as they needed to eat their food. The registered provider sat with the group creating an opportunity to chat to each other.

All of the children were toilet trained and toileted independently. The children were observed to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after toileting and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary

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accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water and liquid antibacterial soap. Pictures, word reminders and hand-washing instructions were displayed in the sanitary accommodation which supported hygienic hand washing and prevention of cross infection between children and between staff.

The children could rest and relax as desired throughout the morning in the library area on the child sized couch, cushions and on floor mats.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the pre-school room. There was a plentiful supply of play props available to support sensorial play. Children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level of choice of activities. The registered provider modelled positive behaviour for the children and the children were praised for their good behaviour. The registered provider was observed to listen attentively to each child and spoke to them using a soft tone of voice and used positive language, engaging children in conversations and giving each child the opportunity to express themselves.

Protective clothing was available for children during messy play and outdoor activities, particularly in wet weather conditions. Outdoor play was incorporated daily into the programme at the service.

Children had daily access to the outdoors for fresh air, physical play and exploration in the garden area to the rear of the house.

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:

Adequate measures were taken at the service to ensure a safe, secure, and well-monitored environment for all pre-school children.

The pre-school main entrance door was securely locked, with entry managed by the registered provider to prevent children from leaving unsupervised.

The fire exits were unobstructed and clear.

Toys and play materials were age-appropriate, well-maintained, and free from hazards like pinch points, crush points, or sharp edges.

Waste was kept inaccessible indoors and outdoors, with foot pedal-operated, lidded bins ensuring safe disposal.

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Cleaning agents were stored out of children's reach on a high shelf.

Exit gates were secured to prevent children from accessing unsafe areas, and supervision was continuous throughout the session.

No ponds or other hazards were identified in the outdoor space and the registered provider was aware of the importance of risk management to ensure the safety of the children.

Infection Control:

A high standard of operational hygiene was maintained throughout the service. Handwashing facilities in the sanitary accommodations had hot water, liquid soap, and paper towels at sinks for the children.

Administration of Medication:

A policy was in place at the service to ensure safety with the administration of all medicines at the preschool.

Fire Safety:

Fire drills were practised monthly and the registered provider had a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities in relation to the fire safety policy.

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Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally and no obvious defects were noted on inspection.
- (b) The outdoor area was secure by fencing, walls and gates.
- (c) The playroom and sanitary areas were well lit by natural light and artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation.
- (d) Routine cleaning schedules were in place for the internal and external areas.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets and wash hand basins available to the preschool children in attendance and the registered provider working in the service.