

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MO003					
Name of Service:	An Mac Leinn Beag					
Address of Service:	Cordarragh, Kiltimagh, Co Mayo, F12 DR74					
Email Address:	diamondmary@eircom.net					
Name of Registered Service Provider:	Mary Diamond					
Type of Service Registered:	Sessional		☒			
Date of Inspection:	2	8	0	1	2	2
No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:	AM	15	PM	-		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.					
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Farrell					
Title:	Early Years Inspector					

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health Welfare and Development of Child	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	This privately owned sessional service is located in a residential area of Kiltimagh in County Mayo. The service is registered to cater for children aged from two to six years of age and provides a morning session from 08:30-12:00 hours.
Premises	The service is provided from a dedicated section of the registered provider's home. There is one indoor playroom and sanitary facilities. The children have direct access from the playroom to enclosed outdoor play areas located to the side and rear of the premises.
Staffing	There are five adults employed in the service including the registered provider who was present during the inspection. Two of the adults are employed under the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.
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 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. 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.
Acknowledgements	The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff 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.
- (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:

- (2) The inspection focused on the management and recruitment of adults who had started working in the service since the most recent focused inspection on the 13th of March 2019. The vetting documentation for two adults in the service had not been previously reviewed. The following documents were available on file or not required for the two adults:
- (a) Two written, validated references from past employers, in particular the most recent employer for the two adults.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available for the two adults.
 - (d) International police vetting was not required for the adults who had not lived outside of the jurisdiction for a period greater than six months as adults.
- (4) The two adults new to the service since the last inspection held a qualification at Level 5 or above in early childhood care and education.

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.

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 11 -Staffing Levels

(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) On the morning of the unannounced inspection there were four adults working directly with fifteen children. The registered provider was also present during the inspection. Samples of the attendance records reviewed by the inspector showed that the registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service at all times. (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio for children aged between 2.5 and 6 years of age attending a sessional service of one adult to each eleven children was adhered to with four adults provided to work with the fifteen children attending the sessional service. (8) (c) Not applicable as the service is not operated single-handedly.
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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:	BASIC NEEDS: - The foods eaten by the children were provided from home and stored in the service's refrigerator on arrival to the service. There was healthy eating policy in place in the service with foods such as sandwiches/rolls, chopped vegetables, prepared fruits and yoghurts provided for the children. Drinks of water and diluted fruit juice were available in individual identifiable beakers and containers to the children throughout the session. The mealtime was treated as a social occasion with the adults sitting with the children and encouraging conversations in an unhurried way. - Facilities were available for nappy changing in the service and nappies were changed in response to the children's individual needs. The nappy changing policy was displayed in the nappy changing area. The children who were toilet trained were encouraged to use the toilet when they wanted to. The adults provided supports and help in response to the children's needs. - An emphasis was placed on handwashing in the service with the adults prompting and supervising the children washing their hands following toileting, outdoor and messy play activities and before mealtimes. Aprons were available
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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

to protect children's clothing during artwork and individual changes of clothing were available for each child should they be required.

- A rest area with wipeable soft furnishings was provided for the children to rest/relax in if they wished during the session.
- The children played outdoors for a substantial time on the day of the inspection in line with the service's COVID-19 policy and response plan. They were observed to enjoy playing in ride on cars, running and some children played a hopscotch game that had been chalked on the ground by one of the adults.
- Positive approaches were used by the adults to manage the children's behaviour. The adults reminded the children of simple rules when necessary, such as sharing, taking turns and being careful not to hurt each other when playing outside.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The adults demonstrated sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for the children speaking in soft low voices, using their names and including all children in conversations at different times. A key worker system was in place with the children assigned to two groups supporting the development of relationships between the children and adults.
- The Lámh manual sign system was used to assist communication with children in the service and the adults supported the children in learning Lámh signs such as "bus", "car" and "toilet" at circle time.
- The service used electronic systems of communication for the provision of information to the parents and the adults advised the inspector that information regarding children's activities was provided to parents on a regular basis. Detailed service information had been given to the parents in an information booklet provided at the start of the preschool year. Brief handovers of information between adults and parents were observed when the parents collected their children. The adults had compiled individual learning journals for the children that were sent home periodically to their parents for review with spaces available for parents to comment and use the journals for two-way communication.
- Sand timers were used at times by the adults to provide visual representation of time for the children when transitioning between activities.
- The adults worked well as a team, linking with each other to co-ordinate activities for the children. Weekly team planning meetings were held in the service between some members of staff with records kept and available for inspection.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The toys and equipment were easily cleaned and freely available to the children at low levels facilitating their choice of play activity. Defined interest areas were evident in the playroom including a home corner, small world area with a large doll's house, dolls area, shop area, art/crafts, transport and construction areas. A

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

rest area with wipeable soft furnishings was available to the children if they wished to rest and relax. The adults advised the inspector that due to the COVID-19 pandemic there were individual lidded boxes of some play equipment for use on separate days of the week such as jigsaw puzzles and books.

- A large selection of Montessori equipment was displayed in open shelving to aid selection by the children including practical life activities such as pouring, locking pegging, screwing and threading activities with equipment such as pink towers, broad stairs, numerical rods and nature puzzles also available.
- The children were observed to enjoy imaginative play wearing dressing up outfits on the day. The adults advised the inspector that playdough when used was made in the service and disposed of immediately following use in accordance with the service's infection control procedures.
- Seating dependent on the children's needs was provided with tables waist high to the children.
- The children had direct access from the playroom to the enclosed outdoor area to the rear and side of the building with ground coverings of tarmac, grass, bark and impact resistant matting areas enabling use all year around. Messy play was facilitated in the bark section with covered sand and water tables and play utensils. Numerous ride on toys were used by the children on the tarmac area supervised by the adults. Fixed play equipment to promote gross motor development was provided such as a seesaw and climbing system.
- A large, covered area at the end of the garden was a recent addition to the outdoor space and facilitated use of the space in bad weather. The covered area had impact resistant ground cover and contained play equipment such as a kitchen/ home area, large wooden blocks and a large four in a row counter game that the children enjoyed playing with during the session. The children had planted flower bulbs that were beginning to shoot up in a small garden section signposted "our garden". Storage was provided for toys in a large wooden shed and a variety of seating was provided including tables and picnic benches.

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 gate to the service was secured on the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service. The service had reviewed their drop off and collection procedure due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the children were observed to be collected at the entrance gate to the outdoor area by their parents/guardians whilst observing social distancing requirements. Masks were worn by the adults during the inspection including drop off and collection times.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

- Records of attendance of the children and adults were kept in the service and the inspector was requested to provide details of attendance for contact tracing should it be required.
- The children were supervised appropriately at all times during the inspection by the adults. The outdoor area was observed to be free from hazards and the adults carried out a safety check prior to the children going outdoors to play.
- The toys and play equipment in use during the inspection were in satisfactory condition and suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children using it.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children in high cupboards above the sink area in the playroom.

INFECTION CONTROL:

- Infection control policies and procedures had been reviewed in the service in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. Training had been provided to the adults on the infection control policies and procedures that included an incident plan to be followed in the event of a suspected case of COVID-19 arising in an adult or child in attendance in the service. A well-ventilated area of the playroom beside a door leading to the outdoor play area had been identified as the isolation area to be used if a suspected case of COVID-19 arose.
- Personal protective equipment including disposable masks and gloves was available in addition to a thermometer to record body temperatures as needed.
- Foot pedal operated bins were provided for waste disposal and boxes of tissues were available for the children to use to clean their noses. The doors in the playroom were observed to be opened to ventilate the playroom with safety gates in place to restrict children from leaving the room unnoticed. The playroom air temperature was recorded between 18-22 °C during the inspection as required.
- Hand washing facilities were available with warm water controlled below 43°C, liquid soap and paper towels provided. Hand sanitiser was available at entrance doors in dispensers and observed to be used regularly by the adults.
- The service's cleaning schedules had been enhanced in line with COVID-19 guidance and the adults cleaned down frequently touched surfaces on a regular basis with records of cleaning/disinfecting processes kept. A procedure was in place for the cleaning and sterilising of toys if they had been mouthed by children.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

- The adults advised the inspector that none of the children attending required medication to be administered during the sessions. A medication record book was provided to record the administration of any medication in the service. The adults demonstrated an awareness of safe practices in relation to safe storage and administration of medication during conversation with the inspector.