

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN036
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Name of Service:	Little Rascals Montessori Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Cooley, Fuerty/Castlecoote, Co Roscommon
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Email Address:	gmullen09@gmail.com
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Name of Registered Service Provider:	Geraldine Mullen
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Type of service registered:	Sessional	☒
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Date of Inspection:	2	4	0	3	2	0	2	1
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No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:	AM	6	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon
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Inspection undertaken by :	A. Kennedy
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	This sessional service is located in a rural setting close to the village of Fuerty, outside Roscommon town. A service is provided to children aged between 2 years 8months and 5 years. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 9:30hrs and 12:30hrs. A room with a separate entrance within the registered providers domestic dwelling has been adapted and purpose built for the provision of a preschool service.
Staffing	There were two adults present on the day of inspection to include the registered provider and the emergency person. The registered provider single-handedly works within the service and has a named designated person to work in event of staff absence. The emergency person is the registered provider's husband and it was advised on the day that he is available to assist for the daily operational hours of the service provision.
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. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 health welfare and development of child and regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. 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, 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.
- (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:	The personal files for one adult employed since the services last inspection were reviewed. (2)(a)(b) Two references from reputable sources with evidence of validation were available. (c) Vetting disclosure documentation was available for this adult. (7)(a) There were signed forms by each adult stating that they had received the updated policies, procedures and statements of the service prior to returning to work.
Non-Compliance Information:	(d) Police vetting was not available for the adult who resided outside the jurisdiction for a period in excess of six months.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	<u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u> The registered provider submitted a written response to state: There was a human error on this adult's CV which indicated that this adult had resided outside of the country for more than 6 months. This was not the case as the adult only spent 3 months outside the country in the year 1996. <u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u> The CV has been updated with correct dates. <u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u> A letter attached from the adult stating all correct information.
Summary Comment:	Police vetting was not required for the adult as they did not reside outside the jurisdiction for a period in excess of 6 months. The evidence submitted was reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and met the Regulatory requirement.

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:	A copy of the services policies, procedures and statements were submitted by email to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate prior to the inspection. These included those specified in Schedule 5 to the regulations. A number of the policies had been updated to reflect the current national guidance with regards to additional COVID-19 precautions to include infection control, risk management, drop off and collection arrangements.
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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) A sufficient number of adults worked directly with children. There was one adult caring for six children aged from three to five years. The emergency person was also in attendance on the day of the inspection. (3) There were six children attending the service being supervised directly by the adults. (8)(c) An arrangement is in place within the service with an adult identified to assist in event of an emergency. The registered provider advised that the emergency person is also on the premises at all times during the hours of operation. The roster records furnished to the Inspector indicated that a sufficient number of adults were employed to work directly with the children at all times.
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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:

Effective communications between adults and children and with the parents and guardians of children attending the service were noted. The registered provider advised that contact was made with the parents/guardians prior to the resumption of service in order to update them on revised policies and procedures arising from COVID-19 national guidance. The exchange of relevant information regarding the care of the child were communicated at handover and collection times. It was advised also that the adult would contact the parent by phone should the need require. A team approach was evident within this service with the adults regularly communicating updates on the care routines and children's preferences with each other.

Positive engagements between the adults and the children were observed. The adults spoke with the children at their level and used positive language in a friendly tone when speaking to the children. The children in turn responded positively to the adults. The adults were able to describe to the inspector children's individual care routines, preferences and dislikes.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The pre-school room was bright and colourful. Low level tables and chairs were in place and low level shelving with equipment and materials were accessible to the children. The room was laid out with clearly defined areas of play to include arts and crafts with a large paint easel, large and small scale construction (plastic and wooden blocks and a large selection of work tools *and a work bench*) and manipulative materials; picture books, problem solving toys (e.g. jigsaws), role and pretend play (e.g. *play kitchen, dolls and accessories*), small world toys (e.g. *play animals, transport toys, play figures*). A soft seated area was provided for circle time activities and as a reading area should a child wish to relax or opt out of activities. Wall art and visual displays added additional decorative features to the indoor play environment.

The outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises supported a range of physically active play including running, ride on vehicles, ball games, climbing and messy play opportunities. The service have erected a covered sheltered space since the last inspection and this was equipped with low level tables and chairs and shelving units with table top and arts and crafts activities. On the day of the inspection the children played outdoors for the duration of the inspection which demonstrated the services commitment to ensuring that outdoor play time played a significant part of children's daily routine in the service.

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 premises was secure in a manner which ensured that no child could exit unsupervised. The main door to the preschool room was secured with a lock and the key was hung out of child reach. On the day of the inspection the service was provided from a newly erected covered in space within the outdoor area and this was securely gated and fenced to prevent a child exiting. Exit routes were free from obstruction. The kitchen and storage areas which contained hazardous materials were inaccessible to the children. Free standing shelves had secure, broad bases and did not pose a risk of toppling. Toys and play equipment were developmentally appropriate and were maintained in a clean and safe condition.

INFECTION CONTROL:

Robust measures to adhere to the national guidance on infection control during the COVID-19 pandemic were evident in the service. The service had revised the service's policies including those for infection control and risk management and completed a self-assessment checklist prior to re-opening the service. Records showed that the adults employed in the service had undergone training in the revised policies and procedures and each parent had been contacted regarding the changes and to ensure that they were familiar with the criteria for exclusion.

The playroom operated as an independent pod. The snacks were brought to the service by the children and stored within the refrigerator within the preschool room. The play dough, sand and water used within the service are disposed of daily.

Suitable hand washing facilities were provided with supplies of liquid soap, disposable paper towels and thermostatically controlled hot water at each sink. The playroom and outdoor play space had a supply of disposable tissues, hand sanitiser, cleaning products, personal protective equipment and foot operated lidded bins. A substantial quantity of appropriate cleaning products was maintained on-site which children could not access. There were enhanced cleaning procedures in place with separate records of completed works maintained on the premises. There was a dedicated area for isolating an adult or child away from others in the event they became ill during the day.

A hand sanitising station was placed outside the arrival area for parents. No parents entered the premises but hand-over was either at the entrance doors or from the outdoor play area. During the inspection children were observed washing their hands after toileting, messy play activities and before consuming food. Table tops were cleaned immediately prior to children's snack break. The adults were observed regularly washing their hands including after disposing of tissues into bins. Fixtures, fittings and play resources were observed to be in immaculate condition with up to date cleaning records maintained. The adults showed awareness of the services

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

	revised procedures including the management of suspected infection when questioned.
Non-Compliance Information:	GENERAL SAFETY: 1. One of the soft mats in the outdoor area at the climbing frame was raised and posed the potential of a tripping hazard. 2. A wooden post on the climbing frame was worn and posed a risk of splintering.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	<u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u> GENERAL SAFETY: The registered provider submitted a written response to state 1. The soft mat in the outdoor area at the climbing frame has now been secured and is no longer a tripping hazard. 2. The wooden post on the climbing frame has been replaced <u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u> GENERAL SAFETY: 1. All the mats are checked daily before the children arrive to prevent any potential hazards. 2. The swing and climbing frame are checked daily before the children arrive to prevent any potential hazards. <u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u> Photographic evidence was submitted of the secured mats and the replaced wooden post.
Summary Comment:	The response and evidence submitted was reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and met the Regulatory requirement.