

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016MO008
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Name of Service:	Kilroe Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Kilroe Montessori Pre-school, c/o Kilroe National School, Co. Mayo
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Eircode:	H91 F5K2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Breda Moran
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	21 February 2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	-
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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

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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Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Kilroe Pre-School is a privately operated sessional service registered to cater for children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates from 9:00-12:20 hours Monday to Friday. The premises is located in a rural area in a standalone building on the grounds of Kilroe National School. The building was purpose built and comprises of a playroom and sanitary accommodation. There is an enclosed outdoor play area exclusive for use by the service at the front of the building.

Staffing

There are two staff working in the service including the registered provider who works directly with the children. One staff member is employed through the Access and Inclusion Model.

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*. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

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Acknowledgments

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 registered provider informed the inspector that there was one new staff member in the service since the most recent inspection of the 16 October 2020.

The following vetting information was available for the staff member:

- (a) Two written references from previous employers including the staff members most recent employer that the registered provider had validated.
- (c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána.
- (d) International police vetting as not required as the staff member had not resided outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

(4) Certification of a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) On the morning of the unannounced inspection, there was one staff member caring for 5 children in the service.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children of 1 adult for each 11 sessional children aged from 2 years and 6 months to six years was adhered to with 1 adult caring for the 5 children present.
- (8) (c)
On the day of the inspection one staff member cared for the children singlehandedly. An emergency person was available in the primary school nearby to provide support if needed in the event of an emergency.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(i) Details of the staff attendance on a daily basis were not accurately kept with staff attendance including the starting and finishing work not recorded for some days in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)

(i) The staff attendance records have been revised to clearly indicate date and time of arrival and departure for every day in service.

The staff roster will be checked on a daily basis, this will be implemented and monitored by the service provider.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of the accurate recording of staff attendance in the service was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and found to have addressed the non-compliance found under this regulation on inspection.

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 children sat together to eat their meal provided during the session. Their food was provided from home and included brown bread, sandwiches, fruits and bread that was toasted and buttered in the service. Each child had an individual drink bottle that they could access during the session if they were thirsty. The meal was sociable with conversations between the children and staff.
- A small cosy area was provided with a pull-out rest mat also available if children wanted to rest during the session.
- The children played outside for a long period during the inspection, running around and enjoying physical activity. When indoors the children moved around freely in the playroom.
- An emphasis was placed on handwashing and the staff prompted and supervised the children to wash and dry their hands for example before eating their snacks and after using the toilet and playing outdoors. Overall aprons were available to protect children's clothes when needed during messy play activities. A box of tissues was located at a low level allowing children to access tissues to clean their noses with when they needed to. Wellington boots and outdoor coats were worn by the children when playing outside.
- The children used the toilet when they wanted to and were encouraged to be as independent as possible by the staff member. Help was given to the children by the staff member if needed.
- The staff member was positive in approach to managing children's behaviour with praise and encouragement given appropriately to the children. When children had disagreements, the staff member spoke with the children and helped them to resolve any issue.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- Written records were kept by the staff of the children's activities and progression in individual books. Individual care plans were developed in the service for children where appropriate. When

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

parents/guardians came to collect their children, they were greeted warmly at the entrance gate by the staff with brief exchanges of information on the children's time in the service that day. The inspector was told by the staff that electronic messaging systems were also used to communicate with parents.

- A family wall with photographs of the children's families was on display in the playroom. Warm interactions between the staff member and children were observed with the staff speaking positively to the children and including them all in activities. Opportunities were taken by the staff member to engage the children in singing. At circle time a board with different pictures on it was used to allow the children to select a picture aligned to a song they would like to sing such as "row the boat" and "twinkle, twinkle little star".
- The service is located on the grounds of a national school and is integrated into the local community.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- There was a wide range of toys and play activities available to the children indoors and outdoors in the service. The play equipment was displayed in open storage units allowing children to choose play activities and replace toys after using them. Imaginative play was supported for example through a well-equipped home corner and variety of dress up outfits with a viewing mirror for the children to look at themselves in. At one stage the children set up the construction tool bench as a hair dressing station with hair dressing items and played with toy ponies. Building blocks were used to build a shelter for the ponies. Numerous age-appropriate books were provided in low level shelves for the children to look at.
- Spring was a topic of interest for the children and when the inspector arrived at the service the children were engaged in artwork making lambs with white cotton wool and paper plates. Other art and craft equipment in the playroom included colouring pencils, paper and pairs of safety scissors.
- Adjustable height tables were provided in the service with age-appropriate chairs and were used on the day to facilitate tabletop activities and mealtime. There were numerous displays with numbers, letters and information relating to months and seasons on the walls of the playroom. Additional toys and play equipment were kept in a store area and the staff member advised that these were rotated into the playrooms.
- A substantial time was spent by the children playing outdoors in the enclosed outdoor area directly accessible from the playroom. The area had ground cover of tarmacadam and a grassed area with a planting box where flowers such as daffodils and crocuses that the staff advised the inspector the children had been involved in planting were growing. Some of the children enjoyed messy play when playing together at a sand table making sandcastles. Later in the session a group of the children played on a small

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

low-level wooden pirate ship. The staff member brought wooden blocks outside and laid them in a row helped by the children to make a balancing game to develop their gross motor skills with the children walking across them towards the end of the session.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

At mealtime, two children were observed to eat packets of crisps as part of their snacks. This was contrary to the service's healthy eating policy that detailed that crisps were not permitted in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

(1)(a)

Corrective and Preventive Action

- The registered provider and staff will continuously implement the Healthy Eating Policy with the parents and remove packets of crisps from lunch boxes on arrival of the children.
- All staff will have refresher training on the Healthy Eating Policy and implementation of same will be monitored by registered provider.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 external door was secured on the inspector's unannounced arrival preventing unauthorised access to the service. The gate in the outdoor area was secured when the children were playing outside preventing them from leaving the area unnoticed.
- Cleaning products were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and equipment were in good condition and suitable for the age and developmental stages of the children using them.
- There were visibility stickers in place on the glass patio doors leading out to the outdoor area to highlight the presence of glass to children.

Infection Control:

- Foot pedal operated bins were used for the disposal of waste items such as used paper towels.
- Liquid soap and paper towels were provided for handwashing and drying purposes. Hand sanitiser was available in dispensers.
- The tables were cleaned down prior to snack time by the staff member. Cleaning schedules for different areas of the premises were on display in the playroom with written records of any cleaning and disinfecting procedures undertaken kept by the staff.
- The food for the children's snacks was stored under 5°C in a refrigerator in the kitchen.

Administration of Medication:

- The staff member advised the inspector that there were no children requiring medication to be administered to them in the service at the time of the inspection.

Fire Safety:

- The emergency exits were accessible during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- A warm kettle and a sharp bread knife were stored near the sink area of the playroom and were potentially accessible by children posing a risk of injury.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The kettle and bread knife were removed from the playroom.
- The staff will no longer use the kettle or bread knife in the playroom.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence of the removal of the kettle and bread knife from the playroom was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on inspection.

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) A certificate of the completion of a First Aid Response (FAR) training course with an expiry date of 3 October 2023 was available for a staff member who was present on the day.
- (2)
 - (a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible location on high shelving in the playroom.
 - (b) The first aid box was readily accessible to the staff if a child required first aid treatment.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) Fire drills were held monthly in the service with written records kept by the staff. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having been carried out on the 20 February 2023.
 - (b) The record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment showed that the firefighting equipment had been last maintained on the 22 February 2022 and a new smoke alarm system was installed on the 8 February 2023.
- (4)
- Notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were prominently displayed on the internal entrance door of the playroom.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

A certificate of insurance was available for the service providing adequate insurance cover for the numbers of children attending sessional services valid until the 27 March 2023.