

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Not applicable[TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE132
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Name of Service:	Sue Mahon Childminding
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Address of Service:	Ballyhannon, Quin, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 P5P2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sue Mahon
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Service type:	Childminder
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Date of Inspection:	11/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	2	PM	3
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla, Station Road Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Ní Niallín
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

This service was first notified in 2005. A childminding service is provided from the childminder's home who caters for up to a maximum number of 5 pre-school children, between the ages of 0- 6 years The service is open Monday-Friday 08.00hrs - 18.30hrs.

Staffing

The registered childminder operates this service. A second named person is available to provide assistance in the event of an emergency within the premises.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,12,19,23,25,26 and 28.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

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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,

(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 childminder is the designated person in charge in the service and a named person was available in the event of an emergency.
- (b) The childminder was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) (a) Not applicable as references were provided from a source other than a past employer.
- (b) Two references from a source other than a past employer were available for each adult.
- (c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for four adults, three of whom were adult members of the household.
- (d) Police vetting was available for the childminder and for two adult members of the household who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period of more than six months.
- (4) The childminder working directly with the children held an appropriate qualification 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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and*

Compliance Information

- (1) One adult was present supervising two pre-school children on the morning and three pre-school children in the afternoon of the day of the inspection.
- (8)(b) A second person familiar with the service was within close distance and was available to attend the home to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

- (a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,*
- (b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and*
- (c) there is a working telephone on the premises.*

(2) A childminder may have more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time where all such children are siblings of each other.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The childminder was caring for no more than five children at any given time. The childminder was supervising two pre-school children in morning and three pre-school children on the afternoon of the inspection.
- (b) There were no more than two children under the age of 15 months in the service.
- (c) A working telephone was available on the premises.
- (2) Not applicable as none of the children present were siblings of each other under the age of 15 months.

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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 of the Children

- There was a healthy eating policy in the service. The parents supplied all the food and drinks for their child which consisted of a variety of home cooked dinners fresh fruit and yogurts. Drinking water was provided to the children throughout the day.
- Personal care and nappy changing were carried out as required in a hygienic manner by the childminder.
- Hand washing was observed with the young children and by the childminder.
- The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the ground floor of the home during the inspection. The children had the use of a safely enclosed outdoor play garden area to the back of the home.
- The childminder was caring and considerate in her dealings with the pre-school children present. Children's behaviour was managed in a competent and positive manner and explanations and encouragement of appropriate behaviour was offered by the childminder throughout the inspection.
- The children had access to a sleep/rest period during the day in the service and sleep checks were recorded.

Physical & Material Environment

- The children had the use of a sitting room and a dining/living area in the home. The play equipment was located in toy boxes in units which were easily accessible to the pre-school children. The range of play resources were sufficient and varied to support all areas of children's development and interests. The children had the freedom to move between the home and the outdoor play area.
- A couch was located in the sitting room and living area where the young children were able to rest and relax appropriately.
- Indoors some of the toy equipment included a selection of books, jigsaws, a variety of blocks, shape sorters, sound making toys and play items for stacking. The outdoor play area had a slide and swings, a climbing frame, some ride on toy equipment, a sand box, a playhouse and facilities to play games.

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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 service had taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service:

The entrance door into the service was secured thus preventing children from exiting the premises unsupervised and prohibiting unauthorised persons from entering the service. There were no hazards identified in the childminder's home or in the outdoor play area.

Infection Control:

A supply of cleaning agents was stored out of reach of children in the service.

The home was adequately ventilated by natural forms of ventilation.

There was liquid soap at the wash hand basins to facilitate hygienic hand washing for children and the adult.

Paper towels were provided in the sanitary areas used by the children and adult to facilitate hygienic hand drying.

Administration of Medication:

Appropriate documentation was available in the event that medication was required by a child attending the service. Medications were not administered in the service on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service.

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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 childminder held a First Aid Responder certificate which was valid to the December 2024.

(2)(a) There was a fully equipped first aid box stored in a designated first aid storage area which was easily accessible.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children always attending the pre-school 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) Records are available to show that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous positions on the premises.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The insurance certificate for the service was available and was valid to the 9th April 2024. The required cover was available for a maximum of 5 pre-school children who could attend at any one time.