

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE063
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Name of Service:	Kathy's Montessori and Childcare
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Address of Service:	Ballaghboy Doora Ennis Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 TEV8
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Name of Registered Provider:	Kathy Clune
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	21/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan
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

Kathy's Montessori and childcare was established in 2014 on the outskirts of Ennis, County Clare. It is registered as a sessional and a part-time service. Care and education is provided for children ranging in age from two to six years of aged, Monday to Friday from 08:15hrs to 13:15hrs.

The childcare service is provided in two open plan rooms on the ground floor with an enclosed outdoor play area located to the rear of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider and two additional staff work directly with the children each day. All three staff have childcare qualifications.

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(3)(4) – Management and recruitment

Regulation 11(2) - Staffing levels

Regulation 15(1)(a)-(i) – Record of pre-school child

Regulation 19 (1)(a) - Health, welfare and development of the child

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Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

Regulation 25(1)(2)(a)(b) - First aid

Regulation 26(1)(a)(b)(4) - Fire safety measures

Regulation 28- Insurance

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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff 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,*

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(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

(1)(a) There was a named person in charge and a deputy was available to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection the person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that the person in charge or the deputy were available on the premises each day.

(2) The files of 3 staff members working in the service were reviewed.

(a) There were 6 written and validated references submitted by staff from previous employers on file.

(b) Reference from sources other than past employers were not required.

(c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for the three staff employed to work in the service. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for a member of staff who had resided outside of jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) The three staff members present on the day had appropriate childcare qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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.

Compliance Information

(2) On the day of the inspection there were two staff working with 13 preschool children present in the morning sessional service and there were two staff working with 5 preschool children present in the afternoon parttime service. During the period of inspection, the minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained and an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

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Compliance Information

(1) A sample of ten records for preschool children were reviewed and each record contained the following details
(a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g) and (i).

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:

Nutritious and healthy snacks supplied by the parents were observed to be available for the pre-school child attending the service. A second snack was available for the children who attended part time.

Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snacks and drinks of water.

Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their age and stage of development. Regular hygienic hand washing was observed by both the staff and the children in the sanitary accommodation.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the playrooms and in the outdoor area.

Rest facilities were available for the children who attended. The adults were positive and consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour where required.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

There were two indoor playrooms in the service which were used interchangeably by the children present.

The playrooms were laid out with uncluttered and clear floor spaces for the children to play safely. Children were making jigsaws which supported the development of their fine motor skills and playing with dolls which supported imaginative play. Scrap books were maintained for each child with all their artwork and photographs of them playing at different activities. These books were given to parents at the end of the school year which supported a sense of partnership and good communication.

Both rooms were well resourced with age-appropriate play equipment and children had the opportunity for different types of play and learning .

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The service had an enclosed outdoor play area with an all-weather ground surface and some grass. A variety of outdoor play equipment was available and included a playhouse, outdoor kitchens with accessories, blocks, sandpits, and a variety of ride on vehicles. The children had free running space and opportunities to play games. Children were observed mark making on a large chalk board which was placed on a wall outdoors.

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) On the day of the inspection there was one member of staff who held current certification in first aid responder for children.

(2)(a) A first aid box was stored in the playroom.

(b)The first aid box was available at all times if required by a child.

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) The fire drills were practiced on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill took place on 07/05/2026.

(b)The firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual basis, most recently in January 2026 and a record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises. The wired smoke alarm was serviced in May 2026.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the playroom.

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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

Adequate insurance was available to cover the number of children in attendance.