

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS091
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Name of Service:	Killakee Montessori
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Address of Service:	11 Killakee Court, Firhouse, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24 FRH3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Roberta O'Neill
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	22/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Level 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	R Phillips
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

Killakee Montessori school was established in 2001 by the current registered provider. Sessional care and education is provided for children aged two years and eight months to five years of age. The service operates from 08:30 -11:30 for 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from an area within the registered providers domestic dwelling and the children have access to an enclosed outdoor space to the rear of the premises. The main Montessori room is in an extension to the side of the premises, there is also a second classroom space to the rear of the building, with access to the garden. The garden area is enclosed at the rear of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider manages the service working directly with the children and has a level 8 qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications. The registered provider is currently operating the service singlehandedly.

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 regulations:

9 (1)(2)(4) Management and recruitment,

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- 11(1)(3) Staffing levels,
- 19 (1) (b) Health Welfare and Development of the child,
- 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,
- 25 First Aid and
- 26. Fire Safety.

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 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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

(1) The registered provider was in charge when the inspector arrived unannounced for the inspection and remained throughout the inspection.

(2) Through discussion with the registered provider, it was established that no new staff commenced employment since the last inspection when full staff files were inspected for the registered provider and the emergency contact.

(a)(b) There were four written validated references available from previous employers in respect of the two staff files examined.

(c) Garda Vetting had been sourced for both adults The registered provider was compliant with the early years inspectorates regulatory notice to renew garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was not required for either of the two employees whose files were inspected.

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(4) The registered provider and emergency contact held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or equivalent.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. There were eight children being cared for by the registered provider.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection.

(8)(c) The registered provider operates the service alone. A second person familiar with the operation of the service is available to provide assistance to the registered provider in the event of an emergency.

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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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1) (b) Each child was observed being welcomed into the service by the registered provider who engaged with the children in a warm respectful manner throughout the inspection and was familiar with the individual children's needs.

The service had a healthy eating policy, and the children brought a variety of healthy foods for lunch, prepared by their parents. The inspector observed the children eating their lunch in a relaxed manner. The registered provider sat with them while they ate, and they engaged in conversation about the origins of their food.

Children's independence was encouraged with managing their own belongings at lunch time and when using the toilets.

The registered provider managed transitions between activities well by using timers and letting the children know what to expect. Activities were child led and there were ample Montessori activities and play equipment available to the children on low level accessible shelving.

Child led play was facilitated with the registered provider who engaged the children by following their lead as they chatted to the inspector about the care they take of the plants and the snail and frog who also live in the garden.

The registered provider supports the children's transitions to local schools and invited them back for a class reunion next year, for which the children have been planning a menu for their reunion lunch.

There was ample play equipment, in good working order and suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present.

The children wore sunhats suitable to the weather.

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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 entrance doors and outdoor area were appropriately secured preventing children from exiting the premises unsupervised and prevented unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.

The play equipment and toys observed in use on the day of inspection were in good working order.

Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.

The registered provider maintained risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor areas.

There were no hazards observed in the outdoor area.

Blind cords were out of reach of children attending the service.

Infection Control:

The service appeared clean and well maintained.

There were cleaning schedules maintained.

The registered provider was observed cleaning down the tables prior to and after the children's lunch.

There were low level sinks with thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper towels available to the children in the sanitary area and in the care room to the rear of the building, to facilitate handwashing.

Children were observed washing their hands after using the toilet, before eating lunch and on return from the outdoor area.

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.

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Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider held in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certification and was immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2)
- (a) A fully stocked first aid kit was stored in a conspicuous place within the service, out of reach of the children.
- (b) The first aid kit was available to the children attending the 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.*
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,*
 - (b) an employee, and*
 - (c) an authorised person.*
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation*
- (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) A record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed the last fire drill had taken place on 09 June 2026.
- (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on 30 June 2025 and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system was last carried out on 22 November 2025.
- (2) (c) The records were made available for inspection.
- (4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.