

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY126
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Name of Service:	Tus Nua Montessori
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Address of Service:	Addergown, Ballyduff, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 C6P6
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Name of Registered Provider:	Joanne McDermottroe
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	03/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	None
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy
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

Tus Nua Montessori is registered as a privately operated early years service, catering for children aged between 2 years and 6 years on a sessional basis. The children attending on inspection were aged between 3 years and 5 years. The service offers one session between the hours of 9am and 12 mid-day Monday to Friday. The service is located in a purpose-built building at the registered provider's home setting in Lisloose, Tralee, Co. Kerry. The service consists of 1 playroom with sanitary accommodation and a spacious outdoor play area sanitary accommodation in a designated building.

Staffing

Currently, there are 3 adults attached to the service, all of whom work directly with the children each day. This includes the registered provider.

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 -

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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,*
- (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

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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) The registered provider is the designated person in charge and there is a named deputy to deputise in her absence as required.
- (b) When the unannounced inspection commenced, the registered provider and the named deputy were on duty to assist with the inspection process.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to each of the 3 adults attached to the service were inspected.
- (a) Of the six references required, there were 4 references from previous employers with records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the six references required, there were 2 references with records of validation on file from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for each of the 3 adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Not applicable, the 3 adults had not resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The 3 staff working directly with the children had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) with copies of the relevant qualifications on file.

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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) 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) Throughout the period of inspection, the registered provider did ensure that there was an adequate number of adults caring for the children attending the service.
- (3) There were 2 adults caring for 12 children, aged 3 years to 5 years attending the service on a sessional basis. The adult child ratio was correct and maintained.
- (8)(c) Not applicable as the service does not operate single-handedly.

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:

- On the inspector's arrival to the service the children were playing in the outdoor area.
- The children had free access between the indoor and the outdoor areas.

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- The playroom had a variety of play materials and toys, including a selection of Montessori equipment, accessible to the children on the low-level open shelving enabling the children to freely and independently access them during the session.
- The play materials and toys were arranged so they were readily visible and accessible to promote independent free access by the children at all times.
- The windows in the playroom were open during the session to ventilate the room
- The outdoor area had a covered in area directly accessible from the playroom and a spacious secured yard.
- There was a variety of toys and play materials available to the children in the outdoor area, which included ride on toys, balls for children to play with in the spacious yard.
- Within the covered in area, there for example was a home area, an art area, a world explorer's table with nature books and a bug hotel, a design and build section with tools and hard hats and a variety of vehicles, farm animals, and blocks.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilet in the playroom during the session.
- Self- toileting by the children was encouraged and practiced as observed on inspection.
- The proximity of the sanitary accommodation in the pre-school room ensured that staff were available to supervise and help the children at all times as was observed on inspection.
- The service promoted healthy eating and the food provided by the parents/guardians for the snack was observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- The children had the morning snack in the playroom.
- Each of the children washed their hands prior to eating at the low-level sink in the playroom under staff supervision.
- The food observed consisted of sandwiches, rice cakes, wraps, cheese, yogurts and a variety of fruit.
- The staff sat down with the children with pleasant social interaction among the staff and the children observed.
- The children were keen to point out their individual artwork to the inspector that was displayed in the room, whilst eating their food.
- There was a rest unit provided on one corner in the playroom, consisting of a timber seating unit with book reading books storage, a rug on the floor, blankets, soft seating and single chairs.
- The staff were observed to be kind and caring towards the children in their care.

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- The staff facilitated opportunities for, individual, small and large group activities and play as evidenced with for example outdoors riding the tractors, playing basketball and at circle time.
- The staff encouraged self-help skills with the children as observed for example when children were putting on their coats to go outdoors and placing their bags on their backs before going home.
- Children were happily watching out the window coming up to collection time, talking between themselves, identifying the colours of the cars coming to the premise at collection time

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)

There were certifications on file demonstrating that 3 staff members attached to the service had current First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)

(a) The sufficiently equipped first aid box was stored at a high level in the kitchenette in the playroom, out of the reach of children.

(b) At all times when the service is in operation, the first aid box was accessible to the adults in the event that children required them.

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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) The service had maintained in writing a record of the following: -
- (a) A template to record each fire drill that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 21/04/2026 for the morning and afternoon sessions.
 - (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance checks of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm. The records on file demonstrated the last check for the smoke alarm was 10.03.2026 and for the firefighting equipment was 12/05/2026.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the playroom.