

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC234
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Deirdre's Montessori Naíonra
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Clifton House, Knockattigan, Quarry Road, Youghal, Co Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P36 Y051
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Deirdre McCarthy
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/01/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D Prendergast
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Deirdre's Montessori Naíonra is a privately owned sessional service, that is registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme is facilitated from 9.00am to 12.00pm, each Monday through to Friday, over 38 weeks of the year. Montessori pedagogy is implemented and the use of the Irish language is promoted.

Situated outside Youghal in Co Cork, the early years service operates from a single storey, purpose-built premises, on the grounds of the registered provider's private residence. There is one care room, with adjoining child and staff sanitary facilities. An enclosed outdoor play space is also available.

### Staffing

There are two adults in employment at the setting, including the registered provider. Both adults are involved in the direct care of the children and each has attained a major award in early childhood care and education.

### 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/ premises and facilities. 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-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, deputy 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 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 person in charge of operating the service was the registered provider, who had also appointed a deputy, to deputise in the event of her absence.
- (b) The registered provider accommodated the duration of the inspection. Review of the staff attendance records indicated that the registered provider and the deputy were consistently available, while the service was in operation.
- (2) (a) (b) (d) & (4)
- Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider, it was determined that no new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. Therefore, parts (2) (a) (b) (d) and (4) were not assessed, as these were reviewed at the time of the previous inspection.
- (c) Garda vetting for both staff members was requested for review, as both disclosures were identified as due for renewal. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

### 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.*

### Compliance Information

- (1) Throughout the period of inspection, an adequate number of adults were observed to work directly with the children in attendance.
- (3) The adult to child ratio met the requirement for a sessional category service, which is 1 adult to 11 children. In

the morning, the care room was attended by 14 children, aged 3 to 4 ½ years, with 2 adults present.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

From the 18 child records available, a sample of 10 were reviewed.

(1) The registration forms contained the required information under parts (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) and (i) of this regulation.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (f) Information regarding whether or not the child had any illness, disability, allergy or special need, was unavailable on one of the records.
  - (g) The name and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner was not detailed on two of the forms.
  - (h) Information in relation to the child’s immunisation status was unavailable on two of the ten records.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (f) The written response outlined that this information has now been included. As a preventive measure, parents will be reminded to complete each section of the form.
- (g) The doctors' details have now been included within the relevant sections.
- (h) The immunisation section has been completed. As a preventive measure, parents will be prompted to spend more time completing the forms and the registered provider will try to allocate time to check that each form is completed correctly.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence in relation to the updated forms.

### Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted by the registered provider are accepted in meeting the regulatory requirements.

## 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)

#### Physical and material environment:

- The service consisted of a large, brightly painted care room, with colourful wall displays, which created a warm, inviting environment.
- The care room was equipped with an adequate amount of child sized tables and chairs. This enabled the children to comfortably participate in tabletop activities, such as arts and crafts, jigsaw making and mealtime routines.
- Materials were displayed on low-level shelving, which supported children to make choices and initiate self-directed play and activities.
- Key areas of development, such as fine motor skills, creativity, imagination, language and cognition, were supported through the provision of play and learning resources, such as:

- Jigsaws, threading materials and connectable shapes
- A broad range of Montessori materials
- Well stocked play kitchens, dolls houses and accessories
- Train sets, plastic bricks and people figures
- Books
- An outdoor play environment was provided at the entrance to the service and was directly accessible from the care room. Available play resources included a climbing frame with a slide, activity trays and a mud kitchen, which promoted gross motor development and sensory play.

### 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's entrance gate was found to be secure upon the inspector's arrival and was maintained secure when not in use. This practice minimised the risk of a child exiting unsupervised.
- A combination of fencing, hedging and a secured gate provided an enclosure of the outdoor play space.
- The children's access to the staff sanitary facility was prevented, through ensuring the security of this door from the exterior.
- Visibility strips were fitted to low-level glass panel doors.
- There were no blind cords in the care room.
- Heavy furniture and display units were securely anchored.
- The television was securely wall mounted and the attached cables were out of the children's reach.

##### Infection control:

- Facilities were in place to support effective handwashing practice; warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels were available at each of the wash hand basins. The children were observed to wash their hands after using the toilet and before the mid-morning snack was facilitated. This practice was supervised by one of the adults.
- Foot pedal operated bins were provided to dispose of used paper towels.
- Individual coat hooks were in use to store the children's bags and coats.
- The children's perishable snacks were refrigerated until the mid-morning meal was accommodated.

### Fire safety:

- The service's fire exit doors were free from obstruction.
- Fire exit signage was illuminated.
- All visible firefighting equipment was safely wall mounted.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General safety:

The Garda vetting disclosure available for one of the adults who worked at the service, was not dated within the previous three years, in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

In her written reply, the registered provider outlined that the Garda vetting has been applied for. As a preventive measure, the vetting will be reapplied for every two years, to avoid delay.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence in relation to the Garda vetting application.

### Summary Comment

Evidence of an application for Garda vetting in respect of the staff member was reviewed. However, a copy of the complete Garda vetting has not been submitted to date. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt. The non-compliance in relation to Regulation 23 remains outstanding.

## 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) One of the adults who worked with the children had completed First Aid Response (FAR) training, with a copy of the corresponding certificate available. This adult was available to the children at all times, during the service's opening hours.

## Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

Insufficient first aid supplies were maintained. Both of the available sterile eye pad dressings were noted to be out of date and there were no medium, or extra-large sized sterile wound dressings available.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The sterile eye pads were replaced with a brand that will be in date for a longer time span. Larger sized sterile wound dressings have been added in stocks above the required quantities. These dressings will be in date for more than one year, which should avoid waste and the need to replace within a year.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

## Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was accepted in meeting the requirements of the regulation.

### 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) A record which evidenced the undertaking of fire drills was maintained. The most recent fire drill was dated 5 January 2026.
  - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment on the premises was available. The firefighting equipment was last serviced on 9 October 2025 and the smoke alarm was tested on 20 February 2025.
- (4) The service's fire evacuation notice was displayed in the care room.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

#### Compliance Information

- (e) Two children's toilets, with two adjacent wash hand basins were provided adjoining the care room. A separate staff sanitary facility was also located in this area. This consisted of one toilet and one wash hand basin. The inspector was advised that all of the children were toilet trained, therefore, a nappy changing unit was not required.