

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC274		
Name of Service:	Montessori Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh		
Address of Service:	Curraheen Road, Bishopstown, Cork, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	T12 RR68		
Name of Registered Provider:	Sinéad Hennessy		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	15/10/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick, V94 XT5F		
Inspection undertaken by:	S O'Brien		
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	N/A
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Description of service

Montessori Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh is an early years service based in Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh boys national school in Cork city. The service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years and offers a sessional service and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. The service operates from 8.25am to 11.25am and from 11.35am to 2.35pm, Monday to Friday. The service consists of one care room with sanitary facilities for the children. The service also has an outdoor area located on the grounds of the national school.

Staffing

There are five staff members employed in the service. The registered provider is based in the service. On the day of inspection, four staff members were present. A student on work placement was also present.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, and 24; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 8. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 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. 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 II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) On discussion with the registered provider and reviewing the attendance records the following change had not been notified to the agency 60 days before the change took place:

- The service was operating from 8.30am to 11.30am and from 11.35am to 2.35pm each day. The service was registered to operate from 8.40am to 11.40am and from 11.55am to 2.55pm.

It is acknowledged that the registered provider submitted an application to the change of circumstance department on 17 October 2025 to correct the times on the register and this was approved on 20 October 2025.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated in their response:

Corrective Action

A change of circumstances application was submitted to the relevant department.

Preventive Action

If the hours of operation are to change, the service will complete a change of circumstance application.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documented evidence of the approved change in circumstances application was submitted to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered providers response and documented evidence was reviewed by the inspectorate and has met the regulatory requirements.

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)
- (a) The registered provider was the designated person in charge, and two named persons were available to deputise if needed.
- (b) The registered provider and the two named persons were on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service, and all adults were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Six recruitment files were reviewed including the file of the registered provider and the student.
- (a) Eight of the references available were from a past employer and were validated.
- (b) Four of the references available were from a reputable source and were validated.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the five staff and one student. 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) Police vetting was not required as any of the staff members or the student had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) All five staff members held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 or a qualification deemed equivalent by the minister. The student on work placement did not require a qualification.

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) The registered provider ensured there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children on the day of inspection.
- (3) There were 22 children aged between 2 and 4 years being cared for by 4 staff members, therefore the service was adhering to the minimum adult to child ratios.

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

- (1) A sample of 12 children records were reviewed and were observed to be complete and contained the relevant information outlined from (a) to (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

- On arrival to the service some children were going to the outdoor area, and some remained in the care room. The children were observed to freely moved around the environments partaking in activities of choice.
- Individual water bottles were observed to be stored on a child height shelf and were freely accessible to the children throughout the day.
- Children's lunches were prepared by the parents and guardians. Lunches consisted of sandwiches, yoghurts, fruit, cheese and crackers.
- Children were supported with toileting and handwashing as needed while the staff encouraged independence.
- Individual care plans were available for the children who required them. The staff were aware of the care plans and outlined that the plans supported them in their care practices.

Supporting relationships

- A family wall was on display in the care rooms which supported identity and belonging. During circle time, the children were observed speaking about the families as one child had a new baby in the family.
- Children were given time to reflect on their day and allowed time to regulate their emotions. This was observed through a counting activity before snack.
- The staff were observed interacting with each child in a kind and respectful manner. The staff ensured they were at the child's level when communicating with them. the staff were observed listening to each child's voice. This was observed at reading time when one child did not want to partake.
- The registered provider outlined the importance of partnership with parents within the service.

Physical and material environment

- The children had a rest area in the care room with cushions and mats to sit and take some time away from the larger group.
- Story books and sensory materials such as coloured rice was available to the children in the care room which was based on the theme of Halloween and Autumn which the children were learning about. The children learned about a bat in circle time.
- The care room had a kitchen area with dress up clothes which allowed for children to partake in role play.
- Plastic bricks and cars were available to develop fine motor skills and coordination.
- The outdoor area was observed to be a natural environment with bark and grass surfaces. Open ended items such as a poly tunnel, rocks and a mud kitchen was available to the children to promote their imagination.

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 main entrance door to the service was secured on arrival to the service. This prevented any child from exiting unsupervised or any unauthorised access to the service.
- The outdoor area was a secure environment for the children to play in with a fence and a gate.
- Visibility strips were placed on the entrance door and windows.
- The toys and equipment observed were in good condition on inspection.
- Cables and flexes were observed to be out of reach to children during the inspection.
- Heavy equipment such as shelving was observed to be anchored to prevent them from tipping over.
- Medicines were observed to be stored out of reach to children and were in their original containers and were clearly labelled.

Infection Control:

- Perishable food items from the children's lunches were stored on a refrigerator to prevent foods from spoiling.
- The children were observed washing their hands before snack and after outdoor play.
- Warm water, soap and paper towels were available to the children in the sanitary area. Water temperatures were recorded between 31.2°C and 38.5°C.

- The care room was naturally ventilated through open windows.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were observed to be clear and free from obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for one staff member. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

It is acknowledged that a Garda vetting application had been made in respect of the staff member on 16 October 2025.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider stated in their response:

Corrective Action

An updated Garda vetting in respect of the staff member was submitted and is now in the staff file.

Preventive Action

An application for updated Garda vetting will be made before it is due to expire.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Documented evidence of the Garda vetting disclosure was submitted to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered providers response and documented evidence was reviewed by the inspectorate and has met the regulatory requirements.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) no person other than-
- (i) pre-school child attending the service,
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,
 - (iii) an employee, or
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and
- (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The inspector reviewed the attendance records of the children in attendance in the service, and it was observed that each child was checked in and out of the service.

- (3)
- (a) The registered provider requested the inspector to check in and out of the service on arrival and departure.
 - (b) There was a daily record kept in the service of the entry of any such person to the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured. The insurance policy commenced on 28 March 2025 and expired on 27 March 2026.