

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC302
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Nathleen's Montessori School
-------------------------	------------------------------

Address of Service:	Percival St, Kanturk, Co. Cork
----------------------------	--------------------------------

Eircode:	P51 Y91R
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Nathleen Kelleher O'Doherty
-------------------------------------	-----------------------------

Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	----------------------

Date(s) of Inspection:	23/04/2026
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	19
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Second Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	F Collins
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Nathleen's Montessori School is a privately owned part-time service operating in Kanturk since 1994.

The service is situated in the town of Kanturk and is accessed by the alleyway into the premises.

The service provides a part-time and sessional service from Monday to Friday for children aged from 2 to 6 years.

The part-time service operates daily from 09.00-14.00 and the sessional services operate from 09.00-12.00.

The service also offers a registered school aged care service from 08.00-09.00 and from 13.50 -18.00 daily.

The service operates from a single-story converted premises. The premises consists of a small entrance lobby which opens into Room A, which is used for the sessional, part time and school aged care services. Room B an inner room is used for the morning sessional service for the younger children and is accessed through Room A. The children from Room B join the children in Room A for the hours between 12.00 and 14.00 daily.

There are adult and children's toilet facilities and a kitchen used for staff breaks and for the reheating of the children's food.

The service does not have a designated outdoor area but has access to the local park for outdoor play.

Staffing

There were nine adults employed in the service including the registered provider. One of the adults was employed for administration work but did not attend the service.

Six of the eight adults who cared for the pre-school children held qualifications at level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework 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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- 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, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN 1821	23/04/2026	Garda Vetting was not in place for one adult working with the pre-school children.
Status	The corrective and preventive actions outlined by the registered provider are accepted to manage the risks identified on the statutory notice with proof of application received.	

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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,
- (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 ensured that there was a person in charge in the service during the operation of the service. On the day of inspection, the named deputy person in charge was onsite when the inspector arrived and the registered provider arrived later in the morning. Should the registered provider or the named deputy not be onsite the registered provider had a further named person available to act in the position of person in charge.
- (b) The staff roster indicated there was a named person in charge or a named deputy onsite.
- (c) All staff were aware of the management structure within the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(2) There were nine adults named as working in the service. Of these four staff were new to the service since the last inspection and their full staff file was assessed. In addition to this the renewal of Garda vetting was assessed for five adults.

(a) Of the eight references required, all eight validated references were available from past employers.

(c) Up to date Garda Vetting was available on file for three of the four adults that had commenced in the service since the last inspection. Renewed Garda Vetting was also available and on file for five of the staff that required their Garda Vetting to be renewed. This is in compliance with the regulatory notice issued to services ensuring all staff have their Gara Vetting renewed on a three yearly basis.

(d) Police vetting was not required for any of the four new staff.

(4) Three of the four new staff working directly with the children held a qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (c) See statutory notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice 1821 served.

(3) The vetting processes were not completed prior to a staff member commencing in the service and having access to children. This poses a risk of staff who may not be appropriate having access to children.

(4) Two adults working directly with the children did not have a qualification in Early Childhood Education and Care at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework. Not having appropriately qualified adults caring for children may hinder the appropriate care and education provided to them.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(3) The registered provider has committed to ensuring all staff are vetted prior to commencing in the service or prior to returning to the service. A staff member has been appointed to take charge of all vetting documents and ensure they are up to date and correct. Staff have bene informed of the process and for the need to maintain up to date vetting.

(4) Staff have agreed to enrol in a relevant course to achieve the Level 5 qualification.

Supporting documentation submitted

(3) Assurances received on the corrective and preventive action form are accepted as proof of actioning the need for all staff to be vetted prior to commencing in the service.

(4) Enrollment for one staff member on a relevant course has been received and assurances that the remaining staff member is sourcing a relevant training course have been assured on the corrective and preventive action form.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Summary Comment

The requirements for this regulation have been met with all staff having up to date vetting and processes in place to ensure the staff are qualified.

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.

(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

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there were adequate staff available to care for the children at all times.
- (2) There were between three and four staff working directly with 16 children in Room A on the morning of the inspection. There were two adults working directly with 13 children attending Room B on the morning of the inspection. During the part-time hours there was five staff working with 19 children. Staff were able to take their breaks and ensure adequate adults were working with the children. Two of the staff had been employed under the access and inclusion model scheme.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

Basic Needs:

- The children's needs were met around food and drink provision. Snacks were served at 10.00 am for the morning session and lunch was served at 12.30. Drinks of water were available to the children throughout the day. Snack was served early on the day of inspection as the plan was to go to the park to play.
- The temperature of the care rooms was recorded at 20.3 and 21.7°C respectively. Air-conditioning was available and used when needed. The windows in Room A were open to allow for ventilation and ensure the comfort of the children.
- The older children used the toilet independently and assistance was given with the younger children who needed reminders with hand washing and with their clothing.
- Four children required nappy changes, and this was done after snack time and before going to the park.
- Attention was observed with the personal care of the children with children's noses cleaned as needed.
- The children were free to move about and access the equipment independently.
- No child required sleep on the day of inspection.

Supporting Relationships:

- The children were supported by the staff at snack time when staff helped the children with their food and sat with the children when required.
- The service communicated with parents daily at drop off and collection.
- Each child was supported to participate in each activity, and it was observed when some needed more help this was offered.
- Activities that have been completed in the service were displayed in the children's scrapbooks and artwork was hanging on the walls of Room B.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- The children knew each of the staff and sought their help when needed. A child who had difficulty in communication was observed to have support in non-verbal communication where the child's needs were met and picture cards were available to assist with communication.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The layout of the indoor environment allowed for the children to use their imagination in choosing and doing activities. There were areas of interest, and these were grouped so children could play in small and large groups.
- Child height tables were accessible, and the children could sit at these in comfort and participate in colouring, playing with moulding clay or when playing with jigsaws, matchbox sized cars, blocks and bricks.
- Gross motor development was encouraged when going to the park and when playing there, as each child walked to the park and when they played with swings, climbing frames, basket swings and roundabouts.
- Fine motor development was encouraged through use of arts and crafts, blocks and bricks and jigsaws.
- Sensory play was developed using moulding clay and through painting, pictures were hanging on the walls and added to the scrapbooks for each child.

Outdoor Environment:

- The service used the local playground for their outdoor play activities. The park was a grass area, and the playground was covered in soft matting.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The equipment and materials used within the service were appropriate to the age of the children attending.

A large selection of, blocks and bricks, farm and wild animals, cars and racetracks.

Home corners, dolls and dolls dress up, arts and crafts.

The equipment was accessible within the care rooms and stored on easily accessible shelving.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 doors into the service were secured with thumb turn locks and there were two doors secured to ensure the children could not gain access to the alley and the road.
- The window openings were out of the reach of the children, and no child could climb out the window.
- The electric cables were out of reach of the children and were made safe.
- The toys assessed were safe and did not appear to have any pinch or crush points.
- The cleaning equipment was stored out of reach of the children
- There was no full-length glass door/window that did not have pictures on them to indicate their presence and ensure no child walked into them.
- No hot drinks were consumed by the staff near the children.
- The outdoor area used by the service was enclosed with fencing and the children could play freely.
- The walk to the outdoor area was near a river and the children were monitored; seven adults accompanied the children to this area.

Infection Control:

- All the food for snack and lunchtime was stored in the fridge to prevent contamination of the perishable items.
- The bags and coats for the children were stored off the ground on accessible hooks or in storage shelves.
- The windows were opened to ensure good air circulation.
- The rubbish was inaccessible inside. The bins were lidded and pedal operated.
- Tables were cleaned with appropriate disinfectant after tabletop activities and before snack and lunch time and the midday meals as provided by parents were served on plates.
- The playground where the children went for outdoor play was assessed and rubbish removed before the children arrived to play.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- There was hot water in the sinks in the children's toilets and in the adult toilet. The water temperatures recorded in the children's sinks was 26.1, 26.7 and 22.6°C respectively. The temperature of the water in the sink in the nappy changing room was recorded at 26.8°C.
- There was liquid hand soap and paper towels beside each of the sinks in use.
- Nappy changing procedures were followed with gloves and aprons worn, hands of children and staff washed after the procedure and the surface of the changing mat cleaned.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- No child slept on the day of inspection and records of sleep check were available for review should a child need to sleep.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exits were not blocked and were clearly identified.
- The fire extinguishers were safely tethered to the wall.

Outing:

The children were taken to the park for their outdoor play.

This outing was:

- Risk assessed, the numbers of children recorded, their names recorded.
- A first aid box was brought to the park and drinks of water.
- Tissues and hand sanitizer were also brought.
- The children wore high visibility vests to ensure they were easily identifiable.
- Seven adults accompanied the group to the park to ensure adequate supervision.
- Headcounts were taken outside the door of the service, halfway to the playground and at the playground. This process was repeated on return to the service.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. One of the two blue couches in Room B was torn and the covering missing, this exposed some foam underneath and rendered the couch difficult to clean. Not being able to clean the equipment used by the children may lead to cross infection and potential illness.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The couch has been removed, and all furniture will be assessed weekly and if signs of wear and tear will be removed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Photographic evidence of the couch being replaced has been received.

Summary Comment

The requirements for this regulation as assessed have been met.

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 registered provider ensured the children were signed in on arrival and were signed out on departure.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that all visitors to the service were signed in on arrival and a record of visitors was kept.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) Four of the staff in the service had first aid responder (FAR) training and this training was up to date. This ensured that there were staff appropriately trained in first aid available to the children during the operation of the service.
- (2) (a) The first aid box was safely stored and accessible.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children and a box was taken on the outing to the park.

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-

(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) (b) There was a record of the number type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment, the fire extinguishers were last serviced in March 2026. The fire alarms were last serviced on 26.03.2026 and a certificate for same was available for inspection.
- (2) (c) The fire alarm and fire extinguisher certificates were available for inspection by an authorised person.