

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CE083
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Harvard's Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Seafield, Quilty, Co. Clare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V95 VK24
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Davina Daly
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	25/09/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	16	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A.McCarthy
<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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Little Harvard's Montessori was established in 2010, in the rural village of Quilty, in County Clare. The service is a privately owned, purpose built, dormer style building, the children have access to the open plan care room on the ground floor. The building is located to the rear of a domestic dwelling. An outdoor play area is located to the rear and side of the service, and a section is partially covered. The programme of care and education is facilitated by the adults for children ranging in age from two to six years. The service operates Monday to Friday from 09:15 to 13:15 on a part-time basis for 38 weeks of the year.

### Staffing

Two adults are employed by the service. On the 25 September 2025 the registered provider and a second adult worked directly with the children. The registered provider provides a managerial, an administrative and a childcare role. The adults held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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.

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 - First aid (1)(a)(b)(4)

Regulation 26- Fire safety measures (1)(a)(b)(4)

Regulation 28- Insurance

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, the member of 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 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 person in charge, and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The registered provider and the deputy were available during the inspection.

(2)

Two files were available in respect of the registered provider and the adult working in the service. The findings included the following:

(a)

Four references from past employers in respect of the adults working in the service were available.

- (b)  
Not applicable, as the required references were sourced from past employers in respect of the adults employed by the service.
- (c)  
Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the two adults currently working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)  
International police vetting was not required in respect of the adults working in the service who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months.
- (4)  
The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)  
During the inspection, an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.

(2)  
On the 25 September 2025, the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Two adults cared for the sixteen children attending the service.

(8)(a)  
During the inspection two adults were available in the service.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)  
**Basic Needs of Children:**

The children's learning, development, and well-being was supported by the adults working in the service. The programme of care and education was facilitated in one, large open plan room and in the outdoor play area. The adults interacted with the children in a caring, kind and respectful manner. The adults listened attentively and conversed with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance. Positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions, and the children were offered praise and encouragement. The adults demonstrated an awareness of the children's personal interests and capabilities. An informal communication approach was observed during interactions with parents; the adults discussed the children's day and observations with the parents during departure times.

The children were encouraged to be independent while caring for their belongings, their play materials and equipment and whilst using the toilet. Areas were used by the children to rest and relax. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their age and level of development. The children and adults sat together and conversed amicably during mealtimes. Mealtimes were observed to be relaxed and sociable occasions.

### Physical and Material Environment:

The children engaged in open ended play and educational Montessori based activities in the indoor and outdoor environments. The open plan, care room was bright and spacious and was adequately resourced for the age range and stage of development of the children. The transitions in the changes of activities in each room were facilitated with ease, as the adults notified the children in advance of any change in the programme of care and learning. The children played individually and as part of a group and chose their individual activities throughout the session. The adults engaged in open ended discussions and singing exercises, played individual and group games with the children and sat with the children as they engaged in constructive, manipulative, sensory and pretend play. Designated areas of interest with appropriate and accessible supporting materials and equipment for the children. The defined areas included a shop and home corner, sensory area, rest and reading area, low level units with a large quantity of imaginative, constructive and manipulative equipment and toys.

The outdoor area offered a large space for the children to freely move and engage in a range of challenging, diverse, creative and enriching experiences for children. A covered section was provided at the rear of the building, and a large space was located at the side of the building. The children played a fun game together, whilst others played with the activity station, the basketball nets and slides. Two children learned to cycle independently with the support of one of the adults. A slide was located over a tunnel and raised area. A large section provided the children with a gravel pit, sand and construction area with a large quantity of supporting play equipment. The outdoor area was enclosed by concrete walls, fencing and gates.

### 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 to the service was secured to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility.
- The outdoor play area was secured with fencing and a gate to protect the children within.
- The children's arrival and departure times were recorded in a record book, and the children were supervised at all times during the inspection.

- Cleaning agents were stored in a secured area out of reach of the children.

### Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lined, lidded pedal operated bins.
- The children washed their hands at regular intervals during the day.

### Fire Safety:

- A fire drill took place during the inspection, and the adults and children readily identified the fire assembly point.
- The fire exits and routes were clear from obstruction throughout the service.

### Outing:

- The registered provider confirmed that outings are not undertaken by the service.

## 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)

An adult working directly with the children held a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the care room adjacent to the entrance.

(b)

The first aid box was available in the service for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

## 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)(a)

A record for completed fire drills were available. A fire drill took place on the 25 September 2025.

(b)

Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system maintenance service took place on the 25 September 2025.

(4)

Fire action notices demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed at both entry/exit points in the building.

## Part VI – Safety

### Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for twenty-two children attending the service. The policy is valid until 27 November 2025.