

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015DR048 |
|--------------------------|-------------|

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Name of Service: | Willow Montessori School |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Address of Service: | 33 Shanganagh Vale, Cabinteely, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin |
|----------------------------|---|

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Eircode: | D18 K580 |
|-----------------|----------|

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Name of Registered Provider: | Dearbhla O'Reilly |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Service type: | Sessional |
|----------------------|-----------|

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Date of Inspection: | 11/03/2026 |
|----------------------------|------------|

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 15 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

| | |
|---|--|
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8. |
| Inspection undertaken by: | R. Duff |
| 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 | Not applicable |
|---------------------------------|----------------|

Description of service

Willow House Montessori is a private childcare service which has been operated by the current registered provider since 2009. Sessional care and education is provided for children aged two to six years of age. The service operates daily from 9am – 12.30pm for 38 weeks of the year and is registered to accommodate a maximum number of twenty children.

The service is located adjacent to a domestic dwelling in a residential area of south Dublin. The children have access to an enclosed garden which is located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs two staff members including the registered provider who works directly with the children. On the day of inspection two staff members were present and working directly with the children.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child, information and records and 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-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-

- (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

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required, the designated person in charge was on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2)

No additional staff members have been employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 15 January 2024. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for each of the two staff members employed in the service. The following documentation was available;

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for two staff members employed to work in the service. Garda vetting disclosures from both staff were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Garda vetting which was dated within the last three years was available for one staff member, however, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice.

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.

(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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children for sessional services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 15 children attending the service being supervised by 2 staff members.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(h) Documented records demonstrated that children’s attendance was accurately maintained within the preschool room.

(i) An accurate staffing roster was available in the service, detailing the hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection.

(j) The service does not routinely administer medication, the exception to this, is prescribed emergency medication. The administration of medicine policy shared with parents in advance of registration reflects this. No medication has been administered since the last inspection dated 15 January 2024.

(k) The service had one written record of an accident and incident available for inspection. A sample of one record was reviewed and demonstrated that necessary information was recorded. The registered provider stated that no additional accidents or incidents had occurred since the last inspection 15 January 2024.

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-

- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place throughout the inspection. The children moved freely between rooms – exploring their environment, playing and engaging with each other and the staff. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed children by name,

used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. Language used by the staff members was observed to be encouraging, supportive and informative.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to a new activity and for mealtimes. Children brought snack from home which was closely monitored by staff for choking hazards. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment.

Drinks were readily available within the care room. During snack time children and adults were observed sitting together, with staff providing children with help when needed. Children were encouraged to clean up after themselves and assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times.

Children were observed to enjoy circle time with all children having the opportunity to have an input into the day's news. Staff and children took part in songs and story time and children appeared familiar with the routine of the day. The care room had cushions and floor mats to facilitate rest or provide a place for children to take a break from activities.

Engagement with families and parents is facilitated by the daily sharing of information on the child's day. This is shared through conversations at drop off and collection and supported by electronic means. On the day of inspection transitions from preschool to home were observed to be friendly and informative to parents or guardians collecting children.

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:

- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Medication and cleaning agents to include disinfectant sprays and liquids were stored in a locked cupboard or on a high shelf out of reach of children.
- Toys and equipment in the indoors environment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- The outdoor area was observed to be suitable, safe and secure with domestic bins stored out of children's reach and all outdoor play materials maintained and in good condition free from hazards.

Infection Control:

- The indoor and outdoor environments were maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, paper towel, liquid soap, and pedal operated bin.
- The children were supported by staff members to wash their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff members stated that the service does not routinely administer medication and the medication policy reflected this, however, staff demonstrated a clear understanding of procedures to safeguard children when administering medicine. This included getting written consent from parents or guardians, having a second staff member present as a witness during administration, and maintaining detailed records to share with parents or guardians upon collection.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape route was clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. 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 for one staff member working in the service.
2. In the hallway leading to the sanitary area used by children an internal door was unlocked. This door leads to a domestic dwelling attached to the service. This poses a risk of a child exiting the service unaccompanied or an unauthorised person entering the service. It is acknowledged that the door was locked by a member of staff during the inspection when the inspector brought it to their attention.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider has stated that an application has been made to the relevant bodies for updated Garda vetting, documents that require updating will be checked regularly.
2. The doorway in the hall leading to the domestic dwelling will remain locked at all times when the service is in operation.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance identified under regulation 23 relating to Garda vetting remains outstanding. The regulatory requirement has not been met. The registered provider is required to furnish the inspector with additional documentation upon receipt.

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.
- (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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drill was carried out on 05 March 2026.
- (b) Maintenance records available for review confirmed that fire extinguishers were serviced on 20 November 2025.
- (2)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- 4) Procedures detailing the steps to take in the event of a fire were displayed on the wall in the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) Maintenance records available for review confirmed the last service of smoke alarms was carried out on 02/02/2024. This non-compliance was observed on the last inspection on 15 January 2024.
- The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider on their CAPA response did not prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has stated that the smoke detectors have now been serviced. The registered provider has also stated that they have now taken ownership of the fire safety maintenance to avoid repeat non-compliance.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. This regulation will be assessed on the next inspection.

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 the sessional service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for the 22 children and an expiry date of 27 November 2026.