

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR141		
Name of Service:	Copperbeech Montessori		
Address of Service:	Copperbeech, Glenamuck Road, Carrickmines, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D18 X2N9		
Name of Registered Provider:	Niamh Scully		
Service type:	Part-time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	10/11/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM 6
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Brunel Building Heuston South Quarter Kilmainham Dublin 8.		
Inspection undertaken by:	A Spain		
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
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Description of service

Copperbeech Montessori is a part-time service which operates from dedicated rooms on the ground floor of the registered provider's private dwelling. The service is registered to care for children in the age range 2 to 6 years and currently cares for children between 2 years and six months and 5 years. The service is in operation between the hours of 9.00am and 2.00pm. Rooms in use include a playroom, storeroom, sanitary accommodation for children and adults and a kitchen. A prefabricated room directly outside of the playroom provides an additional room for play activities. An outdoor play area is available at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service is staffed by two adults which includes the registered provider who works 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 area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 8 – Notification of change in circumstances,
- Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment,
- Regulation 11 - Staffing levels,
- Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child,

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play,
Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,
Regulation 25 – First aid,
Regulation 26 – Fire safety measures,
Regulation 28 – Insurance.

The scope of the inspection included all rooms in use in the service.

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) The registered provider had not submitted a change in circumstances to advise the agency that the hours of operation of the service were changed to from 9.00am to 1.00pm to from 9.00am to 2.00pm

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The registered provider submitted a copy of the approved change in circumstances to the inspector on 9 December 2025. As a preventive measure the registered provider advised in the CAPA response to the inspection report that approval for any further changes in circumstances will be secured prior to making the change.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the approved change in circumstances as secured from cic.eyi@tusla.ie on 5 December 2025 was submitted to the inspector.

Summary Comment

The measures taken by the registered provider and evidence submitted have met the requirements of the regulation.

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,

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge and was on the premises on the arrival of the inspector and for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were held on file in respect of both staff members working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

A police vetting was held on file in respect of one staff member who had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as an adult.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

Validated references from past employers or reputable sources were not held on file in respect of the staff member working in the service.

(3)

All of the necessary vetting procedures in relation to securing and validating references were not conducted for a second staff member employed to work in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)(3)

The registered provider submitted two validated references from past employers to the inspector on 9 December 2025. In the CAPA response the registered provider advised that all references will be secured and validated prior to taking on any new employees in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Two references from past employers and documentation to confirm dates validations were conducted were submitted to the inspector

Summary Comment

The documentation submitted to the inspector confirms that the requirements of the regulation have been met.

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 attending the service. Two adults were working directly with 9 children during sessional hours in the service. Seven children remained in the service after sessional hours and this number was reduced to 6 children between 1.15 and 2.00pm.
- (2)
The inspector reviewed the childrens attendance records and the staff roster for the weeks of 22 September 2025, 13 October 2025 and 3 November 2025. Records confirmed that two staff members were in attendance at all times with a maximum of 12 children in daily attendance.

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)
Children were observed to be supported in using the toilet independently and were supervised for hand washing after toilet use. Childrens sat to have a snack and lunch which comprised of sandwiches, crackers and fresh fruit including apples and oranges. Water beakers were available to the children during the course of the inspection and at snack times.
- Children were observed to enjoy free play in the playroom in use in the service. Changes to routines including tidy up time before snacks and for story time, were observed to be signalled in advance by a staff member. Children were also allocated time to change into boots and play outdoors during the course of the inspection. A staff member was observed to move between and sit at a low level with groups of children playing and engage in conversation with the children.

The service maintained a daily diary for parents and guardians to view daily activities undertaken by children in the service. Art work undertaken by children including labelled hand prints and coloured shapes was on display in the playroom and available for take home at the request of children in attendance. Scrap books were maintained to show case activities the children were engaged in and for take home at year end. An electronic communications application was used to communicate reminders including dress up days and days off in the service.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

- (a)
- Low level tables and chairs were provided in the playroom for children to sit for table top activities and for snack times. Toys and play equipment including jigsaws, puzzles and games were located on open low level shelving for children to easily see and choose to play with. Children were observed to enjoy pretend play with toy mobile phones, tools including play hammers and drills, doctors sets and miniature wheel along toys and animals on the day of inspection.
- The outdoor play area comprises of a grass surfaced area for children to engage in energetic play, a smooth surfaced patio area for children to play on wheel along toys and an all-weather surface outside the wooden cabin with a low level picnic table and stools for children to engage in play activities and picnic outdoors.
- Children played outdoors on the day of inspection, driving cars, playing on trikes and in the playhouse provided outdoors.
- (b)
- A soft couch, soft cushions and floor mats were provided for children to take a break from activities and rest as required in the service. Books were provided on an open low level stand for children to sit and relax while promoting an early interest in reading.

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 on the arrival of the inspector and a doorbell was provided to facilitate access. The storeroom off the hallway provided a suitable location to store toys and play equipment not required for everyday use and for rotation in the service. A stairgate provided at the entrance to the playroom from the hallway and at the entrance to the kitchen, denied children access to these areas. Cleaning agents and equipment were stored in the kitchen and in an area outside of the playroom. Wall hooks were provided in the hallway to store children's bags and coats off the floor.

Infection Control:

Windows in the service were open to let in fresh air while children were present. Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and foot pedal operated bins were provided at the washhand basins adjacent to the sanitary accommodation and the nappy changing area. The laminated floor finish in the playroom, tiled floor in the sanitary accommodation, brightly painted wall, toys and play equipment were observed to be clean and in good repair on the day of inspection

Administration of Medication:

While the service did not administer medication, documentation was available to record the safe administration of medication should it be required.

Fire Safety:

A fire assembly point for the service was posted on a gate in the back garden.

Outing:

The registered provider advised that the service did not participate in outings.

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

(2)(a)(b).

A suitable equipped first aid box was stored on a high level shelf in the playroom and was easily accessible to staff and available to children cared for in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
A staff member with up to date First Aid Response (FAR) was not available to the children cared for in the service. It was acknowledged that one staff member had Paediatric First Aid training with an expiry date of the 2 May 2026.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The dates FAR training were both booked and completed were submitted by the registered provider. Email confirmation to confirm successful completion of the training were also forwarded by the registered provider as secured from the first aid training body. In the CAPA response, as a preventive measure, the registered provider advises that FAR training for a staff member will be kept in date.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted dates FAR training was booked and email confirmation of successful completion of the training subsequent to completion.

Summary Comment

The measures taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.

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-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (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)

The service maintained a record of monthly fire drills as conducted in the service. The last monthly fire drill was recorded on 3 November 2025.

(a)

The maintenance record for the fire extinguishers located in the kitchen and front hallway confirmed that an annual service was conducted in July 2025. The maintenance record for the smoke alarm system confirmed that a service was also conducted in July 2025.

(2)(a)(b)(c)

The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by a parent, a staff member and an authorised officer.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was posted on the wall in the front hallway at the entrance 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 service had insurance cover for a maximum of 22 children in daily attendance in a part-time service. Insurance cover was valid from 28 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.