

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL229
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Name of Service:	Naionra Montessori Lusca
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Address of Service:	Reamont Farm, Lusk, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K45 H960
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lisa Nash
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	16
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Coyle
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).

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Description of service

Naionra Montessori Lusca is a sessional early years' service which was established in 2014. The service operates from a purpose-built care room which is located alongside the registered provider's family home on the outskirts of Lusk village in north county Dublin. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) with two sessional services provided daily, from 9 am to 12 midday and from 12:30pm to 3:30pm through the medium of the Irish language. The service has a particular focus on outdoor play with 2 outdoor spaces available to the children, gairdín beag and gairdín mór.

Staffing

The registered provider employs two staff members all of whom work directly with the children. There were 3 staff members present in the service on the day of inspection.

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, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,21,23,24 and 28; These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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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-

- (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.*

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(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 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 when the inspectors arrived unannounced on the day of inspection and remained present on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

The files for the registered provider and 2 staff members were reviewed.

(2)(a) One written reference was available for the registered provider.

Three written and appropriately validated references were available from a past employer.

(b) Two written and appropriately validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and 2 staff members. The Garda vetting records reviewed demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the registered provider and 2 core staff members who worked directly with the pre-school children in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In the morning session (Grúpa gorm) there were 16 children aged between 3 years 4 months and 5 years 5 months being cared for by 3 staff members.
- In the afternoon session (Grúpa glas) there were 16 children aged between 3 years and 5 years being cared for by 3 staff members.

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

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Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

Basic needs:

- The atmosphere in the service was warm, welcoming and child centred as evidenced in the registered provider and educators consistently speaking to and about the children throughout the inspection. The adults-initiated conversations and listened carefully to the children's stories and questions in an interested, engaged and gentle manner. In turn the children were observed to be relaxed, confident and comfortable in their environment and sought out the educators with ease and familiarity.
- Healthy eating was promoted in the service, and this was seen in the healthy lunches and water bottles which the children brought with them to the service. The mealtime experience was observed to a leisurely sociable occasion, where children sat together with the educators chatting and discussing the events of the morning.
- The personal care needs of the children were attended to promptly by the educators with the children reminded to wash their hands when necessary. The sanitary facilities were located alongside the care room; the children accessed the sanitary facilities independently with discreet supervision and support provided as the children required it.
- The children's independence was promoted throughout their attendance, and this was evidenced when they were putting on their outdoor wear prior to going outside with children encouraged and supported to accomplish the task independently with gentle guidance and assistance provided as needed. The children were affirmed for their efforts when they had succeeded.
- Rest areas were available to the children throughout the care room with an area with child sized chairs and cushions alongside a wide range of reading resources in addition to a low sized couch located elsewhere in the room.
- There was a focus on outdoor play in the service with the children having rainwear and boots available to access the outdoor play area regardless of the weather. The doors between the service and gairdín beag remained open throughout the day to facilitate the children's choice as to where they wanted to play. All the children in attendance enjoyed time in both outdoor spaces on the day of inspection.

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Supporting relationships around children:

- There was a warm and supportive atmosphere evident in the service. The registered provider showed sensitivity and respect towards the children by introducing the Early years inspector to the children and explaining the reason for the visit in a child friendly manner.
- The registered provider and educators were observed to engage children in warm one to one interactions and natural reciprocal conversations about their home, and family life making reference to their siblings and extended family members by name. The registered provider and educators acted as play partners as requested by the children. This included occasions when educators sat having their hair brushed by the children and also taking on roles during imaginative play activities during the day.
- The children demonstrated a sense of pride in their success and eagerly shared their achievements with the registered provider and educators. The adults readily acknowledged and praised the children's efforts and accomplishments; the children were supported in their choice of activities with lots of joint laughter and shows of affection frequently observed during the inspection.
- The registered provider and educators were observed collaborating frequently during the inspection. This was evident in the regular interactions that took place when planning to support the children's needs and when coordinating the implementation of activities. Parents and guardians were observed being warmly welcomed by the adults when the children were arriving to and going home from the service with the opportunity taken for updating the parents and guardians regarding their child's day in the service taken at this time.

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 preschool room was laid out in clearly defined interest areas, and it was evident that each area had been carefully planned by the registered provider and educators to create areas that were visually stimulating and inviting for the children. Interest areas included an extensive home area to include a well-resourced kitchen with a range of open-ended materials to enable the children to extend their play, a baby care area including a nappy changing area, highchair, haircare items, a shop area and a range of dress up materials. A wide range of construction toys were provided along with transport materials and a

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broad selection of tabletop and small world resources. Montessori materials including literacy, numeracy and practical life resources were situated on low level shelves for the children to take as they chose along with a wide choice of jigsaws.

- Art materials were freely available in the care room and the children's artwork was valued and displayed throughout the care room.
- Children's family photographs were on display which enabled the children to establish a connection between the service and home.
- A wide selection of books was provided alongside the rest area and the children were observed to choose the book that they wanted to have read at various times throughout the inspection and the children's language development was further enhanced through conversation.

- Two separate outdoor areas were available in the service, one immediately outside the care room gairdín beag and a separate space to the rear of the service gairdín mór. The doors of the service remained open throughout the inspection which encouraged and facilitated the children to move freely between the care room and gairdín beag. gairdín beag was surfaced with a combination of paving stones and gravel, a water wall in addition to 2 water butts and a variety of water utensils were provided for the children to play with. A digging area with mud and play materials along with a sand table, 2 playhouses and bench seat were available for the children to use. A covered area directly outside the care room door contained a well-resourced play kitchen for the children to use. gairdín mór was an extensive outdoor play area positioned directly behind gairdín beag which the children accessed through a secure gate. The area was predominantly surfaced with grass; there were a wide range of play resources including a large sandpit which was located beneath a Perspex roof and contained a wide range of accessorial equipment for the children to use for digging and extending their play. The children had the opportunity to climb due to the provision of a wooden climbing frame which included a slide, swings and a climbing wall in addition to a separate dome climber. Large tractor tyres and car tyres were available for the children to use in addition to balance boards. A well-resourced mud kitchen with an array of supportive resources provided the opportunity for imaginary play. A wide range of ride on toys were available in addition to copious space for running and free movement. A large room in the outdoor play area with a range of play materials enabled the children to go inside should they chose.

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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 premises and outdoor play area were appropriately secured. This prevented a child from exiting the service unsupervised and unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- The water temperature in the sanitary accommodation did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children.
- The toys and equipment available to the children appeared in good condition with no safety hazards observed. Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- There was warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels provided for hand hygiene at the wash hand basin in the sanitary accommodation of the service. The children in the service were facilitated to wash their hands before eating and following messy play. Children were gently reminded, and assisted, when necessary, to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- Children's lunches which contained perishable food items including meat and dairy products, provided by parents for their snack, were refrigerated on arrival to the service. This reduced the risk of bacteria multiplying to levels which could result in food contamination.
- The children's tables were observed to be appropriately cleaned prior to and following the morning snack.
- Documented up to date cleaning records were maintained on the premises. The premises and the play equipment and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed being administered on the day.

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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-

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The service maintained accurate details of the children's attendance during the inspection. The attendance records were accurately maintained to reflect the children in attendance.

(3)(b) A record was maintained of all visitors to the service. On arrival the early years inspector was requested to sign into the visitors' book.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was in place for up to 22 children to attend the service on a sessional basis, valid until 27 March 2027.