

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TTUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY095
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Name of Service:	Frenchfort Montessori Pre-school
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Address of Service:	Frenchfort, Oranmore, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 E6W6
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Name of Registered Provider:	Geraldine Marmion
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park Hospital, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan.
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

The service is in the townland of Frenchfort, near the town of Oranmore in county Galway. This service operates as a sessional service for children aged from 2 to 6 years. The service operates from 09.00 to 12.00 Monday to Friday. There is one main playroom in the service and sanitary facilities. There is an outdoor play area located to the side of the premises where the children have access to outdoor equipment.

Staffing

The registered provider is on the premises daily as designated person in charge and has a person who is available to deputise in the event of an emergency. The registered provider is working directly with the children in the service and has completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at the required minimum level 6.

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 an examination of compliance under regulations:

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 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.*

(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 designated person in charge and had a named person available to deputise in the event of an emergency.
- (b) The designated person in charge was the registered provider and was present during the inspection. A named person was available if required to deputise.
- The 2 adult recruitment files were reviewed:
- (2) (a) There were 3 of the required 4 written and validated references from previous employers.
- (b) There was 1 validated reference from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available for the 2 adults however, 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 3 years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) International police vetting was not required as none of the 2 adults working in the service had lived in another state for a period longer than 6 months.
- (4) There was evidence that the 2 adults who required a childcare qualification had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and higher on the National Framework of qualifications or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working with the children on the day of inspection.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to.
There was 1 adult working directly with 5 children on the day of inspection in the morning.
- (8)(c) The registered provider operates this service single handedly and has a person to deputise in place in the event of an emergency.

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

19(1)(a)

BASIC NEEDS:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and the food observed was healthy and nutritious.
- The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their snack in a relaxed and unhurried manner. Crockery and plates were given to children during snack times.
- The children had access to a water on a low-level table which allowed them the opportunity to take a drink if thirsty.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.
- Hand washing was observed at appropriate times throughout the day. It was observed prior to snack time and after toileting.
- Each child's privacy and dignity were respected while they were either toileted independently or with some assistance as required.

- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couch in a designated rest and relaxation area in the playroom.
- Children were observed at tabletop activities, playing in the clearly defined interest areas and in circle time. The children enjoyed playing together, tabletop activities, art & crafts, imaginary play, messy and sensory play.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN

- A key worker system was provided by the registered provider giving opportunities for the children to form and sustain secure relationships with the adult who was caring for them in the setting.
- Transitions were observed to be thought through, planned and coordinated well by the adult allowing children time to adjust from one activity to another.
- The adult demonstrated respect and warmth towards the children in their care using soft and gentle tones, positive language and engaging with the children at their level.
- Communication with parents was at drop off and collection, by email, phone, via a multimedia application or arranged meetings.
- Each child had the opportunity to move freely between the numerous play experiences available to them.
- The service had learning journals for each child attending the service detailing their work carried out to date.
- Positive reinforcement was very much part of the day with children being told by adult 'well done, thanks for helping and keep the good work up'.
- Visual displays were on the wall and children's artwork was linked to the Halloween theme in the service.
- The service was linked into the local childcare committee for professional support.

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:

- Adult only areas were secured from the preschool children during the inspection. Doors were secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas.
- The main hallway and the fire exit area from the main playroom was unobstructed.

- The entrance to the service was secured to prevent unauthorised access and to prevent children exiting the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for 2 adults, however 1 of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous 3 years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting' posing a potential risk for children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Going forward all garda vetting renewals will be carried out within the 3 years required.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

A copy of the renewed garda vetting for 1 adult was submitted to the office of the Early Years inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The Early Years Inspector reviewed the documented evidence submitted and has deemed that it has met the regulatory requirements of this part of the Regulations.

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

- The registered provider had evidence that they were trained in first aid responder for children and available to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (a) The first aid box was stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the service.
 - The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped with all contents within expiry dates and was available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 firefighting 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) Written records of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service were available. The last date recorded was the 04 September 2025.
- (b) Written records were available of the servicing of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms. The firefighting certificate and the smoke alarm certificate was dated the 08 January 2025.
- (2) (c) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were available on the premises for review by the inspector.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were positioned on the wall of the playroom.

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 11 pre-school children on a sessional basis. The insurance policy for the full day care service is valid until the 27 March 2026.