

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015GY118

Name of Service: Kidzone Montessori

Address of Service: 86 Palace Fields, Tuam, Co. Galway

Eircode: H54 EK00

Name of Registered Provider: Michelle Farragher

Service type: Full Day

Date of Inspection: 25/07/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	6	PM	5

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:

Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency
2nd Floor, St Mary's HQ
Castlebar
Co Mayo

Inspection undertaken by: B Lavin

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 [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Description of service

This service operates a full day care early years' service for children aged from 2 years to 5 years. A service for school aged children is also provided. The service operates from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday and can cater for a maximum of 25 children. This service is in a residential housing estate in the outskirts of Tuam, Co Galway. This service has 3 playrooms, a kitchen area and children's and staff sanitary areas. It also has a well-equipped outdoor area at the rear of the building.

Staffing

On the day of inspection there were 2 staff working in the service including the registered provider.

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.

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.*

(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 persons in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspection, the registered provider was the person in charge, was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.
- Following a review of the service files and discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed that there were 7 staff members working in the service, which included the registered provider.
- (2)(a) Of the 14 references required, 8 references were sourced from past employers and 5 were validated.
- (b) There were 3 references from sources other than a past employer available and 2 were validated.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 7 staff members working in the service. The service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting for staff members every 3 years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Police Vetting disclosures were not required for any of the adults working in the service as none had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) Six adults working directly with children have obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education from Level 5 to a Level 6 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (a) & (b) Three written and validated references for 2 staff members were not on file. Six written references were on file for 4 staff members, but these were not validated.
- (4) One staff member working directly with the children did not have the required level 5 qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2) (a) & (b) Nine written and validated references are now on file for the adults working in the service. Prior to staff members starting in the service all references will be sought and validated.
- (4) The staff member is no longer working in the service. Staff members with the required qualifications will be recruited in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection.

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) There were 2 adults working directly with 6 children on the day of inspection.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

- Lady bird room: Two adults cared for 6 children aged 3 -5 years of age.

(8) (a) The registered provider demonstrated that a minimum of 2 adults were on the premises during the operation of 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, and

Compliance Information

Basic Needs

- Drinking water was available to all children in individual beakers throughout the day.
- Children were observed eating their snack which consisted of fruit, yogurt, cheese and sandwiches. Children were supported during mealtimes with opening food items when needed. Independence was encouraged with self-help skills.
- There is a weekly menu in place with the service providing the main meal at 12.30pm and snack at 3pm. The main meal served to the children was chicken goujons and chips. Snack was pancakes, fruit and crackers.
- Children sat at tables and chairs which were appropriate for their height and/or stage of development.
- The staff were observed sitting at the child's level and chatted in a respectful manner.
- The privacy and dignity of each child was respected during toileting.
- Appropriate rest facilities were available in the care room in the form of soft matting.
- Appropriate rest facilities were available within the care room should a child require a sleep during the day. On the day of inspection, no child required a nap.
- Children had easy access to the outside areas throughout the day and children moved freely between indoors and outdoors and vice versa.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions to sharing toys and equipment.
- Children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.

Supporting relationships

- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. The inspector observed children getting praise for their efforts in play and learning.

- The staff supported children to engage positively with one another. The children were encouraged to engage in play activities that required turn taking and sharing such as the ride on bikes and swings. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together.
- Each care room had a learning journal for the parents to view photos and descriptions of the children's, activities and learning.

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:

- Documented and recorded daily records of attendance were observed to be kept for all of children attending the service.
- There was a buzzer access system at the front entrance.
- The external play area was secure so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area.
- All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Foot operated pedal bins were available throughout the service and observed to be used appropriately by the children and adults when disposing of items such as paper towels following hand washing.
- Hand hygiene was observed to be practiced frequently by the adults and the children for example after outdoor play and before snack and dinner time.
- The preschool room and sanitary areas were clean and well maintained. The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded pedal operated bins. Child friendly handwashing posters were located above the wash hand basins as prompts to promote good handwashing practices after outdoor play, toileting and before mealtime.

Administration of Medication:

- On the day of inspection, no child required medication. In conversation, the staff demonstrated that they were aware of the correct procedures for the storage and administration of medicines.

Fire Safety:

- The emergency exit routes were observed to be free from obstruction during the inspection

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for 7 adults, however, 1 of these vetting disclosures was 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 safety risk for children

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

A renewed garda vetting application has been submitted and received. The registered provider will carry out regular file checks for all staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Documentation evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found 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.
- (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 written record was available to demonstrate monthly fire drills completed in the service.
- (4) There was evidence of the fire evacuation procedures setting out the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire the playroom and in the entrance lobby.

Non-Compliance Information

- (b) Records of the annual servicing by a competent person, in relation to the premises smoke and fire detection system and firefighting equipment were not completed since 27/11/2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A certificate of maintenance servicing of the fire detection system was submitted to the Inspectorate with a service date of 18/08/2025 for the firefighting equipment and 19/08/2025 for the smoke detection system. The registered provider will carry out regular checks of the dates of services due.

Supporting documentation submitted

Certificates submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection.