

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KE002		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Nurney Montessori		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Nurney Village, Nurney, Co. Kildare		
<b>Eircode:</b>	R51 PH01		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Elizabeth Snell		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	05/11/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	15	PM n/a
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 X38W		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Mulhern		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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).			
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable		

### Description of service

Nurney Montessori is a private early years service registered to accommodate children aged 2-6 years. The service operates from an adapted bungalow adjacent to the registered provider's home in a rural village. One pre-school room is available with sanitary facilities and an outdoor play area to the rear.

The service offers a sessional play-based service and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service operates 38 weeks per year and offers a morning session from 9:30am to 12:30pm.

### Staffing

There are three staff members employed including the registered provider. Two staff members were present and working directly with the children 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. 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 deputy person in charge, 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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise in their absence.
  - (b) The named person to deputise was on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2)
- (a) & (b) Documents were available demonstrating appropriate consideration of references. All staff members had a minimum of two references available. These were provided from past employers and from another source where they had only one previous employer. Records were available of verification checks carried out.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for three adults, two of which were dated within the last three years. 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 three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Not applicable as none of the adults had lived outside of the state.

(4) All adults held either a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed to be equivalent by the Minister.

## 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children throughout the inspection. There were 2 staff members working directly with 15 children.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement was maintained in accordance with the ages of children and type of service delivered.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

#### Compliance Information

A sample of 10 records for children were reviewed. The required information was available as outlined below.

- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
- (b) The date when each child first attended the service.
- (c) A system was available for recording the date when the child ceases attending.
- (d) The name, address and telephone number of parents and information where parents can be contacted.
- (e) Names and contact details of other adults authorised to collect the child.
- (f) Medical information, allergies, dietary preferences, additional needs, and other information specific to the child.
- (g) The name and telephone number of the child's medical practitioner.
- (h) Immunisation details.
- (i) Signed parental consent for medical treatment 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

##### Basic Needs

Children's basic needs were effectively met. A drinks station was available where children could help themselves to a cup of water, with staff helping when needed. The children used the toilet independently, with staff nearby to assist if required. They moved freely within the preschool room, breaking midway through the session to eat. They brought nutritious food from home in accordance with the services healthy eating policy. They sat together in two groups when eating with an adult at each table engaging in conversation and modelling positive social behaviour. This created a warm, communal atmosphere that encouraged the children to interact with the adults and their peers. Clear routines were established for handwashing after using the toilet and before eating. The children wore coats appropriate to the weather when playing outside.

##### Supporting Relationships around Children

The service fostered positive relationships with children by offering support through responsive interactions, gentle guidance and attentive listening. The adults encouraged children to work together during activities and resolve conflicts with kindness and respect. Group activities, such as shared mealtimes and collaborative play, were designed to promote social bonding, supporting children to build friendships and develop essential communication skills. The adults welcomed a parent to stay for part of the session to support the emotional needs of a child who was newly transitioning into the service. They described maintaining connections with families through phone calls and meetings to support children's social and emotional development.

##### Physical and Material Environment

The environment was laid out with designated interest areas such as a home corner, transport area and art station which allowed children to engage in imaginative play and creative expression. Open shelves displayed a variety of materials, including play dough, fine motor materials such as beads, building blocks and puzzles. These were within easy reach of the children, promoting child-led choice and decision-making. Low-level tables were provided

for meals and table-top activities. A rest area with a sofa, mat, cushions and small library was set up in the corner of the room, offering children a space to relax or take a break from more active play. The children had access to the outdoor area which had some equipment to support physical play and games including ride-on toys and balls. A sheltered space was provided with a play kitchen, mark-making materials and a construction area. The staff reported that they had plans to further develop the area.

### 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:

Measures had been taken to safeguard the children. The entrances and exits were secured to prevent unauthorised access or children leaving unsupervised. Equipment was appropriately maintained and items that could cause harm to children including cleaning products were secured out of their reach. The adults demonstrated an understanding of risk management and records were available of risk assessments that had been carried out.

##### Infection Control:

Appropriate measures were taken to reduce the risk of infection spreading. The premises and equipment were clean and well maintained; children washed their hands after using the toilet and before eating; waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal-operated lidded bins; cleaning schedules were in place which included the regular laundering of soft materials. Staff demonstrated an understanding of the exclusion criteria for infectious diseases to help prevent their spread.

##### Administration of Medication:

The service had a medication administration policy. Staff confirmed that none of the children currently in attendance required medication. Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of the procedures to administer medication safely if needed. This included obtaining parental or guardian consent and maintaining accurate records.

### Fire Safety:

All emergency exits were signed and unobstructed to allow for the efficient evacuation of children in the event of a fire. Staff were aware of the location of firefighting equipment and the assembly point which was signposted at the rear of the premises. Staff demonstrated an awareness of procedures to safely evacuate children from the building if required. They reported practicing monthly fire drills with the children and kept records of drills carried out.

### Outing:

Staff reported that the children are not taken on outings from the premises.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for all staff members. However, one staff member's vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

Garda vetting renewal has been submitted for the staff member, awaiting documentation.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

Copy of confirmation from National Vetting Bureau that an application was submitted for processing on 2 December 2024.

### Summary Comment

The action submitted has been deemed to appropriately address the non-compliance. The registered provider is required to submit a copy of the disclosure to the inspectorate once received.

### 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

(1) A person trained in first aid for children was always available to the children.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was appropriately equipped, easily accessed, and safely stored in a conspicuous position in the preschool room.

(b) The first aid box was available for use at all times.

### 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) Records were available of fire drills carried out in the service. The most recent drill recorded was dated 27 September 2024.

(b) Records were available detailing the maintenance of the firefighting equipment dated 5 April 2024 and the smoke alarm system dated 3 October 2024.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the preschool room.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

The adults appropriately supervised the children at all times during the inspection, primarily by keeping them in sight.