

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KE079
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	CK's Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	88 Barrington Court, Naas, Prosperous, Co. Kildare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	W91TH58
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Carmel Kelly
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20/05/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	15	PM	Not applicable
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35K1W4
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A Spain
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

CK's Montessori is a privately run sessional service offering the ECCE (Early Childhood and Care) programme to children between the ages of 2 and 6 years for 38 weeks annually. The service is currently operational between the hours of 8.45 and 11.45am. The service is registered to operate an afternoon session from 12.15 to 3.15pm. However, this is not in operation for the current school year. The service is located in a residential housing estate on the outskirts of Prosperous in Co. Kildare. The service is directly attached to the registered provider's residence. Rooms in use include an entrance hallway, a playroom, a kitchen and sanitary accommodation for the children directly off the playroom. Sanitary accommodation for staff is provided off the hallway. An outdoor play area is provided at the back of the service with direct access from the playroom.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs three staff members to provide direct care to the preschool children. The registered provider also works directly in the service.

### 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 areas of governance, health, welfare, and development of children and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on examination of compliance under:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment,

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels,  
Regulation 15 - Records of pre-school child,  
Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc,  
Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child,  
Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials,  
Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,  
Regulation 25 – First aid,  
Regulation 26 – Fire safety measures,  
Regulation 28 – Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Records of pre-school child. The scope of the inspection included all rooms in use in the service and the outdoor play area.

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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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.

(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 both a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

Both the designated person in charge and the named person to deputise were present in the service on arrival of the inspector and for the duration of the morning session.

(c)

A clear management structure was observed on the day of inspection as the three staff members cared for the children and met their needs while engaged in activities in the playroom, during snack time and when playing in the outdoor play area.

(2)(a)(b)

Two references from past employers were held on file in respect of two staff members. A reference from a past employer and a reference from a reputable source were held on file in respect of the remaining staff member and the registered provider.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were held on file in respect of all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for each staff member.

(d)

International police vetting was not required as none of the staff had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as adults.

(3)

Records held on file confirmed that the necessary vetting procedures were conducted prior to staff taking up appointment to work in the service.

(4)

Records were held on files to confirm that all four adults working in the service had qualifications in Early childhood care and Education varying from level 6 to level 8.

### 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 worked and cared for the children in the service for the duration of the inspection. The inspector reviewed the childrens attendance records and the staff roster for the week beginning 24 March 2025. Records confirmed that the maximum number of children in daily attendance was 18 children with 2 staff members and the registered provider present.
- (3)  
The registered provider and two staff members cared for 15 children in the age range 3 to 5 years on the day of inspection.

### 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.*
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
  - (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
  - (c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) (a) to (i)

Individual children's records were held in alphabetical order in folders. A review of a sample of five of the children's records confirmed that the necessary information in relation to (a) to (i) was held on file in respect of the sample reviewed.

(3)(a)(b)(c)

The records in respect of paragraph (1) were available for inspection by a parent or guardian in respect of their child, an employee authorised on behalf of the registered provider and the inspector on the day of inspection.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

*A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

The service had a copy of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, which were readily available for the reference of a parent, a staff member and the inspector on the day of inspection.

### 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)

The service offered a play based programme of activities with a blend of Montessori. On arrival of the inspector, children were playing outdoors. Children were observed to be playing in the outdoor playhouse, which was set up as an imaginary creche on the day of inspection. Children were also observed making cakes and pasta with sand in the mud kitchen area and looking for bugs in the planting area. Children played with dolls, prams and the tea set on the decking area outdoors. The children were relaxed in the staff members company and offered to make a cake for the visiting inspector and were proud to show the inspector the spider found outdoors. Staff were observed to move between groups of children, use encouraging tones as the children engaged themselves in a variety of activities.

Staff were observed to assist children to wash their hands on return from the outdoor play area. Prior to lunch time both staff and children enjoyed a period of "meditation" to a tape. Staff were observed to praise the children following their participation in this period of relaxation.

The "class helper" for the day was observed to take great pride in placing plastic plates on the tables for children to place their lunch on.

In keeping with the Healthy Eating Policy which was reviewed by the inspector, staff sat with children at break time to give example of positive social skills and promote conversation between and with the children. Children enjoyed sandwiches, rolls, crackers, yogurts, cut strawberries and grapes provided from home. Children who were slow eaters were given unrushed time to eat and staff were observed to praise children for placing their plates in the sink after lunch.

Transitions between activities were clearly signalled. Thus, children were familiar with the routine in the service. Staff used "World Bee Day" to engage the children in repeating a bee poem and reading a book about bees. Other activities the children enjoyed in the company of the staff included drawing and colouring pictures, saying poems

and singing songs to motions and listening to the story book on caterpillars before home time. Children's need for comfort was accommodated as they sat on staff members laps during circle and story time.

Records were held in the service to advise of the activities planned for children based on their emerging interests and forthcoming festive occasions.

In addition to a newsletter furnished to parents on a term basis, folders were held in the service with artwork and pictures to illustrate activities the children undertook for take home. An electronic communications application was also in use in the service to furnish parents with weekly updates on activities undertaken and achievements of the children in the service.

### 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 playroom was well resourced with play and work equipment set out in defined areas of interest. Children's work was on display in the “every child is an artist” wall and in the “springtime on the farm” area. The small world area had a variety of animals and toys on wheels. The construction area had a stock of blocks, bricks and transport toys. A “self-help” station was provided with brushes, a mirror and disposable tissues. Arts and crafts materials in the creative area included colours, paint pencils, paper, shapes and colouring book. The planets in the Solar system, a world globe and a world map were provided in a Geography area. Montessori equipment including wooden jigsaws, shapes, cubes, connection and pouring toys, toys to promote numeracy and literacy was on open display. A range of puzzles and games was provided for tabletop activities. Toys and play equipment were located on low level open shelving for easy access by children to select as chosen. “Our Library” area was provided with a soft low level couch and a supply of books on an open low level shelf for children to rest and relax as well as to promote an interest in early reading

The outdoor play area consisted of a decking area, an all weather surface, a planting area and a grass area. A shed was available to store toys not in constant or everyday use and to rotate toys outdoors. A low level table and chairs were provided for children to sit, play and picnic outdoors. Toys and play equipment available outdoors included a mud kitchen, a sand box, rakes, buckets and shovels. Toys on wheels, a play kitchen with kitchen equipment and utensils as well as dolls, prams, building blocks and tool sets were provided.

### 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:

Entrance to the service was secured with a door bell provided to alert the service of arrivals. Coats and bags were hung in the hallway to avoid any storage in the passageway leading to the playroom. Cleaning agents and equipment were stored in the kitchen off the hallway, which was secured to prevent access by children. Cleaning agents to clean tables were located on a high level shelf in the playroom. Visibility strips were provided on the glass panel doors leading from the playroom to the outdoor play area. The outdoor play area was safely and securely fenced in by the walls of the dwelling, the back wall of the service and a concrete wall. A high level timber gate, bolted from the inside on the open gable end of the premises, guarded against unsupervised exit of children and unauthorised access to the children when playing outdoors.

##### Infection Control:

The brightly painted walls, lino in the toilet areas and laminated floor finish in the playroom were in a good state of repair. Toys and play equipment were observed to be clean. Daily cleaning check lists were maintained for the room furniture, sanitary accommodation, surfaces and play equipment. Liquid soap, disposable paper towels, thermostatically controlled hot water and foot pedal operated bins were provided in the sanitary accommodation and playroom. A wash hand basin was provided in the playroom to assist with handwashing after messy play. Staff were observed to wipe down tables after play and before break time in the service. The windows in the toilet areas and playroom were open to ventilate the premises. A refrigerator was provided in the kitchen to store perishable items contained in the children's lunch boxes.

##### Administration of Medication:

No medication was administered to the children on the day of inspection. Temperature reducing medication was held in storage in the kitchen and children enrolment forms had signed parental consent to administer temperature reducing medication in the event of an emergency.

##### Fire Safety:

Fire exit signs were posted on the entrance door to the service and the door leading to the outdoor play area. A fire assembly point was posted on a tree in the front garden.

##### Outing:

The registered provider advised that the service did not undertake 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

(1)

Two staff members trained in First Aid Response (FAR) with an expiry date of the 9 September 2025 were available in the service.

(2)(a)(b)

The first aid box was stored on a high level shelf in the playroom and an area easily accessible to staff caring for the children attending the 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 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 held in the service confirmed that the last monthly fire drill was conducted on the 12 May 2025.

(b)

The maintenance record for both the fire extinguisher and the smoke alarm system confirmed that a service was conducted in November 2024.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was posted on a wall in 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 at any one time. Insurance cover was valid from the 28 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.