

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LD031
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Name of Service:	Winnie the Pooh Montessori
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Address of Service:	2 Ballinacurry, Drumlish, Co. Longford
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Eircode:	N39 KR82
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Name of Registered Provider:	Olita Lagzdina
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23/01/2025
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Date of Regulatory Compliance Meeting	06/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.
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Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Winnie the Pooh Montessori was established in this location in 2009 as a privately owned Early Years' Service. The service provides sessional preschool care and education to children aged from 2 to 6 years. The service operates from 9:30am to 12:30 hours and 14:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday. The registered provider and staff member collect the children from their homes and return them home again after the session finishes. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE).

The service is located in a building adjacent to but separate from the registered provider's home in a rural location close to the village of Drumlish, Co Longford. There is one care room in the service with sanitary facilities. An outdoor area is located to the front and side of the service.

Staffing

The service employs 2 staff members including the registered provider who works directly with the children. On the day of inspection, the registered provider and a staff member were present 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 area of governance and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under

- Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4) - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1),(3) – Staffing Levels.
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.
- Regulation 24 – Checking in and out and record of attendance.
- Regulation 25 – First Aid.
- Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures.
- Regulation 28 – Insurance.

however, on inspection additional non-compliance was identified under

- Regulation 29 (e) – Premises.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

Additional Information

1. A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child was issued to the registered provider onsite by the Early Years Inspector on 23 January 2025 in respect of no staff member in the service qualified to administer first aid for children.
2. An email with photographic evidence of enrolment booking to complete First Aid Response (FAR) training was received by the Early Years Inspector on 23 January 2025 from the registered provider in relation to the immediate action notice. The response was accepted by the Early Years Inspectorate.
3. A second written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child was issued to the registered provider by the Early Years Inspector on 23 January 2025 by email. This was in respect of a strong smell of kerosene in the care room which was not ventilated.
4. Three email responses were received by the Early Years Inspector on 27 January 2025 from the registered provider in relation to the second immediate action notice. Further information and assurance were urgently requested from the registered provider by the Early Years Inspectorate on 28 January 2025.
5. A written referral was sent to the Chief Fire Officer in Longford County Council on 28 January 2025.
6. A regulatory compliance meeting was conducted by the Inspection and Registration Manager with the Registered Provider of the service on 6 March 2025.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, the staff member and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

The files of two staff members were reviewed.

- (2)
- (a)(b) Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of two adults employed.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for two adults working in the service. 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) Police vetting was available for two adults who had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months whose records were reviewed.
- (4) One adult working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) One adult employed and working directly with children attending the service did not have documentary evidence of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Minister.

This was a non-compliance following the inspection conducted on 13 June 2022. The corrective action submitted following the inspection failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) There are now 11 registered ECCE scheme children attending and 1 qualified staff in the service. The registered provider will make sure there are 2 qualified staff on premises at all times working with 15 children and 1 qualified staff working with 11 children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Two screenshots from the Early Years Hive Portal with 11 registered children for the service.

Summary Comment

The written response and photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 9(4). This will be assessed at the next 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.

(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) There were thirteen children attending the service being supervised directly by two adults during the inspection.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to on the day of the inspection.

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 main entrance door which led into the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the service. The staff members advised the inspector that they immediately cut/chop any food that may pose a choking risk to a child at snack time.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and play materials and safe storage of cleaning agents which were stored out of the children's reach.

Measures were taken to ensure that children who were transported by the two staff members to and from the service. It was observed that the children were all in child seats with seat belts placed around each child while being transported.

Infection Control:

The care room was observed to be clean and tidy. Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members supervised the children's

handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Staff members were observed washing their hands during the morning.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. The staff members were familiar with the required safe practices when administering medication in the service. There were no children attending who required medication to be administered while attending the service.

Safe Sleep:

A comfortable rest area was available to any child who wished to have a rest or take a break from activities for a while.

Fire Safety:

Emergency exits were kept clear to allow for timely evacuation in the event of a fire. There was a signed assembly point at the perimeter fence outdoor area and staff members demonstrated an awareness of fire evacuation procedures.

Outing:

The service conducts outings and an outings policy is in place.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for two staff members. However, the two vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. The following was observed about the oil-fired heating system used to heat the care room:
 - There was a strong lingering smell of kerosene in the care room after the heating was switched on by the staff member on arrival to the service with the children. It is acknowledged that the registered provider switched off the heating and opened one of the four windows in the care room at the request of the inspector.
 - The oil-fired heating boiler was located inside the care room in an enclosed wooden press.
 - A maintenance certificate for the oil-fired heating system has not been provided to the Early Years Inspector.

An immediate action notice in respect of a strong smell of kerosene in the care room which was not ventilated was issued to the registered provider by the Early Years Inspector on 23 January 2025.

3. The registered provider was unable to provide documentary evidence of the current motor insurance cover for the two cars used for the transportation of the children to and from the service.
4. Daily indoor room and outdoor risk assessments were not completed to identify and mitigate risk to children from any hazards observed.

Infection Control:

5. The bin used for the disposal and containment of waste was not foot pedal operated for infection control purposes. It was observed that the staff touched the lid to open it which created the potential risk of cross contamination.

Fire Safety:

6. There was no documentary evidence available that the smoke alarms had been maintained.
7. The two smoke alarms in the care room were battery operated. One alarm was not working, and the other alarm placed on the ceiling was continuously beeping.
8. The smoke alarm on the wall had an expiry date of January 2017.
9. The carbon monoxide alarm placed on the wall was observed not to be working as one of the three batteries was corroded at the contact points.
10. The carbon monoxide alarm had an expiry date September 2019.
11. The registered provider did not ensure that fire drills were completed monthly as the last recorded fire drill was 25 October 2024.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting had been renewed for registered provider. The staff member has applied for the Garda Vetting renewal.
2. The maintenance was done on the boiler, and the boiler was placed outside the premises.
3. Insurance disk for two vehicles have been submitted and placed in the staff folder.
4. The registered provider completes risk assessment every morning and recording it accordingly.

Infection Control:

5. The bins have been replaced with foot pedal bins in the classroom and in the Bathroom.

Fire Safety:

6. The maintenance certificate for the smoke alarms have been obtained.
7. The smoke alarms have been wired and replaced.

8. The instalment date of the smoke alarms has been noted, and expiry date have been noted in the smoke alarm certificate file. The smoke alarm on the wall for fire drills have been replaced.
9. The carbon monoxide alarm has been replaced and will be maintained and certified yearly to replace any batteries if necessary.
10. No response.
11. Fire drill documentation is saved electronically and set dates to when the fire drill will take place in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting document; application for Garda Vetting renewal.
2. Photograph.
3. Two photographs.
4. Completed risk assessment documents.

Infection Control:

5. Photograph.

Fire Safety:

6. Documents.
7. Photograph.
8. Photograph.
9. Photograph.
10. Not required.
11. Document.

Summary Comment

The written response, photographic and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 23. This area will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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.*
- (2) *Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.*
- (3) *A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) no person other than-*
 - (i) pre-school child attending the service,*
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*
 - (iii) an employee, or*
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*
- (4) *A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in each care room.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a),(b) The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.
- (4) The registered provider confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

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

- (2)
- (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in conspicuous position in the care room in the service.
- (b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There was no person trained in in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, immediately available to the children attending the service.

A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child was issued to the registered provider onsite by the Early Years Inspector on 23 January 2025.

This was a non-compliance following the inspection conducted on 13 June 2022. The corrective action submitted following the inspection failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The First Aid Response (FAR) course has been completed by one adult. A second course is booked for the registered provider on 15/04/25.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) First Aid Response (FAR) certificate received.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 25(1).

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.
- (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 of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was recorded on 25 October 2024.
 - (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced in April 2024.
 - (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) There was no maintenance record of the smoke alarm system in the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)(b) The maintenance certificate of the smoke alarm has been obtained

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1)(b) Maintenance document.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 26(1)(b). This area will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2025. The insurance provided cover for 22 children attending on a full day care basis.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Non-Compliance Information

- (e)
- The service has one toilet and one wash hand basin in the sanitary facility in the care room. Fifteen children are registered in the attendance record. There were thirteen children attending on the day of the inspection. Two toilets and two wash hand basins are required.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (e)
- A building construction plan have been made to build the second toilet during the summer holiday 18/08/25-28/08/25 when the school is closed.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Confirmation email from building company

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate.

Regulatory compliance is not met for regulation 29 (e) as the sanitary facilities remain unchanged. This area will be reviewed at the next inspection.