

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK062
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Diane's Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Community Hall, Tournafulla Village, Tournafulla, Co. Limerick
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V42CF30
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Diane Horgan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/06/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	13	PM	No.
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Browne
<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

This privately owned preschool service is operating from the Community Hall in Tournafulla, Co Limerick providing sessional care for children aged 2 to 6 years of age from 09.00 to 12.00hrs for 38 weeks of the year.

The staff and children have access to a designated playroom located upstairs in the community hall, an entrance area, sanitary facilities for the adults and children and a large, enclosed cement yard to the rear of the premises for outdoor playtime. The service is registered to provide care and education for 22 preschool children.

### Staffing

The registered provider and 1 staff member are working in the preschool service, and all have a childcare qualification.

An additional staff member is available to assist in the event of an emergency.

### 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*
- (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 registered provider was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present, and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.

(c) There was 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 member of the team.

(2)(a) All staff files were reviewed. There were two written and validated references available for all staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) References were submitted by staff from other reputable sources such as schools and colleges where two past employers were not available.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of A Garda Síochána were available for all staff working at the service. Garda vetting for the three staff members were dated within the last three years as per the regulatory notice, EYI-RN12.3 renewal of garda vetting, published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2024.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) The adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### Compliance Information

The policies, and procedures for the service were updated in August 2024 and were available in the service, accessible to the staff and parents to view and refer to as required.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection there were 13 pre-school children and two adults on the premises for the sessional service. The adult child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

### 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

(1) A sample of 10 records for preschool children were examined and each record contained the required information from (1) (a) – (i).

## 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) BASIC NEEDS**

Parents provided snacks for the children who attended in line with the healthy eating policy of the service, these included fruit, sandwiches, crackers and yogurts. There was a fridge available for the storage of perishable foods and drinks prior to their consumption. The staff sat with the children at break time and actively encouraged break times to be a social occasion.

All children were toilet trained and toileted independently with assistance given where it was required.

Children were observed to wash their hands at appropriate times during the sessions such as after toileting and before eating. Hand washing took place using hot water, liquid soap and paper towels.

The children could rest as desired throughout the morning on the child sized couch in the library area. The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the room. Children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a wide level of choice of activities. The adult modelled positive behaviour for the children and they were praised for their good behaviour.

Staff were observed to be kind, caring, calm in all her interactions with the children and used positive language. Parents were made welcome in the service at collection times during which they had the opportunity to share information about their child and their day. The children were observed to put on their coats independently when they were going home. The curriculum was based on children's emergent interests as detailed on the wall posters. Children were observed to work in small groups at different activities on floor mats on the floor or alternatively doing tabletop activities.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

This sessional service was operated from the local community centre in a rural area. The children had access to one playroom, sanitary accommodation area and an outdoor play area. The room was well resourced with a wide range of equipment, including real items, natural and sensory material and a library area. Materials were rotated according to the learning needs of children in the group. Defined interest areas included practical life, cultural area, mathematical, science, history, geography and language areas. In addition to the montessori equipment the children had access to a home corner with supporting resources, a farm with animals and other farm equipment, a painting easel, train set and a nature table. Children were observed moving freely between activities and the staff were available to help and assist where needed.

The outdoor play area was an enclosed, safe and secure area at the rear of the premises.

## 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.*

*(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.*

### Compliance Information

- (1) Each child was checked in by an adult on arrival to the service. At home time each child was checked out by an adult. The time of arrival and departure was documented for each child.
- (3) (a) No person other than a child attending the service, a person dropping or collecting a child, an employee or an unpaid worker could enter the premises without prior approval.
- (b) All visitors were signed in and out, documenting their time of arrival and departure and the reason for their visit.

### 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 had up to date training in First Aid Responder (FAR).
- (2) (a) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible position in the playroom.
- (b) The first aid box 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 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) The fire drills were practiced monthly. The last recorded fire was the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2025.

(b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2024 and mains powered smoke alarms was serviced on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2024. A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system.

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