

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK185		
Name of Service:	Tir Na Nóg Montessori School - Pallasgreen		
Address of Service:	Corelish, Pallasgreen, Co. Limerick		
Eircode:	V94 KR98		
Name of Registered Provider:	Mary O'Connell		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	22/01/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM No.
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2 nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.		
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan		
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	Not applicable		

Description of service

Tír Na Nóg is a private registered sessional pre-school service situated in a rural setting close to the village of Pallasgreen in County Limerick. It offers a morning sessional service, Monday to Friday from 09.00hrs to 12.00hrs. The service presently has 28 pre-school children registered to attend the facility.

The service operates from a modular building located on the grounds of the registered providers home. Within the premises the children have access to three preschool rooms and sanitary facilities. An outdoor play area to the front and the back of the school is available for outdoor play.

Staffing

The service is managed by the registered provider who works on site every day. There are two additional staff employed full time at the school. All staff working at the service have achieved a major award in early childhood care and education. The registered provider has completed the LINC programme, a course designed to enhance inclusion of children with additional needs in early childhood care and education settings.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations :

Regulation 9 1(a)(b) 2(a)(b)(c)(d) 4

Regulation 11 (1)

Regulation 19 1(a)

Regulation 23

Regulation 24 1 2 (a)(b)

Regulation 26 1 (a)(b) 4

Regulation 28

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 person in charge on the day of the inspection and there was a named person present who was able to deputise if required.

(b) The staff roster indicated that all three staff attended the service every day from time of opening to time of closure.

(2)(a) Two written references were available for each staff working at the service.

(b) References were from previous employers or from sources other than past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all three staff working at the preschool. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had worked longer than six consecutive months outside the jurisdiction.

(4) All staff held an appropriate qualification in early childhood care and education.

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 23 pre-school children under the supervision of the registered provider and 2 additional staff members. In Montessori room 1 there was 10 preschool children and 1 adult, in Montessori room 2 there was 7 preschool children and 1 adult, in Montessori room 3 there was 6 preschool children and 1 adult. The adult/child ratio was correct in the facility.

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:

The services objective was to ensure that each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. A healthy eating policy was available at the service and children brought a healthy snack each day with them to the preschool. Fruit, sandwiches, yogurts and crackers were observed in the children's lunch boxes at break time. Childrens drinks were readily accessible to them. Perishable foods were stored in a fridge each morning until required for break.

Children who were toilet trained used the bathroom facilities independently which were directly adjacent to each room. Hygienic nappy changing facilities were available in Room 3 for the younger children who required nappy changing. Regular hand washing by both children and staff took place at the wash hand basins in the room which helped prevent cross infection.

Comfortable inviting rest areas were available in each room of the service which children were observed to use when they choose to opt out of an activity and play or read alone.

Tissues and wipes were observed easily accessible to the children and all waste was disposed of in lidded bins. Children had daily access to an outdoor play area to the front and rear of the premises. Opportunities to run, climb, crawl and balance were available in this space. Weather permitting children spend as much time as possible outdoors each day.

Staff were observed interacting well with the children, using soft tones of voice, using the child's name and getting down to their level and making eye contact.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The physical and material environment of the service was carefully planned and organised to ensure each child's learning was facilitated. Each room had many interest areas well developed which included a construction area, a home corner equipped with a play kitchen, dolls and prams, an imagination play area with dolls houses, a rest /relaxation reading corner with soft furnishings located next to a book stand, an art/craft area with lots of paper and painting materials. The service had focused on the provision of timber, natural real type open ended play materials.

Children had access to a variety of materials and equipment which were rotated to suit the changing abilities and interests of the children and the changing curriculum plans throughout the year. The current theme being explored in each room was 'the very hungry caterpillar'. Books and play equipment was chosen to support this theme.

The outdoor areas of the service offered the children space for physical play, for movement and for exploration. The front garden was designed from natural materials and encouraged the children to learn about safe risk, to complete obstacles, to improve balance and co-ordination and to learn about gardening.

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:

- External doors were secured to restrict unauthorised access to the building and to prevent children leaving the building.
- Fire exit doors were unobstructed.
- Storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- Safe storage was available for toxic cleaning agents.
- Waste was inaccessible both indoors and outdoors.
- The outdoor play area was fenced and gated which made the area safe for children.
- There were no safety hazards in the outdoor play area.

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) The registered provider had ensured that a staff member held current certification in first aid response for children.

(2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box safely stored and easily accessible in the service.

(b) The first aid box was available at all times if required for a child.

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 drill took place in December 2025.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual basis, most recently in December 2025 and a record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises which were serviced in September 2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the playroom.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was available to cover the number of children who attended.