

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH175
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Snugglemuffins Montessori LTD
-------------------------	-------------------------------

Address of Service:	9 Moyrath View, Kildalkey, Navan, Co. Meath
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	C15 YY76
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Geraldine Collins
-------------------------------------	-------------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	12/03/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	0
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	---

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Inspection undertaken by:	D.Murray
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
---------------------------------	----------------

TUSLA An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency	Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2015MH175	1 of 15
--	--	----------------

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Snugglemuffins Montessori Ltd provides a sessional service to children from 2 to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). The service is situated in Kildalkey village and consists of 1 care room with an additional room for messy indoor play, sanitary facilities and an outdoor space to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 1 full time staff member and 1 staff member who works 2 day a week providing support under the Access and Inclusion Model (Aims).

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/ premises and facilities. 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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

A Regulatory Compliance Meeting was held on the 22/04/2026 to discuss persistent risk to the safety, health and welfare of the children which was identified during the inspection.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff members 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.*

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.
- (2) One staff member file was reviewed. The other 2 staff members files were reviewed at the last inspection and met compliance following the Corrective and Preventive Action (CAPA) process.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for this staff member.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(6) (a) One staff member was employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) Vetting procedures were not carried out appropriately to ensure one staff member was suitable and competent to work with children in the service.

(a)&(b) Two validated written references were not available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(d) As there was no curriculum vitae available on file it could not be determined if this staff member had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) There was no documentation on file to demonstrate that this staff member had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)(d)&(4) The staff member file was located and forwarded to the inspectorate on day of the inspection. A staff check list has now been created to ensure all files are available for inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff member file :2 validated written references, curriculum vitae and qualification.

Staff check List.

Summary Comment

The response received has been reviewed and accepted. The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

(3) From 10am there was the registered provider and 1 staff member with an additional staff member arriving to the service at 10:10am providing care and education to 13 children ranging in age from 2 years 3 months to 4 years 11 months.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) On arrival to the service the inspector recorded that from 09:40am until 10am there was 1 staff member present with 13 children ranging in age from 2 years 3 months to 4 years 11 months attending the service on a sessional basis. The ratio for sessional service only is 1 staff member to 11 children and therefore a 2nd adult was required.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)&(3) Due to weather conditions two staff were late. One staff member has left the service. A new staff member has now been employed.

The registered provider will ensure that in the future the ratio of adults to children will be maintained in the service at all times.

A Staff Absentee Policy is now in place for the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Supporting documentation submitted

New Staff member file: 2 validated written references, curriculum vitae and qualification.

Staff Absentee Policy

Summary Comment

The response received has been reviewed and accepted. The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances.

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:

- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(c)(g)&(h) Admission forms for a number of children had not been updated since the last inspection on 5/11/2025 with the following information:

- The date on which the child ceased to attend the service.
- The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner.
- Record of immunisations received by the child.

As part of the corrective and preventive action plan submitted the registered provider stated that the admission form template would be updated and that all required information would be gathered for the children, evidence of an updated template was submitted. The actions stated by the registered provider were insufficient to ensure that this non-compliance did not re-occur.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(c)(g)&(h) All application forms have been updated and have been sent to the parents of the children attending to complete.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

The registered provider will ensure that application forms are completed when children are enrolling in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Updated admission forms.

Summary Comment

The response received has been reviewed and accepted. The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances.

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 following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. The curriculum was child led, incorporating the themes of the month which was "Spring" and "Mothers Day" with art work displayed and potted plants with a poem attached for each child to bring home for "Mothers Day".
- From 10 am children's individual needs were well supported by the staff members who engaged in play activities with the children which included sensory play, art and crafts, singing and dancing. During activities children were offered choices and sought out the staff members for praise, encouragement and reassurance.
- Staff members were responsive to the children's cues should they need to use the toilet, with discreet supervision and reminders regarding handwashing.

Supporting relationships around children:

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- The staff in the service were observed to provide kind, caring and nurturing interactions to the children in their care by using age-appropriate language, gentle tones and talking to younger children at the child's level.
- The children brought in their own healthy snack from home. Snack time was a social event with children and adults sitting together with lots of chat and laughter observed.
- Engagement with families and parents was facilitated by the daily sharing of information at drop off and collection.

Non-Compliance Information

1. There was no care plan in place for a child who had additional needs and who was receiving supports from outside agencies. Care plans are needed to assess the progress of the child and to identify learning needs when working in partnership with outside agencies.

2. There were no observations conducted on 5 children to assess the progress of the children and to identify if additional supports were required. It was observed on the day of inspection that one of these children also required additional attention and supervision.

These non-compliances were found on the last inspection on the 05/11/2025. As part of the corrective and preventive action plan submitted, the registered provider gave assurances that care plans would be available to support children with additional needs and that observations would be conducted for each child on a regular basis. Evidence was not available to demonstrate that these actions were being implemented at this recent inspection and it was determined that the actions outlined by the registered provider were insufficient to prevent them from re-occurring.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1&2 A care plan is now in place and all observations up to date. Key workers are now assigned to children and a schedule in place for observations.

Supporting documentation submitted

Key worker system list.

A Care Plan template

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Summary Comment

The registered provider has but measures in place to address these non-compliances which have been accepted. These will be reviewed at the next 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.
- The 2 gates in the outdoor area had coded locks to prevent unauthorised entry.
- The heater on the wall in the children's sanitary area was out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand-washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis
- Perishable items in children's lunch boxes were stored in the fridge.
- Aprons and gloves were available for nappy changing to prevent the risk of cross-contamination.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The door to the staff toilet was open with cleaning products within reach of children. Children had access to this area when using the sanitary facilities. It is acknowledged that when it was brought to the attention of a staff member the cleaning products were removed.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

The following non-compliances were found at the previous inspection on 5/11/2025 and actions outlined by the registered provider in the Corrective & Preventive Action Plan (CAPA) were insufficient to prevent the non-compliances from re-occurring.

2. Risk assessments were not conducted for the outdoor area. As the service is located in a village with adjoining gardens, a daily outdoor risk assessment would be required to ensure no hazardous items were thrown into the outdoor area. As part of the corrective and preventive action plan submitted following the last inspection on the 05/11/2025 the registered provider gave assurances that risk assessments would be carried out on a daily basis and had submitted a risk assessment template. It was evident that the corrective and preventive actions were not implemented.

Infection Control:

3. The pedal bin for soiled nappies was broken as the lid had to be opened by hand which poses a risk of cross contamination. The corrective & preventive action plan submitted following the inspection on the 05/11/2025 indicated that a new bin was provided, however it was found that the bin was broken. It was evident that the assurances given by the registered provider were inadequate.

Administration of Medication:

4. There was no prior consent from parents for the administration of emergency medication although this practice was stated in the Medication Policy. As part of the corrective and preventive action plan submitted following the last inspection on the 05/11/2025 the registered provider gave assurances that consent for emergency medication is now included on the children's admission form however this consent was not obtained. It was evident that the corrective and preventive actions were not implemented.

Fire Safety:

5. There was no fire drill conducted for the month of February 2026. Following the last inspection on the 05/11/2025 the registered provider submitted proof that fire drills were being completed on a monthly basis as a corrective and preventive action. However, it was evident that the action previously stated by the registered provider did not prevent the non-compliance from re-occurring.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Cleaning products are now stored up high and not accessible to children.
2. A daily risk assessment is now conducted in the outdoor area.

The registered provider will ensure that all areas accessible to children are safe on a daily basis.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Infection Control:

3.The bin has been replaced with a new pedal operated bin.The risk assessment for the sanitary area now includes the bin.

The registered provider will ensure that the pedal operated bin for soiled nappies is functional and available on a daily basis.

Administration of Medication:

4. Consent for emergency medication has now been obtained for all children attending the service. The admission form for the service has now been updated to include this information.

The registered provider will ensure all admission forms are fully completed with all relevant information before children start in the service.

Fire Safety:

5.Fire drills are now conducted on a monthly basis. One staff member has now been assigned this responsibility.

The registered provider will monitor this practice and ensure that fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the following:

- 1.Cleaning products out of reach of children on a shelf.
- 3.Nappy bin replaced.
- 2.Outdoor risk assessment.
- 4.Updated Admission Form.
- 5.Record of recent Fire drill completed.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has but measures in place to address these non-compliances which have been accepted. These will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 20/01/2026.
- (b) A record was maintained of the mains powered smoke alarms and firefighting equipment on the premises. The mains powered smoke alarms and firefighting equipment were last serviced on 24/11/2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the entrance hall.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 22 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/11/2025 to 27/11/2026.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required.

Non-Compliance Information

1.The surround of the nappy changing mat was torn with foam exposed which did not provide a smooth surface for cleaning.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The nappy changing unit has been replaced. The registered provider will include the maintenance of the nappy changing unit on the risk assessment of the sanitary area.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of nappy changing unit.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(k) A record was maintained of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child which were signed by parents/guardians which confirmed they were informed.

Non-Compliance Information

1(i) On arrival to the service there was no staff roster available to determine what hours and days staff members were working.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A staff roster is now in place for the service. The registered provider will ensure that the staff roster is maintained on a daily basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff roster.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.