

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH211
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Name of Service:	Windmill Nursery & Montessori School
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Address of Service:	Windmill Road, Beauparc, Navan, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	C15 KD5K
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Name of Registered Provider:	Tracy Moore
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	31/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	32
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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 & AM. Cunningham
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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).

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Description of service

Windmill Nursery & Montessori School provides a full day care, part time and sessional care to children aged 0 - 6 years and operates from 07:30am to 6pm. Eligible children can participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). The service is purpose built and consists of 3 care rooms.

The rooms in the service were as follows:

Downstairs:

The Wobbler room facilitates the care of children from 1 to 2 years.

The Toddler room accommodates children from 2 to 3 years.

Upstairs:

The Montessori Room provide care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 5 years. There is a separate entrance to this room from the side of the building.

Other facilities include a cot room, kitchen, children and staff sanitary facilities.

Outdoor spaces are located of the Wobbler and Toddler rooms along with a large grass area for the older children.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 2 managers ,8 childcare staff and 2 kitchen staff members. The registered provider is available in the service to provide relief as needed.

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

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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 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, managers, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

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 inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Thirteen staff files were reviewed including the registered providers.

Twenty-six validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 13 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for 2 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

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(4) All childcare staff members 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.

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.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) During the period of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) On the day of inspection, the following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity:

The **Wobbler room** had 1 staff member and with 5 children ranging in age from 1 to 2 years all attending on a full day care basis. Another staff member was available to this room to provide relief and to support transitions.

The **Toddler room** had 2 staff members with 12 children ranging in age from 2 to 3 years all attending on a full day care basis.

The **Montessori room** had 3 staff members with 17 children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to school going age. Two children were attending on a part-time basis, and 15 children were attending on a full day care basis.

(8) (a) Two staff members were present at all times in the service as confirmed by the staff roster.

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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.

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:

- Children were observed engaging in tabletop activities, art and crafts and free play with children afforded the opportunity to choose and change activities if they so wish. The curriculum was child led with the theme of the month in the care rooms being "Easter" with art work displayed to reflect this theme.
- The service embraced outdoor play and learning. Children were observed enjoying outdoor play with both their peers and staff members. Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative.
- Dinner time was observed to be a social and pleasant experience for the children. Staff sat at the table whilst the children ate engaging them in conversation and provided assistance to the children as required.
- Children's nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Staff members were responsive to the children's cues should they need to use the toilet, with discreet supervision provided and gentle reminders regarding hand washing.
- The staff worked well together as a team. Children sought out staff members who readily acknowledged and encouraged the children's efforts and accomplishments.
- In the Wobbler and Toddler rooms any child who became upset were nurtured and cuddled until they settled. All children went to sleep at the designated sleep time after dinner.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff encouraged the children to engage positively with each other by adopting simple social skills such as turn taking, sharing in play activities and resolving minor disputes. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of

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friendship and working together. Children were given advance reminders to support transitions to a new activity and for mealtimes.

- Engagement with families and parents was facilitated by the daily sharing of information at drop off and collection time which was supported by electronic means. The staff members worked in partnership with parents regarding children who required additional supports.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1) (b) Soft mats and cushions were available in the care rooms should a child wish to take a break from activities to rest during the day. A cot room with 9 cots was available off the Wobbler room for the younger children requiring sleep. Stackable beds were available and placed in the Toddler room for the older children requiring sleep.

(3)(a) Three outdoor play areas were available, two are directly accessible from the Wobbler and Toddler rooms with play equipment suitable for the age and stage of development of the children attending these rooms. The Montessori Room has access to the large grass area. Each outdoor area had partially sheltered areas for outdoor play in all types of weather.

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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

Play materials and play equipment in the care rooms were visible and easily accessible to the children on open shelving at their height which supports children to have choices in selecting materials and equipment to play with. The rooms were well resourced and were bright and airy with home corners, construction areas, wooden building blocks, sensory materials and arts and crafts.

Equipment in the outdoor spaces included sand pits, tuff trays, activity unit with a slide and climbing wall, playhouses and kitchens, ride on toys, digging areas, mud kitchens, tyres, balls and benches.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a 4-week menu plan with a variety of dishes ranging from meat, fish and poultry cooked on site. On the day of inspection, the children had a choice of cereals and toast for breakfast. Morning snack was served at 10am which consisted of watermelon and bread sticks. The main meal of the day was served at 11:30am and consisted of salmon curry and rice. Evening tea was served between 14:30 to 3pm which consisted of pasta for the younger children and ham and cheese toasted sandwiches for the older children. Additional snacks were available for the children staying until 6pm if required. Water was the drinks of choice with individual cups available in the care rooms.

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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 observed in the service:

- The front door of the service was secured, a staff member answers the door to facilitate visitors to gain access. This minimised the risk of unauthorised persons gaining access to the service.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- Toys and play equipment were safe for the age group using them, in good condition and free from pinch and crush points.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed in the service:

- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.
- All bins for contaminated waste were foot pedal operated.
- Warm water, hand paper towel and liquid soap was available in the children's sanitary facilities.

Safe Sleep:

The following Safe sleep practices were observed in the service:

- Children who were in cots and on sleep beds were supervised by an adequate number of adults at all times.
- A sleep log was maintained on all sleeping children at 10 minutes interval recording their colour, breathing pattern and position.
- The temperature of the cot room and the care room for children requiring sleep over 1 year of age was maintained between the normal range of 18°C to 22°C.

Fire Safety:

The following Fire Safety practices were observed in the service:

- All emergency exit doors were accessible in the event of an evacuation.
- Fire drills were recorded on a monthly basis.

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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 27/03/2026.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the service. The firefighting equipment was last serviced on the 09/07/2025. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 04/02/2026.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in different areas on the premises.

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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 44 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2026 to the 27/03/2027.

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

In the Montessori room the surface of the presses in the kitchenette area were peeling which did not provide a smooth surface for cleaning.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The covering on the presses has been removed and the presses painted to provide a smooth surface. A maintenance record book is now available to log any furniture and equipment that requires repair. The registered provider will ensure that maintenance checks are conducted on a regular basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the presses painted.

Summary Comment

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