

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN022				
Name of Service:	Dunogue Montessori				
Address of Service:	Dunogue, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan				
Eircode:	A81 YP30				
Name of Registered Provider:	Martina Tully				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	29/09/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>11</td> <td>PM</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>	AM	11	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan				
Inspection undertaken by:	S Skinnader				
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
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Description of service

Dunogue Montessori is a privately owned service which is in operation since 2007. It provides a sessional service to children aged 2 years – 6 years. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme and opens from 9am – 12 pm Monday to Friday. This service is located in a rural setting outside the town of Carrickmacross Co. Monaghan. It operates from a purpose-built building. There is 1 care room, sanitary accommodation, and an outdoor play area to the back of the building.

Staffing

There are 3 staff members including the registered provider employed in the service who work directly with the preschool children.

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

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 member 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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

All 3 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection:

(2)(a) There were 2 written and validated references available for all 3 members of staff.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 3 staff members. The service had 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) Not applicable, from the information available for review international police vetting was not required as none of the staff members had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction as an adult for a period of 6 months or more.

(4) All 3 staff who worked directly with the preschool children had at least a minimum of a Level 5 childcare qualification.

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) On the day of inspection when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there was 1 room in operation and there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(3) The adult: child ratios observed in the care room were correct, there were 2 adults caring for 11 preschool children aged 3 - 4 years of age.

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (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)(h) All children present were signed in with their arrival and departure times documented in the attendance book.

(k) The accident and incident book was reviewed. All forms were complete and contained the required manager, staff and parental signatures to confirm that they had been informed about the incident / accident.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(i) There was no weekly staff rota available in the service which documented the staff who were rostered to work.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A Staff Roster has been implemented.

The staff roster has been put into a folder with title on the front and has been placed into a display wall mounted holder for weekly use.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of staff rota.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response and supporting evidence was reviewed and accepted. The non-compliances have been addressed.

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

There was 1 care room in operation on the day of the inspection.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs:

- All lunches were brought in by the children. The children's drinks cups were readily accessible to them in the care room and the children could go and take a drink whenever they required one. Assistance was given to the children who required help with opening lunches and certain foods and the staff sat with the children while they ate their lunch. The children were not rushed and time was given to all children to finish their lunches.
- All children had access to the outdoor area and a change of environment to the outdoor area. Children were dressed appropriately to go outside.
- Independence with toileting was promoted for the children who were toilet trained, the younger children were offered the opportunity to use the toilet before going outside. Discreet supervision was also provided when children were brought in by staff members from the outside to go to the toilet. Gentle handwashing reminders were given to the children after toileting.
- Transitions between activities and going outside were observed to be smooth and no behavioural issues were observed. Children were observed to come and ask the staff for timers to facilitate turn taking in the use of bikes in the outdoor area.

Supporting Relationships

- The children actively sought out staff when they needed anything, and the staff responded appropriately. The staff were observed to use gentle tones and positive language when communicating with children for example "well done good boy", "how is my friend doing?", "that might not be a good idea pet" and "how are you getting on my love?".

- Staff were observed to sit with children during indoor tabletop activities and also support the children's outdoor play when requested to do so; for example, bringing out some dolls and a mat for the children to sit on.
- Staff showed a clear knowledge of the children in their care as evidenced from the conversations that were heard with the children in relation to their families, what they had done over the week and holidays that were due to be taken.
- Communication with parents was informal at drop off and collection times however the service also used an electronic application (the App) to communicate activities and photographs of activities to the parents.

Physical and Material Environment

- There were a wide range of Montessori equipment and a variety of age-appropriate toys and materials available in the care room. These supported many areas of development such as fine motor skills, role play and sensory development.
- Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in all rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children enabling them to choose which items they wished to play with. The children were also facilitated in taking out various toys to the outdoor area to play .
- The outdoor area was well resourced and had a partially covered area.

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:

- All emergency exits were clear and unobstructed.
- The front door was appropriately secured when the inspector arrived unannounced to the premises to prevent children exiting and a buzzer system was in use.
- Cleaning equipment was stored in a secured cupboard under the sink out of reach of the children.
- The television and stereo present in the service were wall mounted or up high with no trailing leads observed.
- There were no sharp and unprotected corners observed.

Infection Control:

- There was a constant supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and single use paper hand towels available to support effective hand washing in the service.
- Effective hand washing practices were observed during the inspection, after toileting, and outdoor play and prior to lunch time.
- Good environmental cleaning practices were observed during the inspection, with tables being wiped down prior to lunch and after activities. Staff when questioned were able to verbalise correct cleaning processes for toys and equipment. Documentary evidence of up-to-date cleaning routines and schedules were on display.
- Lunches were appropriately stored in the fridge.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

There was a hole in the safety surface of the outdoor area which was a potential trip hazard.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The wear patch / dip in the safety surface has been repaired.

Extra risk assessment checks to be carried out daily on outdoor safety surface area. We will keep a close eye on the repaired area for future wear and tear due to use and weather conditions.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the registered provider's response and supporting photographic evidence. The non-compliance has been addressed.

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 ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, on the premises at all times. Three FAR certificates were reviewed.
- (2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available to the preschool children.