

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015OY030		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Discover Montessori		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	7 Cluain Alainn, Curraghnavarna, Banagher, Co. Offaly		
<b>Eircode:</b>	R42 NX44		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Carrie Byrne		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	29/01/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	24	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	K. Murphy		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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.		

### Description of service

The service is registered as a sessional service catering for up to 33 children. The age range of children enrolled in the service is 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates two staggered morning sessions between the hours of 09:00 - 12:00 and 09:30 -12:30. The service is operated by an independent provider.

The Early Years' Service is located in a two-storey adapted domestic premises. Two pre-school rooms, an office and a kitchen are provided. A breakout room has been developed on the first floor to support children attending the pre -school junior room since the last inspection on 2 February 2023.

An outdoor area is attached to the rear of the premises. The service is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of the town of Banagher, County Offaly.

### Staffing

The registered provider and four staff members were present during the inspection.

### 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 co-operation of the registered provider, person in charge, 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*

*(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 and the designated person in charge were available as required.

(b)

The registered provider was present throughout the inspection.

Five staff files including the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from either a past employer or a source other than a previous employer in respect of the files reviewed.

- (c)  
A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)  
Police vetting was available in respect of one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4)  
Staff members working directly with children attending the service and held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 5 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

## 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)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.
- (3)  
There were twenty-four children attending the service supervised directly by five adults.

### 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 children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development. Conversations and interactions between children and staff were observed during snack time. Children used the toilet independently and regular hand washing was observed.

The children were encouraged to be independent, and their choices were supported. Staff were observed to offer support and praise to each child for their involvement in activities. The service operated in partnership with parents and guardians. Learning journals were in place and shared with parent at intervals throughout the year. A verbal handover on the child's day was given to the parents and guardians at collection time.

The staff were familiar with each child and their personality. Staff members were observed to be positive towards children evidenced by individual names used, eye contact and praise for children on completion of activities. Good teamwork between the staff members was observed during the inspection. The two pre-school rooms were laid out with areas of interest that incorporated real life play items and materials to stimulate each area of the child's development. Low level tables, chairs and low-level shelving with equipment were available to all children. Play equipment and materials were accessible to children and individual preferences were accommodated as to what and how long children wish to engage with specific chosen activities. A range of developmentally appropriate, challenging, creative and enriching experiences were available for all children. Materials included paint, play dough, dolls, dolls houses, buggies, puzzles, blocks, trucks, animals and fine motor skill toys including pegboards, jigsaws and shape sorters. Children's artwork was noted and paper, crayons, paint and a variety of open-ended art materials were in plentiful supply. Activities were related to the displayed theme for the January curriculum plan.

## 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-*

*(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*

*(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.*

*(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable and adequate play and work equipment were provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, sensory, tabletop activities, arts and crafts and home corners.

(b)

Soft furnishings in both pre-school rooms supported rest and relaxation for the children in attendance.

(4)

An outdoor play area with a flagstone and artificial grass surface area was attached to the rear of the service. The outdoor area could be accessed directly from the senior pre-school room on the ground floor. This area was equipped with wall mounted chalk boards, playhouses, an outdoor play kitchen area, a stationary wooden boat and car to support imaginative play. A large climb and slide unit was in place. A variety of bikes and trikes for use by children were also available. A sheltered area was in place to facilitate all weather play for the children.

### 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

Healthy eating was encouraged. A variety of fresh fruit, dairy products, crackers, and sandwiches were noted for the mid-morning snack. A refrigerator was available for each pre-school room for the storage of perishable foods.

### 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 entrance door to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

##### Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Paper hand towel and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the sanitary accommodation and pre-school rooms for the hygienic disposal of waste.

##### Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature. Appropriate documentation was in place to record the administration of medicine should it be required by a child in attendance.

## Fire Safety:

Emergency exit routes were identifiable in each pre-school room and were unobstructed. A fire assembly point was noted to the front of the premises.

## 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 members were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)  
Two first aid boxes were available in accessible and conspicuous location in the pre-school rooms on the ground and first floors.

(b)  
A first aid box was accessible to adults caring for children in 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 firefighting 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 for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 21 January 2025.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in January 2025.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

## Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2025.