

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015TY026
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Roots Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Toomevara, Nenagh, Co Tipperary
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<b>Eircode:</b>	E45 T382
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Pamela Cummins
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20/01/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM	6
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	North Tipperary Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co Tipperary, E45A099
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L McGeeney
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

This full day care service was established in 2009 to provide care and education to children aged between 2 and 6 years old. A registered school age care service is also provided.

The service operates Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm for 48 weeks of the year. This includes a daily three-hour sessional service funded under the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) for eligible children that operates between 9am and 12pm for 38 weeks of the year.

The service is operated from purpose-built rooms within the registered providers residence in the rural village of Gortagarry in north Tipperary. The children have access to two activity rooms, sanitary accommodation area and enclosed outdoor play areas. There is a third room available for use by the school age children.

### Staffing

The registered provider works in the service with the children. There are a total of five staff who work in the service, including the registered provider: two staff work in the early years service and two staff work in the school age care service.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(1)(2)(4), 11(1)(2)(4), 15(1)(3), 16(1)(3), 19(1)(a), 23, 24(1)(3) and 25(1)(2).

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, 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, 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 and the pre-school leader was the designated deputy.

(b) The designated person in charge or her deputy were present in the service while it was in operation.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that of the five staff employed in the service, four staff members were employed at the time of the previous inspection in February 2024. All five staff files were reviewed as part of the inspection process.

(a) Two written and validated references were available for each staff member working in the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member working in the service. Garda vetting had been renewed, in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting documentation was not required as none of the staff had lived outside of the state for a period of six consecutive months or longer.

(4) The staff employed to work with the pre-school children held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5, 6 or 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.*

*(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.*

*(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*

*(a) a sessional pre-school service, and*

*(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

### Compliance Information

(1) There were 10 children aged between 2 years 11 months and 5 years old being supervised by 2 staff during the morning session. There were six children being supervised by two staff in the afternoon. The registered provider was also present in the service but not involved in supervision of the children on the day of inspection.

(2) The adult to child ratio was maintained at greater than the recommended ratios of 1:11 during the morning session and 1:8 in the afternoon.

(4) The adult to child ratios were maintained within the requirements throughout the day.

### 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:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

The children's registration forms were reviewed as part of the inspection:

(1) The information required to be kept in writing in respect of each pre-school child as detailed under parts (a)-(i) of this regulation was available.

(3)(c) The required records were available on the premises for inspection by an authorised person.

### 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:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The records that were required to be kept in writing as detailed under parts (a)-(k) of this this regulation were available.

(3) The records were available on the premises for inspection by an authorised person.

### 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 was observed on the day of inspection through direct observation, discussions with staff and review of records:

#### Basic needs

The children enjoyed freedom of movement throughout the day. They moved freely between the two activity rooms to the activities they wanted to engage in. The children also enjoyed daily movement in the outdoors.

The children sat together at mealtimes, which were a relaxed time of the day when the children and staff enjoyed laughter and conversation. Children were given as much time as they needed to eat. Children brought their own drink bottles which they could access throughout the day. Drink bottles were refilled with water as required.

The children could rest and relax during the day. There was a two-seater sofa and cushions in the second activity room as well as a cosy area beside the library where the children could rest. Sleep facilities were available if required though staff said that these were rarely needed.

The children were supported to be independent with self-care skills according to their age and stage of development such as using the toilet, washing their hands and dressing for the outdoors. Children were responsible for caring for their belongings, packing away their lunch boxes after snack time, using the pedal bins to dispose of rubbish or recyclables and tidying up after play. Staff taught the children singing rhymes to support their learning such as 'flush and wash' to remind them to flush the toilet after using it then wash their hands.

#### Supporting relationships

The children benefitted from being cared for by the same staff each day in favourable adult to child ratios which ensured that each child received as much individual attentions as they needed.

The children also benefitted from being cared for in a small peer group, which included children with close family relationships to each other such as siblings and cousins.

### Physical and material environment

The children had access to a wide range of toys, activities and experiences both indoors and outdoors. The two indoor rooms provided different play and exploration opportunities for the children. The main room was used for dining, table-top activities, Montessori work, art and crafts and sensory play. The second room was set up for imaginative play, small world play, construction and reading.

There were several outdoor spaces available. The main area used by the pre-school children was directly accessible from the main pre-school room and provided the children with opportunities for physical movement and challenge such as swinging, climbing, riding tricycles and other wheeled vehicles, playing with balls and push toys. A sheltered area ensured that the outdoor space could be used in most weathers.

## 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 service was kept secured. Parents and children entered the premises through a side door from the outdoor play area. There was a secured gate between the parking area at the front of the premises and the outdoor play area which prevented children gaining unsupervised access to moving cars.

The staff could see who was approaching the service through the front windows of the activity rooms. They could also see who was at the glass panel entrance door before opening it.

Hot water for hand washing was thermostatically controlled not to exceed 43°C. On the day of inspection, the hot water was 32°C.

There was a soft fall surface under climbing equipment.

#### Infection control:

The service had an infection prevention and control policy, including a hand-washing policy. Staff and children washed their hands at appropriate times during the day such as before eating and after using the toilet.

Staff wiped down the tables before and after mealtimes.

### Administration of medication:

The service had a policy on the administration of medication. There was a medication form to be completed and signed by parents giving consent for staff to administer medication to their child. None of the children were in receipt of medication on the day of inspection.

### Fire safety:

Fire escape routes were kept clear of obstruction.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

### Compliance Information

(1) The staff were responsible for checking the children in and out of the service. Attendance was recorded on the weekly attendance sheets.

(3) Staff met all visitors to the service at the entrance door before allowing them to enter the service if appropriate.

## 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) There was one member of staff present in the service who held current certifications in first aid response (FAR), valid until January 2027.

(2)(a) There were two first aid boxes available on a shelf in the main room where they could be easily accessed when required.

(b) The first aid boxes were available if required by a child while attending the service.