

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY152
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Name of Service:	The Den Montessori
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Address of Service:	Fort Aengus Community Tennis Club, Racecourse Cross, Cashel, Co Tipperary
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Eircode:	E25K753
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ruth Molony
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	17/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary, E91RF38
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Inspection undertaken by:	Antoinette McNamara
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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	N/A
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Description of service

The Den Montessori is a private early years service which was established in 2014. It provides a sessional service for children aged from 2 to 6 years old. The early years service operates Monday to Friday, 08:45 to 12:15. The children have access to a playroom, sanitary accommodation area and an outdoor play area. This is a sister service of The Den Montessori, Boherlahan and The Den Montessori, Kilfeacle.

Staffing

There were four staff present on the day of inspection. The designated person in charge was present on the day. Staff held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) at level 6 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications. As well as additional qualifications in Leadership for Inclusion. The registered provider does not work directly in the service but is available for cover 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

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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and recruitment,

Regulation 11(1)(3) Staffing levels,

Regulation 15 (1) (a-i) Records in relation to a pre-school child,

Regulation 16 (1) (h, i, j) (3) Record in relation to pre-school service,
Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, welfare, and development of the child,
Regulation 21 Equipment and materials
Regulation 25 (1)(2) First aid,
Regulation 26 (1)(4) Fire safety and
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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) There was a designated person in charge and a named deputy designated person in charge who was able to deputise, as required.

(b) A designated person in charge is present on site daily.

The staff files for four staff were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for each staff member working at 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) Not applicable. Review of the curriculum vitae indicated that police vetting was not required.

(4) Certificates of qualifications for the staff working directly with children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above 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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children.

(3) During the morning session there were 16 children being directly cared for by 4 staff.

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.*

Compliance Information

A sample of 10 completed registration forms were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

(1) The registration forms contained the required information as detailed under parts (a) to (i) of this regulation.

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;

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

(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)(h) Staff worked the same hours weekly. A staff sign in and out book was available for inspection.

(i) A detailed staff roster was available.

(j) Six medication administration records were sampled and were found to meet the necessary requirements.

(3) The written 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

Basic needs:

The service had a healthy eating policy. The children brought their own food which was stored in a fridge. Drinking water was available to the children throughout the day, should they become thirsty at any stage. The available space within the care room supported the children to explore their environment and to freely engage with materials. Children who were able were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care. Regular hand washing was observed by the children. Children and staff took time in the morning to engage in a relaxation exercise after free play. Staff reported that children play outside daily.

Supporting relationships:

Staff members were observed to treat the children with respect and a positive regard. They sat with children in small groups or individually, engaged in conversation and listened attentively to the children as they spoke. An example of this was observed when the children were chatting about the Ploughing Championships which they had been to the day previous. Parent and guardian communication was observed during collection and drop off periods. This provided an opportunity for staff to share information with parents. The environment was inclusive and representative of the children attending the service, with images of the children and their families displayed along with a birthday wall. Adjustments to the learning environment and teaching strategies were used to support the learning and development of all children attending the service.

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

The equipment and materials reviewed on inspection were well maintained. All materials were accessible to the children on open low-level shelving. The service had appropriately sized tables and chairs for the children. The service had personalised coat hooks for each child attending the service. There were additional resources for the rotation of materials in the main care room. There was clear interest areas developed within the room such as the kitchen area, construction area, book area, language and culture area, a messy play area and farm toys. The walls of the service were decorated with the children’s artwork, animals and colours. The outdoor area was secure to prevent children leaving. There was a climbing frame with a slide, astroturf, a playhouse, water play area and a mud kitchen. There was also a shed of additional resources available. The child had access to a large secure tennis court next to the service.

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 were staff trained in first aid responder (FAR) available to the children attending the service.
(2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position.
(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the 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 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) There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 16th September 2025 and staff advised that monthly fire drills were completed.
- (b) There was a record available demonstrating that the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 20th September 2024 and the firefighting equipment was last serviced on the same date.
- (4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed in a conspicuous position on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An in-date insurance certificate was available for inspection to demonstrate that valid insurance was in place.