

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WH057
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Kilbeggan Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Mullingar Road, Kilbeggan, Co. Westmeath
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<b>Eircode:</b>	N91 HY38
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Brenda Smith
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	22/05/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	4
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35K1W4
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A Spain
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<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

Kilbeggan Montessori is a sessional service offering the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme to children in the age range 2 to 6 years. The service is operational between the hours of 9.00am and 12.00pm and between 12.30pm and 3.30pm for 38 weeks annually. The service is attached to a private residence with direct access from the front of the building. Rooms in use include a playroom with sanitary accommodation off a lobby area outside of the room. An outdoor area is provided at the back of the premises. The service is located in Kilbeggan town in south Westmeath.

### Staffing

The registered provider and 1 staff member provide direct care to the children attending the 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment,
- Regulation 11 - Staffing levels,
- Regulation 15 - Records of pre-school child,
- Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child,

Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,  
Regulation 25 – First aid,  
Regulation 26 – Fire safety measures,  
Regulation 27 – Supervision,  
Regulation 28 – Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Record of pre-school child. The scope of the inspection included all rooms in use in the service.

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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)

Both the designated person in charge and the named person to deputise as required were present in the service on the arrival of the inspector and for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure in the service. Both staff members were observed to be aware of their roles and responsibilities as they cared for and assisted the children both in the playroom and when engaged in outdoor play.

(2)(a)(b)

Two references from past employers were held on file in respect of the staff member. Two references from a reputable source were held on file in respect of the registered provider.

(c)

A Garda vetting was held on file in respect of the registered provider and the staff member. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff members.

(d)

Police clearance was not required as none of the staff had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as adults.

(3)

Records held on file confirmed that the necessary vetting procedures were conducted prior to the appointment of the staff member to work in the service.

(4)

Both adults working in the service had qualifications in Early Childhood care and Education at Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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)  
An adequate number of adults were working with the children in attendance in the service. Two staff members cared for 14 children in the morning sessional service and for 4 children in the afternoon sessional service.
- (3)  
The inspector reviewed the children's attendance records and staff roster for the week of 4 February 2025 for the morning session. Records confirmed that the maximum number of children in daily attendance was 15 children with two staff members present. A review of the children's attendance records and staff roster for the week of the 3 March 2025 in the afternoon session, confirmed that the maximum number of children in attendance was 7 children with both staff members present.

### 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-*
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
  - (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
  - (c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (i)

A review of a sample of seven of the children's records as held in a folder confirmed that the necessary information in relation to (a) to (i) was held on file in respect of the sample reviewed.

(3)(a)(b)(c)

The records in respect of regulation (1) were available for inspection by a parent or guardian in respect of their child, a staff member authorised on behalf of the registered provider and the inspector on the day of inspection.

### 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 service offered a child led programme of activities in a prepared environment with a blend of montessori pedagogy. Children in the morning session enjoyed making hot air balloons during the themed "transport week". Cars made from cardboard and lorries also made by the children were on display as illustrations of the week's work. Staff were observed to move to different tables where children sat and to praise the children for "doing great work".

Hand washing under supervision was observed after children used the toilets and before break time in the service. The "morning helper" was given time to hand out plastic plates at the three tables for lunch. Staff sat with the children during break time and engaged in leisurely conversation about lunch, where children's parents were gone, what was happening at home as well as in the service. Children were observed to be listened to and afforded time to talk and have their lunch in a relaxed environment. The staff were observed to praise the children for placing their plates in the sink after break. Food supplied by parents and guardians for lunch included sandwiches, wraps, crackers, cheese, brown bread, yoghurts and fresh fruit which was in keeping with the Health Eating policy reviewed on the day.

After lunch in the morning session, children enjoyed outdoor play. Children played with buckets and shovels in the sandbox. Children were also observed to enjoy playing with toys on wheels on the smooth tarmac surface.

Picnic tables and chairs were provided for children to both take a break and engage in tabletop activities outdoors on request.

A staff member was observed to use a buffalo figure for demonstration purposes during story time and before home time in the service. The staff member was observed to pause the story to listen to the children's comments and to answer their questions.

Children in the afternoon session were afforded the time to introduce themselves to the inspector and were observed to engage in free play, making jigsaws, playing with matching games and relaxing in the book corner. Artwork on display in the playroom to illustrate the measures taken by the service to make connections with the local community included "Our Farm" posters with the children's work display of both farm animals and farm machinery. An open ended cardboard box with cut-outs of hens, with straw bedding and housing a hen's egg, was indicative of natural materials used in the service. The "Our Town" poster included children's picture illustrations of the garda station, hospital, school, café, post office and veterinary clinic.

In addition to the handover at collection time, the service maintained children's "Learning Journals" for take home. The journals included descriptions of activities, pictures and staff comments on the skills the activities promoted. In addition, each child in the service had a "processed art" copy to illustrate their individual art interpretation of themes including themselves, the beach and festive occasions including Mother's day and Christmas.

### 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:

Entrance to the service was secured on the arrival of the inspector and a doorbell was provided to facilitate access. A high level latch was provided on both the entrance door directly to the playroom and the door off the playroom leading to the outdoor play area to guard against unsupervised exit by children. Coats and bags were hung off the floor in the playroom. Cleaning agents and chemicals were stored out of reach of the children on a high level shelf in the sanitary accommodation area and in a high level press in the playroom. Toys and play equipment were observed to be in a good state of repair and well maintained.

##### Infection Control:

The floor lino and painted walls throughout the premises were observed to be clean and well maintained on the day of inspection. The windows in both the playroom and sanitary accommodation were observed to be open to ensure a good supply of fresh air when children played indoors. A sink was provided in the playroom with a supply of hot and cold water to assist with cleaning. A lidded bin was provided in the playroom for the temporary storage of waste and refuse. Daily completed cleaning schedules were available for the floors, furniture, shelving and sanitary accommodation. Weekly cleaning schedules were available for toys and play equipment. A refrigerator was provided in the playroom for the storage of lunches and water beakers provided from home for break time.

### Administration of Medication:

No medication was administered to the children on the day of inspection. The sample of childrens record forms reviewed had signed parental permission to administer temperature reducing medication and medication in the event of an emergency. Temperature reducing medication was stored in a high level press in the playroom.

### Fire Safety:

Both fire exit doors from the playroom were provided with fire exit signage. A fire assembly point was posted on the timber fence in the outdoor play area.

### Outing:

The registered provider advised that the service did not undertake outings.

## 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)

Both staff members had up to date FAR ( first aid responder) training with an expiry date of the 4 August 2025 in the case of one staff member and an expiry date of the 5 July 2026 in the case of the second staff member.

(2)(a)(b)

A first aid box was stored in a high level press in the playroom and in an area easily accessible to the staff working directly with the children in 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)

Records held in the service confirmed that the last monthly fire drill was conducted on the 30 April 2025.

(b)

The maintenance record for both fire fighting equipment in the playroom and the smoke alarm system confirmed that a service was conducted in October 2024.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was posted on the wall in the playroom.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

Staff were observed to supervise the children by both sight and sound on the day of inspection. Staff were also observed to sit with the children as necessary to support supervision for example when children played with matching games and relaxed with story books.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service had insurance cover for a maximum of 22 children in daily attendance at any one time in a sessional service. Insurance cover was valid from the 28 March 2025 to the 27 March 2026.