

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW116
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Name of Service:	Enniskerry Montessori and Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Cois Coillte, Church Road, Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow
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Name of Registered Provider:	Aisling Malone
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/01/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Early O'Brien
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	N/A
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Description of service

Enniskerry Montessori and Afterschool provides a sessional service to pre-school children currently aged from two and a half years to five years of age and operates from 09:00 to 12:30 daily. The service is located in Enniskerry village and is in the grounds of the registered provider's home. The service comprises of one care room, an office and a sanitary area. A large, enclosed garden area at the rear of the pre-school is available daily to the pre-school children attending.

Staffing

The registered provider employs three adults to work in the service. This includes the centre manager. On the day of inspection there were three adults working directly with the children. The registered provider does not work in the service on a daily basis.

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 and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

- Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(4) - Management and recruitment,
Regulation 11 (1)(3) - Staffing levels,

Regulation 16(1)(h)(i)(j)(k) – Record in Relation to a Pre-School Service,
Regulation 19 (1)(a)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child,
Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,
Regulation 25 – First Aid,
Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16(1)– Record in Relation to a Pre-School 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 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.

(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 centre manager is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.

(b) The deputy manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived on the morning of the inspection. The centre manager arrived after the inspector's arrival at 10:25 and the registered provider arrived at 10:50 and both were present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Following a discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that one new member of staff was employed in the service since the last inspection on 27 February 2024.

Documentation was reviewed in respect of this adult as follows:

(a)(b) Two validated references were available, one from a past employer and one from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for four staff members including the registered provider. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) There was no evidence to suggest that a staff member had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that all staff members had 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.

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 directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(3)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for sessional services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. On the day of inspection there were twenty children attending the service being supervised by three adults.

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;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Children’s attendance was recorded in a hardcopy book with the arrival and departure times of each child recorded daily.
- (i) A staff roster was available with details of daily sign in and sign out times for each adult and represented the names of all staff working in the service on the day of inspection.
- (j) There was no evidence of administration of medication to a child since the last inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (k) Eleven records were reviewed and while it is acknowledged that seven records had been completed as required by the regulation, the following information was missing on four of the records:
- There was no evidence of a parent signature on four records, confirming that parents had not been informed of any such accident or incident.
 - Three records available for inspection had not been shared with parents as all triplicate pages relating to each of these incidents remained on file.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All four unsigned accident and incident forms have been issued and signed by parents. The registered provider confirms that all accident and incident files are now fully up to date on the premises and parents have a copy. To prevent this non-compliance from reoccurring in the future, the registered provider has confirmed that the service has now implemented the following preventative measures to ensure all accident and incident forms are

discussed, signed and a copy provided to parents along with compliant recording of same filed on premises. Management have discussed the importance of the requirement with all staff. The manager has implemented a new procedure for checking the accident and incident book before daily collections to ensure that any required actions are taken as appropriate. In the future, all accident and incident forms will be discussed, signed and a copy provided on the day to relevant parents and guardians.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance and will inform the next 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*
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Basic Needs

Healthy eating was promoted in the service and staff reported that all snacks are provided by parents and guardians for children attending on a sessional basis. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day. Children appeared happy and content within each of the care rooms.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly, and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent in using the toilet and in cleaning up after their play and meals.

Supporting Relationships

Children were observed being supported by the staff members as they engaged in their self-directed play and activities. The atmosphere was friendly, happy and child centred. The staff members were observed responding to the children in a positive manner and provided praise and encouragement to each child on a regular basis. The service had a key person system in place and staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Family photos and children's artwork were displayed in the care room and this provided opportunity for reflection and a sense of security, identity and belonging for the children. Individual learning journals and storybooks were maintained for each child, following their development and learning journey throughout the year and will be presented to parents at the end of the pre-school year.

Physical and Material Environment

The care room was bright and was arranged into carefully planned and defined areas of interest, providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included small world toys, a home corner, sensory play, an art area, sand tray and a rest area with books. The care room provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and was adequately resourced with a variety of materials. The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care room.

Programme of Activities

Children were observed to make choices on their own play materials within the environment and demonstrated familiarity with the routine of their day. Activities throughout the day were child-led but children also engaged in Montessori work in partnership with the educator and with their peers.

Positive language was observed to be used across the staff team and with the children. Language development was supported in discussions observed both in play and at snack time where the adults encouraged the children to use words to describe their thoughts and feelings and to share stories on matters that had meaning to them.

Children demonstrated autonomy within their learning environment as they transitioned to activities throughout the inspection. Children were assigned roles on the day such as helping to distribute water bottles and snack and they were aware of these.

On the day of inspection children were observed playing in the enclosed outdoor play area located to the rear of the building. This is a large, natural play space with adequate resources that were age and stage appropriate, and

children appeared to enjoy their play experiences in exploring their environment. Children were appropriately dressed for the outdoors, wearing coats, hats and gloves.

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 leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children in the indoor and outdoor areas on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor and outdoor play environments were safe and free from hazards.
- Medication, which is only administered in an emergency, was stored safely and out of the reach of children.
- Storage facilities for hazardous cleaning materials were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate handwashing for staff and children in the sanitary area adjacent to the care room.
- Foot pedal bins were available throughout the service for the safe disposal of used hand towels and other waste products.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned before and after snack time.
- Perishable food items were stored in the refrigerator as required.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had an administration of medication policy in place. Medication has not been given to date in the service since the last inspection date. An adequate medication record was available to document medication given, should this be required in an emergency. All staff were familiar with the procedures outlined in the medication policy. Anti-febrile medication was available, in date and stored out of the reach of children.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, all emergency exits were observed to be clearly identifiable and were not obstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

- On their return indoors from playing in the outdoor play space, children were not supervised in handwashing, and the adults were not observed to wash their hands. The children were observed to access resources from the shelves to play with them. This poses a risk to staff and children in cross contamination and cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

To correct this non-compliance, the registered provider discussed this non-compliance with all staff on 13 February 2026 and the importance of hand washing for all children and staff when returning from outside play. This will be applied to our daily routine along with being checked and monitored by the manager and the registered provider.

To prevent this non-compliance from re-occurring in the future, the registered provider in addition to holding a meeting with staff, has also erected new signage (with hand washing image) to remind staff and children of the requirement to wash hands after outdoor play. These are located at each exit and entry points to the service and in the sanitary area.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance and will inform the next inspection.

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)

A person trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. Two staff members hold current FAR certification.

(2)(a)(b)

A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available and safely stored on the premises.

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 evidence of regular fire drills having taken place within the service. The last fire drill took place on 17 December 2025.

(b)

There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the premises dated 17 September 2025 and 28 September 2025 respectively.

(4)

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the Montessori room and the main hallway of the building.