

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW249
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Name of Service:	Knockeevin Montessori & Nature Schools
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Address of Service:	El Pinar, Kindlestown Hill, Delgany, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 A251
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Name of Registered Provider:	Maeve Murtagh
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	04/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	18
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke
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

This private childcare Montessori service was first registered in 2013 and currently provides care and education for children aged two to six years of age on a part-time basis. The hours of operation are 9.00 to 13.30. The service, which consists of two purpose-built rooms, is located within the grounds of the registered provider's private home, located outside Delgany village in Co. Wicklow

There is a large garden to the back of the buildings which is used by the children attending the service on a daily basis.

Staffing

The registered provider employs four adults to work in the Montessori.

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 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

Following a discussion with the registered provider and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that the registered provider employs four adults in the service, these files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The registered provider has a named person who is able to deputise as required.

(b)

The deputy person was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspector, the registered provider arrived a short time after and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of five adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for four adults employed. However, for one adult, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)

International police vetting was available for one adult working in the service who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Five staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed 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.

(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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the Montessori service.

(3)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained during the inspection. There were three adults present with eighteen children.

(8)(a)
The registered provider ensured that there were two adults on the premises at all times. This was confirmed by reviewing the staff roster.

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

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The registered provider ensured that these records were available for inspection to 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;

(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), (a), (h) - (k)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the above list of information in relation to the service.

(3)

The registered provider ensured that the above list of documents were open to inspection by an authorised person.

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 main door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspector to the service.
- All toys examined were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit routes from each of the Montessori rooms were free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- There was a sanitary area in each Montessori room. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- Foot pedal bins were available in the sanitary areas and in the Montessori rooms for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other items that required disposing of.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and outdoor play.
- Cleaning schedules were present and maintained in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for five staff members; however, one vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. The three toilet seats in the sanitary areas were loose, this posed a safety risk of a child falling off them. Point 2. was noted on the last inspection report of the 8th of May 2023 and the CAPA process failed to resolve the non-compliance.

Infection Control:

3. There was no splash back or tiling behind the sinks in both sanitary areas. The paint on the wall directly behind the sinks had started to chip, this is ineffective for cleaning and infection control purposes.

Point 3. was noted in the last inspection report of the 8th of May 2023 and the CAPA process failed to resolve the non-compliance.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting has been updated for the adult in the service and we will check Garda Vetting on a yearly basis and redo every two years.
2. We have added checking the toilet seats to our daily risk assessment, we will check the toilet seats every morning and at the end of the day.

Infection Control:

3. Backsplashes have been put up behind the sinks and checking them has been added to our risk assessment sheet.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence was submitted with the CAPA response demonstrating UpToDate Garda vetting and a revised risk assessment form that includes daily toilet seat observations.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence was submitted with the CAPA response of a revised risk assessment form including recording splash back conditions on a daily basis.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted will address the non-compliances found on the day of inspection in relation to regulation 23 General Safety and Infection control and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The registered provider ensured that all children attending the Montessori were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The registered provider ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people had access to the Montessori.

(b)

The registered provider had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the Montessori.

(4)

The registered provider was able to demonstrate that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it related.

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)
The registered provider ensured that an adult present was trained in first aid for children and was available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)(a)
A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place within the Montessori rooms.

(b)
The first aid boxes were available to the children attending the service at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
There was no adult present on the day of inspection trained in FAR (First Aid Response).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Two adults have now completed FAR training and we will ensure that more than one adult has FAR training.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted with the CAPA response that demonstrated FAR training of two adults

Summary Comment

The evidenced supplied has addressed the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 25 and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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 having taken place in the Montessori service on a monthly basis. The last fire drill took place on the 29th of May 2025.

(b)

There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and the smoke detection system on the premises dated March 2025 and December 2024 respectively.

(2)(c)

The above records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire, clearly displayed within each Montessori room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was a certificate present to demonstrate that the service was adequately insured for the correct number of children and expired on 27th of March 2026.