

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WX065
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Kinderland Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Na Crosaire, Kilmysall, Bunclody, Co. Wexford
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<b>Eircode:</b>	Y21 XK20
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Maria Dunne
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	22/10/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	45	PM	21
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C. Ryan
<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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Kinderland Creche and Montessori is a privately operated full day care service. The service operates from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The service operates from a premises in a small residential estate located in a rural village of Kilmyshall near Bunclody, Co Wexford. The service has three playrooms: junior playroom, pre-school room and Montessori room. There is a sleep room, an office, kitchen and sanitary accommodation. There is an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The service employs 12 staff including the manager who is the day-to-day person in charge. The registered provider does not work daily in the service. All the staff working directly with children in the service held the minimum of level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 20 Facilities for Rest and Play,

Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,

Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4) 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 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)(b)

The manager was the designated person in charge of the service on the inspector's arrival. There was a second named staff member available to deputise as needed.

The files for all staff, including the registered provider and student were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a)(b)

There were validated references for each of the employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were available on file for staff who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

There were certificates of qualification for all staff members working directly with the preschool children available on file.

## 9-8Part 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(2)

There was an adequate number of staff working with the children for the duration of the inspection.

During the morning, there were 45 children being directly cared for by 7 staff.

During the afternoon, there were 21 children being directly cared for by 4 staff.

A student was present on placement on the day of inspection and was supernumerary to the adult to child ratios.

## 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

#### Non-Compliance Information

1(a) On the day of inspection, the following was observed and not in line with basic needs of the children during mealtimes:

Staff did not sit with the children during the main meal

Children were crowded together without adequate space to eat,

Food was served from lunch boxes and not on plates,

Lunch boxes and bags left in the middle of the table,

There was a lack of opportunities to develop social skills during main meal as it was loud and busy.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response to address the non-compliance:

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

Staff have now allocated seating within the classrooms and are sitting with the children during mealtimes.

Children have been separated into two downstairs classrooms, reducing the number of children in each room and providing more space for eating. The staff timetable has been adjusted to maintain appropriate ratios.

Plates are now used in all classrooms during mealtimes.

Slowing down the mealtime routine has created more opportunities for children to develop their social skills during main meals.

Staff have all been advised on food practice going forward.

All policies are being revised and updated.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Minutes from staff meeting.

#### Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The three indoor playrooms provided the children with a space which supported their play ideas, choice and varying types of play. The rooms were bright, warm and spacious. The interest areas were resourced with a variety of materials that were suitable to the different age groups using them.

Outside children had access to a large, enclosed play area to the rear of the premises. The area was divided into two spaces, one with a soft surface and the second was a concrete area for ride on toys. There were toys and materials available to the children in the outdoor area.

(b)

Each of the three playrooms had a rest area available to the children. The rest areas consisted of small sofas, mats and cushions. The service had a designated sleep room with cots for younger children. There were stackable mattresses and bed linen available for older children to use for sleep.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(a)

In the outside area a number of interest areas were not fully resourced or set up for the children. For example, the mud kitchen appeared empty, the children's playhouse was empty, the sandpit was covered and closed off to the children.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response to address the non-compliance:

##### **Corrective and Preventive Action:**

Supplies are being supplied to ensure a fully resourced outdoor area. Wooden kitchen is being moved and re-designed, indoor playhouse to be revamped, and open-ended materials to always be available.

The indoor now have specified tuff trays and sensory play areas for the children to use daily. Staff are advised to

keep this available at all times. This will support sensory exploration, especially when weather does not allow for outdoor sand play.

Staff have been advised to ensure that open ended material and exploration play is available. Management have purchased a variety of materials to support this type of play.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographs of the new sensory trays.

**Summary Comment**

The requirement of the regulation is met.

**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 three playrooms reflected the individual age groups using them. Each of the rooms had interest areas that reflected the different age groups using them. There were home corners/kitchens, with a variety of play equipment, toys and play equipment such as bricks, dolls, colouring materials, books dress up clothes and art stations.

Children’s identity and belonging was fostered through the display of works of art and personalised touches such as birthday walls, family photographs and individual named hooks for their coats and bags. Low-level open shelving units were used so children could freely access materials and resources from the shelves, promoting independence and choice making.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The food and snacks were supplied by parents and stored in fridges in the kitchen and playrooms. The children had access to their water drinks throughout the day. The parents were asked to ensure the food supplied was in line with healthy eating guidelines for pre-school children.

The service ensured a supply of additional food and snacks were available if a child was hungry, forgot their snack or wanted an alternative food to eat.

### 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 outdoor garden and play area located to the rear of the premises was fully enclosed.

##### Infection Control:

There was warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels available to facilitate hygienic handwashing.

##### Administration of Medication:

Staff detailed the procedures for administering medication if required during discussions with the inspector. The staff showed the inspector two individual care plan for the safe administration of medication. A sample of medication administration records reviewed on the day were fully completed.

##### Safe Sleep:

Staff who spoke with the inspector were aware of safe sleep practices and knowledgeable in the importance of adhering to safe sleep guidelines. For example, they were aware of how often a sleeping child is physically checked, recording the observations such as colour, position and breathing rate and temperature of the sleep

room. Staff were observed checking on the sleeping children's colour, position and breathing every 10 minutes and recording the sleep checks.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

Areas of the service which contained hazards were accessible to children, for example:

1. The kitchen door remained open during the inspection and potentially accessible to the children. Drawers and presses in the kitchen contained knives and a kettle.
2. The door to the staff toilet was left open for long periods on the day of inspection. Staff stored their personal belongings such as coats and handbags in the staff toilet with a number of bags left on the floor that were open and potentially accessible to children.

#### Infection Control:

The following practices observed were at variance with good hand hygiene practices:

1. Children were not observed to have their hands washed after nappy changing.
2. Staff members were not observed to wash their hands after each nappy change.
3. Staff were not observed to change their aprons or clean the changing mat between each nappy changes.
4. The toilet doors were left open for much of the day including during nappy changes which poses as a risk of cross contamination.
5. Children from the preschool room all washed their hands after outdoor play but used a communal towel to dry their hands which can lead to cross contamination.
6. Staff were observed to use their hands to put soiled items in the bin and not use the foot pedal mechanism.

A number of inconsistencies in practice were observed and at variance with the service's infection control policy and procedures:

7. Two soft sofas in the Tiny Tots room were marked and torn, therefore not allowing for adequate cleaning which posed as risk of cross contamination.
8. Attention to personal hygiene of the children was not observed during the inspection. Children's faces were not wiped after eating and runny nosed were not cleaned.
9. Two large mats in the preschool room were visibly dirty and stained.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response to address the non-compliance:

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### **General Safety:**

1&2:

The kitchen door and staff toilets has sign for door to remain closed, and locked. This was discussed with staff at meeting.

#### **Infection Control:**

1 -9:

Infection control practices were revised by all staff at a staff meeting.

Hand washing policy, apron and glove practice, importance of doors of changing area to be closed were reviewed with staff.

The nappy bin was replaced.

Closer attention to the child on hygiene practice of face washing also discussed with staff.

The sofa in Tiny Tots room was replaced.

The mats were replaced with machine washable mats.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted:**

Photographs of bin, mats, signs on doors, minutes from meeting and policy.

### Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

## 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 had ensured that a person trained in first aid responder was available to the children at all times.

(2)  
A suitably equipped first aid box was in the service and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position.

### 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)  
Fire drills were completed monthly. The last fire drill completed was recorded on the 29 September 2025.

(b)  
A record was maintained when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system were serviced in June 2025.

(4)  
There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had a valid certificate of insurance for full day care for 53 children.