

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016CC012
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Tir Na nÓg Montessori School
-------------------------	------------------------------

Address of Service:	Copperfield House, 6 Clermont, Douglas Road, Co Cork
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	T12 FK02
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Jennifer O Donovan
-------------------------------------	--------------------

Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

Date of Inspection:	27/04/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	53	PM	39
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Co Cork P51DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher and D Prendergast
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Tir Na nÓg Montessori School is a privately operated service that is a purpose built 2 storey house located in a residential area in Douglas Cork. The full day care service caters for 2 to 6 year olds and operated from 8:00 to 18:00. The service offers part time and sessional care also with the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) in operation. There are three care rooms in the service. Two care rooms are located on the ground floor and one room is located on the first floor. An enclosed outdoor space is available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are 14 adults employed by the service, including the register provider, who is service based. On the day of inspection, 12 were present in the service, 10 of whom were working directly with the children. The registered provider and the person in charge were office based. A student was also on placement on the day of inspection.

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 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.

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

Additional Information

A referral was made to the fire officer to assess fire safety in the service. Further information is available under Regulation 23 of the report.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, registered provider, person in charge and staff who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN1882	27/04/2026	On review of the staff files, it was noted that police vetting was not translated for one staff member, who was present on the day of inspection and had access to the children.
Status	The registered provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IAN1882	27/04/2026	On review of the staff files, it was noted that one adult onsite who had access to the children, had ECRIS Garda Vetting, but did not have translated police vetting and police vetting was not translated for another staff member, who was not onsite.
Status	The registered provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

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*

(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.

(b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date.

Compliance Information

- (1)*
- (a) The registered provider had appointed a person in charge and a deputy.*
 - (b) The registered provider and the person in charge were on duty at the service when the inspectors arrived and facilitated the inspection process.*
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider and the person in charge, it was determined that 10 new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. All of these new staff members worked directly with the children. A student was also present on an educational work placement programme. A total of 11 files were reviewed.*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- (a) Of the 22 required written and validated references, 13 had been provided by past employers.
- (b) There were eight references available from sources other than previous employers, with validations in place for five of these references.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 11 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting records, with certified translations where required, were available on file for two of the staff members, who had lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer, as adults.
- (4) Records demonstrated that the 10 adults had either achieved major awards in early childhood care and education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

A second written and validated reference was not on file for one staff member.

Records of validation were unavailable for three of the references, which had been provided by sources other than past employers.

(d)

See statutory notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IAN1882 and Improvement Notice IN2882 served.

(3)

The procedures outlined in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to some of the adults being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service, as follows:

- It was noted that the Garda vetting disclosure held in respect of one staff member was dated after the staff member had commenced working at the service.
- Seven of the reference validation records on file were dated after the relevant adults had commenced working at the setting.
- As per part (2)(a)(b) above, a second reference in respect of one adult and three validation records in respect of two further adults, had not been obtained before these adults commenced their roles at the childcare facility.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) The required references and validations were obtained. References checks will be completed prior to a new candidate commencing employment.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(3) Staff members awaiting vetting will work in an administration role . Vetting will be received before commencing employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b) Photographic evidence of references, validations and a new reference check list were received.

(3) A copy of the Garda Vetting policy was received.

Summary Comment

The corrective actions submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 19.

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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults were working directly with the children at all times. There were 53 children with 10 adults and 1 student directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection and 39 children with 7 adults directly supervising them during the afternoon.

(2) The service maintained the minimum adult to child ratio required as per regulation. The ratio was as follows:

- The Pink Room, there were 4 adults caring for 20 children in the morning and 1 adult caring for 8 children in the afternoon.
- The Green Room, there were 4 adults caring for 18 children in the morning and 3 adults caring for 16 children in the afternoon.
- The Yellow Room, there were 3 adults caring for 15 children in the morning and 3 adults caring for 15 children in the afternoon.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(8)

(a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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

The service had 85 early years children registered and all records were available. A sample of 10 records were reviewed. They were found to contain the required information as listed (a) through to (i).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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,

Compliance Information

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the adults and examination of relevant documents.

Basic needs:

- A variety of snacks were provided by the service, with children having access to these throughout the morning. These were observed to be healthy and nutritious. Parents provided a hot meal for the children which was heated at the service. Children were observed eating potatoes, pasta, vegetables and meat. Some children had filled sandwiches, bread, eggs, waffles, yogurts and a variety of fruits. The service had hot alternative food to offer to children that did not have a hot meal on the day of the inspection.
- Staff interacted with the children during snack time and were observed helping and assisting the children where necessary.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children throughout the day.
- While outdoors, the children were noted to be dressed appropriately with sun hats in use.
- Children's independence was promoted by adults in the care room. Examples of this were when children poured their own drinks, put on their own coats and tidied up after play.
- Nappy changing was carried out at regular intervals and as required. Each child's dignity and privacy were observed to be respected with one child being changed at a time. Supervision and assistance were provided for the children who accessed the sanitary facilities.
- Children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of a child size vinyl seat in each room.

Supporting relationships:

- The registered provider informed the inspector that the service communicated in person with parents or guardians at collection or drop off and contacted via telephone or email if needed.
- The atmosphere was observed to be relaxed in the care rooms at all times during the inspection and teamwork was evident between the adults and the children.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- Family photos and birthday calendars were displayed on the walls which promoted a sense of belonging for the children.
- Each care room had fish in a bowl which children took turns in feeding. Live caterpillars were stores in glass as the children observed and discussed them. This assisted to foster empathy in the children.
- Adults engaged with the children in both group and individual activities throughout the inspection. They were observed getting down to their level discussing topics of interest and helping children with their chosen activity. This was observed on numerous occasions for example with adults making puzzles, making moulding dough, assisting with artwork and also playing in the outdoor area with the children.
- Children's language development was supported through conversation as a group. One example observed was getting the opportunity to discuss the weekend by taking turns in a group to speak. Another example observed was adults read stories during the inspection where children discussed topics in the storey.
- The adults informed the inspector that meetings were held weekly in each of the care rooms and on a monthly basis with management, and the last meeting was held on 21 April 2026.

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 was secured appropriately.
- This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care rooms were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition.
- The outdoor area was a safe and secure space for the children with timber fencing and a concrete wall. This prevented children gaining unsupervised access to an unsafe area.
- The first aid box was stored out of reach of the children.
- There were no cables or trailing flexes observed to be accessible to the children on the day of inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Infection Control:

- Children's coats and bags were stored on hooks and were off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available in each care room for the storage of perishable foods.
- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels. Children were observed to wash their hands before meals and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Lidded, foot pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste during the inspection.

Administration of Medication:

- The adults present on the day informed the inspector that no child had prescribed medication requiring to be administered currently in the service. Two children had emergency medication prescribed and adults informed the inspector they received training in the use of this.
- Temperature reducing medicines were stored out of reach of the children in each care room and the observed medicine was in date.

Fire Safety:

- The service had two external exit doors labelled as fire exit doors in the Yellow Room, one of which was secured with a runner bolt. Runner bolts were also in use on the half door on the stairway. A referral has been made to the fire officer to assess the safety of the fire doors.
- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- Fire extinguishers were secured to the walls.
- The fire assembly point was visible in the outdoor area.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

The inspector observed the following during three children's nappy changes in the service:

- The same non disposable apron and disposable gloves remained in use for the three nappy changes.
- The changing mat which was not cleaned between use.
- The adult did not wash their hands after each nappy change.
- The children's hands were not washed after nappy change

This poses a risk of contamination and cross infection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was received from the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

Staff members will dispose of aprons after each nappy change, change gloves, clean changing mat and wash both adult and children's hands. New changing mats have been put in place. The nappy changing policy is accessible to the staff at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographs of both nappy changing areas and a copy of the nappy changing policy was received.

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 19.

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-

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

Compliance Information

(1) The adults working in the service ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service.

(3)

(b) A daily record of visitors to the premises was kept in a visitors log book. The inspector was requested to signed in and out from the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

Compliance Information

(1) Current First Aid Response (FAR) certification was available for three staff members, who worked at the setting. Evidence was also available to demonstrate that a fourth adult had recently completed this training and was awaiting their certificate.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was in place. The available certificate was valid until 27 March 2027 and indicated that the service was insured to provide full day care.