

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016DY032		
Name of Service:	Willow House Montessori		
Address of Service:	The Maigeough Hall, Cowper Road, Rathmines, Dublin 6, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D06 R8C8		
Name of Registered Provider:	Hilary Garvey		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	27/11/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM 17
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin.		
Inspection undertaken by:	N McEndoo		
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	Not applicable.		

Description of service

Willow House Montessori is a part time service located in Dublin 6. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 8:30am-1.00pm providing care to children aged 2- to 6 years old. The premises is a single storey building located in the grounds of a residential complex for older persons. The service operates from one main care room. The outdoor play area is located to the front of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider and the deputy person in charge were present and working directly with the children on the day of inspection. There is one other adult employed to work with the children but was not present on the day.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 25, 26, 27 and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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 and deputy person in charge, 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,*
- (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)

The registered provider ensured that.

- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
- (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
- (c) There was 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.

(2)

On the day of inspection, there were two adults present, the registered provider and deputy person in charge. Following a review of previous inspection information and discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed that there was one new employee since the previous inspection.

The following vetting information was available for one adult:

- (a) Two written validated references from past employers for one of the adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another state was available for one adult who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.

(4)

One of the adult files reviewed evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

The registered provider did not ensure that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained for part-time day care, on the day of inspection.

At 9:38am the inspector observed the required ratio to be in place with 18 children being supervised by two adults, during the sessional period from 8:30am to 12:00pm. However, at 12:25pm it was confirmed that 17 children were being supervised by two adults.

From 12:00pm until the service closed at 1:00pm, the minimum required adult to child ratio for part time daycare was not maintained.

Time	Children present	Required Ratio
09:38	18, aged 2.5-3 years	1:11
12:25	2, aged 2-3 years	1:6
	15, aged 3-6 years	1:8

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that.

A staff member was absent due to illness on the day of inspection. No substitute staff were available from the local agency. Parents were informed of the situation and offered to collect their children early. Alternative collection arrangements were also made for the provider's own child. Staff absences are reported to be infrequent. A former staff member has since been recruited and vetted to provide emergency cover if a similar situation occurs again.

Supporting documentation submitted

None submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed by the inspectorate and deemed to be adequate. This regulation is now compliant.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. On the day of inspection, the doors to the kitchen area were unlocked. Chemicals were observed to be stored freely on a countertop in the kitchen. This could cause a potential risk of harm to a child.

Fire Safety:

2. On the day of inspection, it was observed that one of the fire emergency exit doors was obstructed by a mobile shelving unit and a draught excluder. This could cause a delay in exiting and a risk of harm to a child in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider stated that:

We have never let the children into the kitchen, it has always been off limits, there is no problem in locking the door into the kitchen while the children are attending the service. Which we are now doing. We moved the cleaning product to a shelf up high in the cupboard out of reach of a child. It has been added to our Daily risk checklist. We also put a note on the door to remind ourselves every morning. We also moved the cleaning product to a shelf up high in the cupboard out of reach of a child.

Fire Safety:

The registered provider stated that:

We use a community hall for our classroom. Other people use it in the afternoons. There are 2 fire exits, one is off the corridor. This is known as our second fire exit. There is a draft that comes under the door, and somebody had left a draft pillow & a lightweight shelf on wheels in front of it. Our assistant usually removes it in the morning

before our children arrive, but she was absent that morning. It was removed immediately when it was pointed out that day.

We have added this important task to the morning checklist so that it is always kept clear with no obstructions whatsoever.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence and copy of daily checklist submitted.

Fire Safety:

Photographic evidence and copy of daily checklist submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed by the inspectorate and deemed to be adequate. This regulation is now compliant.

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 there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, available to the children at all times while attending the preschool service. There were two adults who held in date FAR certificates, with expiry dates of 20th November 2026. One adult had also been trained in paediatric first aid.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a)(b)
Whilst a first aid box was available, securely stored, and clearly identifiable, in the care room. The first aid supplies were not sufficient to meet the needs of the number of children in attendance. The contents of the box were not maintained or regularly checked as evidenced by out-of-date items contained within.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated:

A new fully equipped first aid box was purchased from a reputable supplier.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of purchase submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed by the inspectorate and deemed to be adequate. This regulation is now compliant.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A procedure was in place to practice and record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated the 25th November 2025.
 - (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on available. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated 8th January 2025 and the fire detection system was dated 31st October 2025.

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 strategically positioned throughout the environment to ensure continuous visual and auditory supervision; when seated in the main care room, staff were observed with their backs to the walls always facing into the room. This practice enabled purposeful engagement with children who were nearby while being aware of children within other areas of the room. A rolling snack table was available to children throughout the morning, staff were observed to monitor the children at the table, ensuring help and guidance was given when required.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured adequate insurance was in place for the part-time day care service for 33 children up until 24 March 2026.