

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2016KE007

Name of Service: La Petite Ecole Montessori A.M.I.

Address of Service: Scoil Bhride Girl's School, Prosperous Road, Clane, Co. Kildare

Eircode: W91 PF77

Name of Registered Provider: Rita Bourdiol-Ruane

Service type: Sessional

Date(s) of Inspection: 12/05/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM	Not applicable
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----------------

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Inspectorate
Primary Care Centre
Church Avenue
Tullamore
Co Offaly
R35K1W4

Inspection undertaken by: A Spain

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

La Petite Ecole Montessori A.M.I is a sessional preschool service located within 2 rooms in a primary school on the outskirts of Clane in Co. Kildare. The service is operational between the hours of 8.40 and 11.40am in Room 14 and between the hours of 9.00am and 12.00pm in Room 3. Children in the age range 2 to 6 years are cared for. The service also has use of an office, two storerooms for toys and a storage area in the hallway between the two rooms. Sanitary accommodation for children is available off both playrooms. Sanitary accommodation is available to staff off the school hallway. Children have access to a dedicated play area and to a section of the school playground for outdoor play activities.

A school age service is also operational between the hours of 1.30 and 4.30pm.

Staffing

The registered provider employs four staff members to provide direct care to the preschool children. A student is currently on placement in the service and is available in a supernumerary capacity. The registered provider also works in the service.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment,
Regulation 11 – Staffing levels,
Regulation 15 – Records of pre-school child,
Regulation 19 – Health, welfare and development of child,
Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials,
Regulation 23 – Safeguard health, safety and welfare of child,
Regulation 25 – First aid,
Regulation 26 – Fire safety measures,
Regulation 28 – Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Records of pre-school child. The scope of the inspection included all rooms in use in the service and the outdoor play area.

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.

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The service had both a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

Both the designated person in charge and the named person to deputise were present in the service on the arrival of the inspector and for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

It was observed on the inspection that key staff members familiar with their roles and responsibilities were assigned to work in both rooms in the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Two references from past employers were held on file in respect of three staff members. A reference from a past employer and a reference from a reputable source were held on file in respect of one staff member and the registered provider. A reference from a current employer and a reference from a past employer were held on file in respect of the student of work experience placement.

(c)

A Garda vetting disclosure was held on file in respect the registered provider, four staff members and the student on work experience. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for each staff member.

(d)

International police vetting was held on file as necessary in respect of two staff members in the service who had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as adults.

(3)

Records held on file confirmed that the necessary vetting procedures were conducted prior to the appointment of staff to work in the service.

(4)

Certification was available to confirm that all four staff held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education, varying from level 6 to level 8.

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 worked and cared for the children in attendance for the duration of the inspection. The inspector reviewed the children's attendance records and the staff roster for the week beginning 3 March

2025. Records confirmed that the maximum number of children in daily attendance in Room 3 was 15 children with 2 adults present. Records also confirmed that the maximum number of children in daily attendance in Room 14 was 10 children with 2 adults present.

(3)

Two adults cared for a total of 18 children in the age range 3 to 5 years in Room 3 in the service. Two adults also cared for 10 children in the age range 3 to 5 years in Room 14 in the service.

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-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (i)

The service held folders which contained individual child files in both rooms in the service. The inspector reviewed six children's files. The necessary details in respect of (1)(a) to (i) were recorded in respect of the sample of files reviewed

(3)(a)(b)(c).

The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to their child, an employee who is authorised by the registered provider and an authorised person such as the inspector on the day of 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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

On the day of inspection, lunchtime in the service was observed to be a sociable occasion for the children who could sit and chat with their friends and staff and develop their social skills. Lunches brought to the service from home included sandwiches, wraps, cheese strings, yoghurts and a selection of fruit, including oranges, apples and raspberries. Children were observed to be afforded adequate time to enjoy their food without being rushed.

Children cared for in Room 3 were observed enjoying playing basketball and with hoops in the PE hall which was designated for use by the service at an assigned time on a Monday and Friday. Children from this room were also observed enjoying playing with toys in the school yard before home time in the service.

Children in room 14 were observed to finish lunch at their individual pace. The staff were observed to be caring and kind in their interactions with the children, evidenced by a child seeking out a staff member for comfort and when children were sitting and singing songs after break time while playing with musical instruments.

A sheltered area enclosed by walls on three sides and covered with a roof was available for children to play outdoors during both inclement and hot weather conditions. A section of the school yard surfaced with tarmac was also available to the children for play on ride on toys including trikes, cars and bicycles.

In addition to a display of artwork in the playrooms, each child had an individual drawer to store samples of their work. Scrap books were also maintained to demonstrate play activities and learning achievements of children to take home at year end. Parents were invited into the service at a scheduled time to experience through demonstration what their child is learning.

The inspector was shown a copy of a newsletter furnished to parents on a quarterly basis. The newsletter included information on weekly/monthly activities that the children had participated in, seasonal changes and festivities, events undertaken in the service and some French vocabulary used to celebrate festive days.

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

Toys, play equipment and furniture in the playrooms and in the outdoor play area was observed to be of a suitable design and size for preschool children.

Both care rooms were stocked with a wide range of play and work equipment located on low-level open shelving for easy access and retrieval by children. Low level tables and chairs were provided for children to sit for tabletop activities and for break time. Some of the well-defined interest areas and associated resources available included a play kitchen and home corner, a range of stackable toys and interlocking stick together toys, building bricks and a variety of jigsaws, puzzles, cards and games. A stock of art resources, including a variety of paper, colours, paint, shapes were provided and the children's artwork was on open display on the walls in the rooms and in the hallway. An additional supply of toys and play equipment was held in storage and was available for rotation, for seasonal use and to support developing curricular themes and to support the children's emerging interests throughout the year. In addition to the books available in the care rooms, children also had access to the school library room two days a week. The library was furnished with a soft floor carpet, soft cushions and books designated for the preschool service stored in low level containers.

Children had access to two separate outdoor play areas.

The outdoor play area designated for use by the preschool service had a grass surface and an enclosed garden area with a lilac bush, a maple tree and planting boxes. Toys and play equipment available included a playhouse, tyres to climb on, balancing planks, a blackboard, a dolls house, sand pits, rakes and sweeping brushes. A section of the school yard surfaced with tarmac was also available to the children, and was suitable for play equipment including trikes, cars and bicycles that were available.

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:

Children cared for in Room 3 were dropped off and collected from the main school entrance door. The door was secured and the glass panels allowed easy visibility of all approaching the service. Children cared for in Room 14 were dropped off and collected from an entrance which was located close to the care room. The door was secure and parents and guardians were easily visible from the glass panels on the door. A keycode was provided on the double glass doors leading from the school hallway to the rooms in the service to guard against unauthorised access to the service from the school building. A mobile phone in both rooms was provided to facilitate late arrivals and early collections during operational hours of the service. The daily start and end times in both rooms were staggered to assist with a safe movement of children in to and out of the school building and to protect against unauthorised access to the service. Chemicals and cleaning agents were stored in the storeroom in an area where children were denied access to.

The outdoor play areas were safely and securely fenced off by heavy duty plastic fencing to guard against unsupervised exit of children from the outdoor play areas.

Infection Control:

The floor linoleum and brightly coloured walls throughout the rooms in the service were clean and well maintained on the day of inspection. Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap and disposable paper towels were provided in the children's sanitary accommodation for handwashing under staff supervision. Foot pedal operated bins were provided adjacent to the wash hand basins. Completed and up to date cleaning schedules were available for the furniture, shelving, toys and play equipment in use both indoors and outdoors in the service. Toys and play equipment were observed to be clean and in good condition. In addition, the service

availed of the school cleaning service to assist with daily cleaning of floors and sanitary accommodation as well as daily removal of waste. Hooks were provided in the hallway to store children's coats, bags and spare clothing off the floor to facilitate cleaning as necessary. Openable windows were available in all rooms to ensure a good supply of fresh air when children played indoors.

Administration of Medication:

No medication was administered on the day of inspection. Temperature reducing medication was held in storage in the storeroom. Parental consent to administer temperature reducing medication if required was documented on the children's enrolment forms reviewed by the inspector.

Fire Safety:

The hallway leading to the fire assembly point outside of the building was clear and unobstructed. Monthly fire drills were conducted by the service. Fire exits from the service were clearly sign posted.

Outing:

The registered provider advised that the service does not currently undertake outings.

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 staff member trained in FAR (first aid responder) with an expiry date of the 17 August 2026 was available in the service.

(2)
(a) A first aid box was secured to the wall in both playroom in the service.
(b) The first aid box was easily accessible to staff and available to children cared for in both rooms in the service.

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)

Records were maintained of two fire drills conducted monthly in the service.

(b)

The maintenance record for the fire fighting equipment confirmed that an annual service was conducted in March 2025.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was posted in the hallway outside of the playrooms and in both playrooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had insurance cover for a maximum of 33 children in daily attendance in a sessional service. Insurance cover was valid from 28 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.