

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D: TU2016WD002

Name of Service: Kilmacthomas Montessori School

Address of Service: The Old School House, Currabaha, Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford, X42 PY64

Email Address: kilmacmontessori@gmail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Rowena Power, Philomena Troy

Type of Proposed Service:	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Full Day Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed change: Maximum number of children to increase from 33 children to 44 in an existing room on a sessional basis

Proposed Number of Children: 44 children.

Registered change: No Change – Registered Providers withdrew application

Date of Inspection:	0	1	0	8	2	0	2	3
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Inspection undertaken by: M. Ryan

Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings
Cork Road, Waterford City

Rationale for Inspection:
Change in Circumstance Application

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	No Change – Registered Sessional Service for 33 Children
Date of Registration	10 th October 2023

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Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Kilmacthomas Montessori opened in September 2016. The service is privately owned and run by the registered provider. The service is located on the outskirts of Kilmacthomas, a rural village in mid-county Waterford. Kilmacthomas Montessori presently offers sessional hours from 09:30hrs to 12:30hrs Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme.
Premises	The service is located in an old schoolhouse building on an acre of ground. The building is privately owned and is leased for the purpose of running an early years service.
Staffing	There are three staff currently employed and available to work directly with the children in the service. A fourth staff member is available for employment to meet additional adult child ratios for the increase in numbers of re-registration.
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under two themes: Governance, and Safety.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the Inspection report and presented to the Registration Office for consideration of a decision in relation to the service receiving continued registration.</p> <p>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.</p>
Additional information	Following the inspection the registered providers decided not to progress their application to increase the number of children attending.
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the registered provider.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met:

(1)

(a) The service had a designated person in charge and had a named second person who was able to deputise as required, both of whom were working directly with the children in the service.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met:

(1) The registered provider proposes to have 4 childcare staff working directly with the children to cater for the proposed 44 children that may attend the service.

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.

(2) A registered provider—

(b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016, shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

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<p>Requirement met:</p>	<p>(1)</p> <p>(a) The Montessori early years room proposed to cater for the extra 11 children was well laid out with clearly defined areas of interest. Shelf displays were organised in accordance with the Montessori materials such as sensorial and practical life and these were arranged around the room for easy access for the children. The children’s tables, chairs and furniture were age appropriate for an early year setting.</p> <p>(b) Children’s relaxation needs were facilitated in one area with three bean bag seats and soft matting.</p> <p>(2)</p> <p>The outdoor space made available to the children was safely secured from the roadside. There was a large tarmacadam area for ball games. A further grassed area had a variety of timber play activities zoned into areas of interest for the children. A bug hotel, fairy garden and mud kitchens were further features of this extended play space. Planting boxes were available for planting flowers and vegetables.</p>
<p>Requirement not met:</p>	<p>(2)</p> <p>The grassed outdoor play space had a partial boundary made from reed fencing. This area was ill defined, and the fencing did not create a complete secure boundary for the play area from the waste land. Furthermore, some of the access route to the outdoor play spaces was unkept and overgrown with briars and weeds. Children could gain easy access to these areas that could pose some harm to them.</p>
<p>Response from Provider:</p>	<p>(2)</p> <p>The registered provider stated in the response that new temporary fencing had been installed between the play areas and the wasteland as this area had to be accessible for grass cuttings and council water works.</p> <p>The registered provider stated in the response that the area at the side of the premises that had long grass, weeds and briars had been cut and is now being maintained by the current gardener.</p>

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	<p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Photographic evidence submitted to the Inspectorate on the 2 October 2023 demonstrated that a partition installed rendered the scrub area of the property inaccessible to children while using this outdoor space.</p> <p>Further photographs were submitted of the access route to the outdoor play spaces that was suitably maintained for children’s access to the outdoor play spaces.</p>
<p>Summary Comment:</p>	<p>The non-compliance for Regulation 20 was addressed and all evidence submitted met the requirements the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.</p>

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.

Requirement Met:

The following appropriate safety measures were taken:

Timber fencing with safety gate locks had been erected at the entrance and the sides of the building securing the play areas to the rear of the premises and restricting children from exiting the grounds of the premises.

Access to the early years service was restricted with the entrance door secured and keys readily accessible.

All electrical flexes and cables at child height in the room were safely secured and encased with conduit.

Chemical cleaning materials were stored in a locked storage room inaccessible to children.

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	<p>Water and heating temperatures were thermostatically controlled within the required ranges.</p> <p>Finger guards were fitted to the fire doors which children had access to.</p> <p>Refuse was separated and storage bins were securely located away from the service area.</p>
Requirement not met:	<p>1. All blinds were secured with safety devices, however, some of these devices were at a low level accessible to children with cords that were slack and could pose a risk of injury to the children using this room.</p> <p>2. A considerable amount of moss (originating from the roof of the premises) collected on the pathway to the outdoor environment, and on the tarmacadamed play area at the rear of the building, this could pose as a slip hazard for children and staff.</p>
Response from Provider:	<p>1. The registered provider stated in the response that all blinds have now been corrected, taken down completely.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u> Photo graphic evidence submitted from the registered provider on 2 October 2023 demonstrated that the blinds had been removed from the room seeking registration.</p> <p>2. The registered provider stated in the response that the moss has now been cleaned off and any extra fallen moss is swept up immediately / daily.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u> The registered provider submitted photographs of the pathway on route to the children's outdoor play spaces with all moss removed. A 'moss checklist' was also submitted on the 2 October indicating a date and responsibility for ensuring the moss is cleared daily.</p>
Summary Comment:	<p>The non-compliance for Regulation 23 was addressed and all evidence submitted met the requirements the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.</p>

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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 is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met:

- (1) Two of the staff had current first aid responder training completed in April 2022.
- (2)(a)(b) A fully equipped first aid bag was located on a high shelf out of children’s reach in the childcare room.

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 firefighting 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.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met:

- (1)
- (a) A recording system was in place to maintain a record of monthly fire drills as conducted.
- (b) A recording system was maintained for firefighting equipment which was last serviced on the 7 February 2023 and the smoke alarms were last serviced on 8 May 2023.
- (4)
- A fire plan of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the wall of the new room. A fire assembly point was identifiable at the gate entrance to the building.

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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met:

Insurance cover was available to cover for 44 children in this early years setting. This policy was valid 27 March 2024.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Requirement met:

(a) The building which had previously operated as a national school was approximately 50 years old. The windows were large metal single glazed panes throughout the premises. There was wood laminate floor covering in the new children’s childcare room. The water was supplied directly from the mains. The building was attached to the public sewage system for Kilmacthomas.

(b) The main entrance door had a magnetic locking system controlled from the main reception area to restrict unauthorised access and prevent children from exiting the building unsupervised; in addition, the keys for the door were readily available to the staff working in the service.

(c) The childcare rooms had natural lighting provided through large windows along two walls and this was supplemented with fully enclosed fluorescent light fittings. All rooms were ventilated with openable windows.

	<p>There was an oil-fired central heating system throughout the building. A ceiling mounted convection heating and cooling system was also available in the childcare rooms and was last serviced in August 2022. This system was observed to be working on the day of the inspection and a comfortable room temperature of 20.2°C was recorded.</p> <p>(d) The service was clean and suitably kept for the purpose of operating a sessional early years service. The registered provider had a documented cleaning plan for the rooms, toys, and equipment in the service. There were cleaning schedules displayed in all rooms throughout the building.</p> <p>(e) Three wash hand basins and three toilets were provided off the entrance hall. A suitable table was available for the purpose of nappy changing in the disability toilet.</p>
<p>Requirement not met:</p>	<p>(a)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the waste piping at the rear of the building in the children’s tarmacadamed play area had been dug up and had remained unfinished with loose cement pieces and wastewater piping not secured into the shore. One high level windowpane was observed to be covered with masking tape to cover cracks in the window. <p>(c)</p> <p>There were old doors and broken glass accessible to the children on route to the outdoor play area.</p> <p>(e)</p> <p>There was an inadequate supply of wash hand basins and toilets in order to cater for the proposed 44 children on the premises. A further toilet and wash hand basin is required in order to meet the 1: 11 child: toilet ratios.</p>

Response from Provider:	<p>(a)</p> <p>1. The registered provider stated in the response that the tarmacadamed play area outdoors with loose cement had been filled in.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Photographs had been sent to the inspectorate on 2 October 2023 of newly cemented areas infilled.</p> <p>2. The registered provider stated in the response that the complete windowpane had been replaced.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>A Photograph of the newly replaced windowpane was submitted on 2 October 2023.</p> <p>(c)</p> <p>The registered provider stated in the response that this area was cleared before children returned to school, and that this was part of ongoing summer maintenance work.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Photographs were submitted of the area on route to the children’s outdoor play space that had been cleared of building materials and the broken glass.</p> <p>(e)</p> <p>The registered provider stated in the response that at present, a further toilet and wash hand basin will not be installed as required in order to meet the 1: 11 child: toilet ratios. It is no longer the intention of the registered provider to expand to accommodate 44 children for the forthcoming ECCE year 2023/2024.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>An email was sent to the inspectorate from the registered Provider on 27 September 2023 with confirmation that the service provider does not wish to increase the numbers of children attending the service to 44 for the forth coming ECCE year 2023/2024.</p>
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Summary Comment:	<p>The non-compliance for Regulation 29 (a) and (c) were addressed and all evidence submitted meets the requirements the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.</p> <p>However the non-compliance for Regulation 29 (e) has not been addressed resulting from the decision not to increase numbers of children in attendance. Sanitary facilities in place meet the requirement for the current number of children registered to attend.</p>
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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met:</p> <p>(1)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Room Name</th> <th>Age Range</th> <th>Type of Service</th> <th>Floor Space Available</th> <th>Number of Children space will accommodate</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Montessori room 2</td> <td>2.5 -6 years</td> <td>Sessional</td> <td>54.02m/sq.</td> <td>22</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(3)</p> <p>Adequate clear floor space was available in this room for an additional 11 children aged between two and a half and six years of age, therefore the service was compliant with the minimum space requirements for sessional care in this room.</p>	Room Name	Age Range	Type of Service	Floor Space Available	Number of Children space will accommodate	Montessori room 2	2.5 -6 years	Sessional	54.02m/sq.	22
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