

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016WD002		
Name of Service:	Kilmacthomas Montessori School		
Address of Service:	The Old School House, Currabaha, Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford		
Eircode:	X42 PY64		
Name of Registered Provider:	Philomena Troy, Rowena Power		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	28/01/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM n/a
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Community Care Office Cork Road, Waterford City		
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Bradshaw		
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

Kilmacthomas Montessori School offers a sessional service for children aged 2 to 6 years. It is based in an old schoolhouse on the outskirts of Kilmacthomas village, Co Waterford. The service is registered to operate from 09:00 to 12:30 caring for up to 33 children, and 13:00 to 16:30 caring for 22 children. The service currently only operates the morning session. There are two care rooms for the preschool children and a sanitary area off the hallway. The outdoor area is at the rear of the building.

The service is also registered to offer school-age care.

Staffing

The registered providers employ three staff members, two of whom work directly with the children. A student was on the premises on work experience on the day of the inspection. Both registered providers work directly with the children and there is an auxiliary staff who prepares food.

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;

Regulation 11– Staffing Levels;

Regulation 15 – Record of a Pre-School child;

Regulation 16- Record in Relation to a re-School Service;
Regulation 19 - Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of the Child;
Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child;
Regulation 25 – First Aid.

However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 – Record of a Pre-School Child and regulation 16 – Record in Relation to Pre- School Service.

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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued on 28 January 2026 under Regulation 9: Management and Recruitment for the absence of a Garda vetting disclosure. The registered providers submitted a written adequate response on the 28 January 2026.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered providers, 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)

Both registered providers were on the premises on the inspector's arrival. Through discussion with the staff, it was determined that one of registered providers is always on the premises during the hours of operation.

All staff and the student files were reviewed on the day.

(2)(d)

Through discussion with staff and documents reviewed on the day demonstrated that Police vetting disclosures were not required as no staff 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)
(a)(b) Two written references for two staff were not available on file.
(c) While the service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years, a Garda vetting disclosure was not available in respect of one adult. An immediate action notice was issued on the 28 January 2026 regarding this non-compliance. An adequate response was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate on the 28 January 2026 to demonstrate the actions taken to correct the non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)
(a)(b) The registered providers stated that the required validated references and Garda vetting has been filed in staff folders and they have developed a recruitment check list to ensure all documents are in place before a new employee takes up their position.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the references and Garda vetting was submitted to the inspectorate.
A copy of the recruitment checklist was submitted.

Summary Comment

The action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.

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)(3)

During the inspection, there were an adequate number of staff working directly with the children.

During the morning there were 2 staff caring for 21 children with both registered providers available throughout the morning.

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

(1) A sample of 10 children's record forms were reviewed and the information required under parts (a) to (i) were available on the day of the inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1)
Required information for parts (1)(b) to (i) was available in the parental handbook and displayed in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
(a) There were no records available to demonstrate the registered providers had considered the previous work experience for one staff member.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered providers stated that they have filed a copy of the staff members curriculum vitae (CV) as evidence of reviewing their previous work experience. A recruitment checklist has been developed to ensure the required documents are on file before a new staff begins their employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the recruitment checklist was submitted.

A copy of CV was submitted.

Summary Comment

The action submitted by the registered providers are suitable to address the non-compliance identified on 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.

Compliance Information

1(a)

On the inspector's arrival, the children were based in the Montessori room and were engaged in a variety of play and activities at the tables. The staff explained that had just transitioned from free play to tabletop activity time. The children were fully immersed in their activities and were observed to complete one activity and chose another one. Staff were observed to be responsive to children and when requested for help by a child a staff replied 'well let's have a look and see where we're at' giving the child the opportunity to explain what they needed. The staff were seen to be polite yet firm with the children in relation to unsuitable play, a staff member was observed suggesting to a child to choose as different activity as 'they looked as if they were finished playing with the straws properly'. Staff in the room observed the children and engaged with them if they were required to give support or help them to solve a problem. A staff member was observed demonstrating a practical life activity to one child

and then supporting the child to complete the activity with their encouragement. Staff interacted in a positive, friendly and familiar way with each child.

Staff encouraged children to be responsible for their own work, choosing their activity, choosing where to sit and who to sit with. Children were observed to organise themselves, two children discussed what they were going to do, then gather the materials they required, choose where to sit and then to settle into their work. This practice supported the children's sense of independence.

The service operated from two well-resourced playrooms, with sanitary facilities adjacent. Classroom one was well organised with furniture used to create space and the materials were displayed based on the Montessori key themes of practical life, sensorial, language, mathematics and culture. These were available on low shelving for the children to access if they chose and were organised to be visible and easily accessible. There were low level tables to accommodate children to work in smaller groups and large floor mats for group work.

The second room was equipped with toys and materials for imaginative and physical play, staff explained that children spend time in this room when they arrive each morning.

The service supplied warm snacks to the children and on the day of the inspection, spaghetti shapes and toast were served with a side of cut grapes watermelon and slices of kiwi.

A menu of the food provided was included in the parental handbook for parents. The snack time was relaxed and unrushed. The staff sat with the children talked about their interests.

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 to the service was secure on arrival, and the outdoor area was secure, this restricted unauthorised entry and exit of the premises.

The window dressings were out of reach of the children in each room.

Cleaning products were stored on high shelving out of reach from the children.

Infection Control:

Pedal bins were available in the sanitary area.

There was warm water, liquid soap and paper towels available when children washed their hands.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The children's attendance record was not completed accurately. For example,
 - there were 21 children in attendance during the morning of the inspection however only 19 children were signed in on the attendance book,
 - the record of the children in attendance on the previous day did not include the time the children left the premises.

This posed as risk to children's safety in the case of an emergency evacuation where there was no accurate record of attendance.

2. The accident and incident book were not completed correctly. Of the three records reviewed the parental signatures were absent. As a result, the inspector could not be assured the parents had been informed of incidents or accidents which had happened during the day.

Infection Control:

3. Procedures regarding the management of cross-contamination were not thorough as the staff toilet is used for the temporary storage of floor mats, toys, and boxes. This was a previous non-compliance on the last inspection in April 2025.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered providers stated that:

1. All children have been included in the attendance book, and they will ensure the book is kept up to date as children arrive and leave the service. They stated that the book will be kept at the main door of the service for ease of use.
2. Staff have been reminded that of the requirements of completing incident and accident reports correctly.

The registered provider stated that all staff have been informed of the above requirements and these were discussed the staff meeting.

Infection Control:

The registered providers stated that:

3. The staff toilet has been cleared mats, toys and boxes. Staff have been reminded that this room is not to be used for storage.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

A copy of the minutes of the staff meeting was submitted.

Photographic evidence was submitted.

Infection Control:

A copy of the minutes of the staff meeting was submitted.

Photographic evidence was submitted.

Summary Comment

The action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.

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 providers had ensured that a person trained in first aid was available at all times to the children. Two staff were qualified to the level of a First Aid Responder.
- (2) (a)(b) The first aid box was stored on an accessible shelf in the care room.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and.*

Non-Compliance Information

1. The outdoor area at the rear of the premises was not well-maintained. There were weeds, and moss growing through the cracks in the concrete and two stacks of unsecured pallets which were accessible to the children. This was a non-compliance on the previous two inspections in August 2023 and April 2025.
2. There was evidence of the rooms not being thoroughly cleaned with mould observed on the walls of the children's care rooms and in the sanitary areas and spiders' webs on the windows of the children's toilets.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The registered providers stated that they were waiting for a dry day to treat the surface of the outdoor area.
2. The registered providers have installed de-humidifiers and placed them in each room to remove excess moisture. Once the walls have dried out, they will treat and paint them. In the meantime, the wall has been washed and the mould removed. The staff are now aware that's the rooms require a thorough cleaning regularly. A comprehensive cleaning checklist has been developed. This was discussed at the team meeting.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted.

Summary Comment

The action submitted by the registered provider are appropriate to address the non-compliance identified on inspection.