

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2019TY005
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	The Den Montessori Kilfeacle
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Kilfeacle Community Centre, Kilfeacle, Co Tipperary
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<b>Eircode:</b>	E34 YP98
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Kate Molony
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/04/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary E91RF38
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Antoinette McNamara
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

The Den Montessori Kilfeacle is a private early years service which was established in 2019. It provides a sessional service for children aged from 2 years 8 months to 6 years old. The early years service operates Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 12:00. This is a sister service of The Den Montessori, Boherlahan and The Den Montessori, Fort Aengus. The service is operated from a detached premises in a rural setting on the grounds of Kilfeacle Tennis Club Co Tipperary. The service has shared use of the building which consists of one large early years classroom, kitchen, store, and sanitary accommodation. There are three enclosed outdoor play areas available to the children.

### Staffing

There are currently five staff employed to work in the service. The registered provider arrived at the service on the morning of the inspection and is available to provide relief cover for staff absences as required. Staff working directly with children hold qualifications at level 6 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and recruitment,  
Regulation 11(1)(3) Staffing levels,

Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, welfare, and development of the child,  
Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of the child,  
Regulation 25 First aid,  
Regulation 26 Fire safety and  
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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, person in charge, 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) There was a designated person in charge and a named deputy designated person in charge who was able to deputise, as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present for the inspection.

The staff files for five staff were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for each staff member working at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from other sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member working in the service. Garda vetting had been renewed, in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable. Review of the curriculum vitae indicated that police vetting was not required.

(4) Certificates of qualifications for the staff working directly with children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualification.

### 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) The person in charge ensured that there were enough adults to respond to children’s individual needs. There were 3 staff directly working with 14 children.

(3) At all times during the inspection the person in charge ensured that the adult to children ratio was maintained. The service exceeded the minimum child to adult ratio required under the regulation.

### 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

##### Basic needs:

Children had free movement and choice of activities in the classroom observed on the day. Three secure outdoor areas were available to the children. Staff reported that the children engaged in outdoor play daily. The toilets were directly accessible from the classroom which supported the children to use the toilets independently when they needed to. Drinking water was available to the children throughout the day on a low shelf and refilled as required. Healthy eating was promoting within the service. Snacks were provided by parents for the children.

### Physical and material environment:

The indoor environment was warm, bright, and well ventilated. The windows in the service were decorated for Easter. Children’s Spring and Easter crafts were displayed on the walls of the service. A variety of defined areas of interest were provided for the children to play with. These included a kitchen, jigsaws, Montessori toys, a farm area and arts and crafts. Labelled low-level shelving provided children with access to a wide selection of activities, suitable for the age and stage of the children’s development. Adequate space was available for children to engage in both floor and table play independently and in groups. The was room was laid out with appropriately sized furniture and a broad range of developmentally appropriate equipment and materials which were well organised. The large outdoor play space was divided into three areas directly assessable from the classroom. A storage shed housed a variety of outdoor play resources. A covered outdoor area was also available. Staff were engaged in the children’s play and exploration and provided them with the resources they needed to extend and enrich the play experience. The noticeboards in the classroom displayed plans for learning. Pictograms timetables were displayed at the children’s eye level so that they could see what was happening next. Phonics, colours, shapes, and seasons were displayed on notice boards in the classroom. Children were given individual jobs on a daily basis such as giving out the water bottles at lunch and ensuring pencils were picked up. Children were observed practising spring and graduation songs on the morning of the inspection.

### Supporting relationships:

Staff members were observed to treat the children with respect and a positive regard. They sat with children in small groups or individually, engaged in conversation with and listened attentively to the children as they spoke. The environment was inclusive and representative of the children attending the service. The children’s identity and belonging were fostered through the display of their arts and crafts, birthday wall, and individual portraits of the children. The family wall was creatively displayed to provide an important link between home and preschool.

## 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 premises was adequately secured to prevent children leaving unsupervised and unauthorised persons gaining access. The main door to the service was locked and had to be opened by staff. A stair gate was present at the

porch area of the service so children could not easily assess the front door. Cleaning agents and hazardous materials were stored inaccessible to children.

**Infection control:**

There was warm running water, liquid soap, and paper hand towels available for hand drying throughout the service. There were designated children’s toilets available to the children. Designated staff toilets were also provided. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day such as after messy play and after using the toilet. Cleaning schedules were maintained in the service. The service was well maintained.

**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) There were staff trained in first aid responder (FAR) available to the children attending the service.  
(2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position.  
(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending 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.*

**Compliance Information**

(1)(a) There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and staff advised that monthly fire drills were completed.

(b) There was a record available demonstrating that the smoke alarm system was last serviced in September 2024 and the firefighting equipment was last serviced on the same date.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

An in-date insurance certificate was available for inspection to demonstrate that valid insurance was in place.