

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2024RN001			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Na Fea Montessori Preschool			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	St. Marys National School, Glebe, Knockcroghery, Co. Roscommon			
<b>Eircode:</b>	F42YF38			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Marie Mc Manus			
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional			
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	30/01/2026			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	7	PM	5
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government buildings, Convent road, Roscommon town Co Roscommon			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. Kennedy			
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector			
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>				
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>	Not Applicable.			

### Description of service

This pre-school service is based in a primary school classroom, in the village of Knockcroghery, Co. Roscommon. An Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school sessional care programme is offered from 9.00hrs to 12.00hrs and a part time service is available 08:30 to 13:30hrs. The service can cater for a maximum of 22 children at any one time, for children aged between 2 and 6 years of age. A Montessori play-based pre-school curriculum focusing on emerging interests is provided.

Quiet rest areas are available for children to rest and relax. There is a designated secure outdoor play area located at the side of the primary school. The children have access under supervision to the primary school facilities, that is an impact absorbing pitch, a sensory area, and playground areas. The children have access to the school hall, during inclement weather.

### Staffing

The registered provider works between this service and a second pre-school service in Athlone.

Two adults are employed daily to work in the service. There is a named designated person in charge and a person available to deputise.

Three relief persons are also available in event of staff absence. The five adults (including the registered provider) have at least a major award Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

The staff have documentary evidence of on-going training and education.

### 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 regulations 9,11,15,19,23,25,26 and 28. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 regarding the surface temperature for Regulation 23 (Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child). Please see body of report for more detail.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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,*

*(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) The registered provider was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The registered provider was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.

Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.

(2)(a) &(b)

The five staff files were reviewed.

Ten of the ten written validated references on file in respect of the five staff were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the five staff. The service did adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Documentary evidence indicated that none of the staff, had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years, and therefore did not require police vetting.

(4) The five staff working directly with the children had evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 to Level 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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.*

*(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*

*(a) a sessional pre-school service, and*

*(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Documentary evidence indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

At all times during the period of the inspection, the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(4) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained.

On the day of the inspection, there were seven children aged between 3 to 5 years with two adults directly caring for these children in the morning and five children between 3 to 5 years were in attendance from 12:30 to 13:30hrs with two adults directly caring for these children.

### 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.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.*

*(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.*

### Compliance Information

(1) (a)(b)(c)(d)(e) and (f)(g)(h)(i)

Five of the children's records were reviewed by the Early Years Inspector.

The entries reviewed were factual, consistent, and accurate.

The twelve children's records contained the following:

(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 stopped attending the service (where relevant).

(d) The name and address of the child's parent or guardian, and a telephone number where that parent or guardian (or a relative or friend of the parent or child) can be contacted during the hours of operation.

(e) Written authorisation / permissions for collecting the child.

(f) Details are recorded of any illness, allergy, or additional need(s) the child had, together with all the information relevant to the provision of specific care or attention

(g) The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner was available or recorded on the child's record.

(h) A record of any immunisations the child has had was recorded on the child's records

(i) Written parental or guardian consent was included to allow the child to have appropriate medical treatment if there was / is an emergency

(4) & (5)

The registered provider advised and documentary evidence from the file review indicated, that the pre-school had a system to allow all relevant children's records were kept for 2 years from the date a child stops attending the service.

### 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) Children had plenty of opportunities to move freely to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.

The service supported the children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with staff.

For example:

- assigning a key person to each child;
- showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust;
- being actively involved in children's play, where appropriate (initiating games, joining when invited to by children);
- behaving in a way that creates a positive atmosphere (having frequent social conversations, laughter and showing affection);
- listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures, and body language;
- encouraging children to think critically, ask questions and respond to them in a way that promotes sustained shared thinking, nurturing and comforting children.
- using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact.
- Visual aids (picture and word reminders) and instructions were displayed and used with the children to support their learning.
- Displayed on the walls were posters, visual aids, artwork, and themes including "our weekly colouring", "our family", the children's art displays, the weather chart, "our birthdays", nursery rhymes, colours, the world and the daily routine.
- The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried.
- The children were supported to be confident about their identity and to have a strong sense of belonging, while in the service.
- The service provided parents and guardians with daily information, including significant events or activities involving their child, for example, verbal communication at drop of and collection times.

- Staff adjusted the level of support provided to children depending on the child's abilities, allowing for children's partial participation and participation with support.
- The children were observed playing in the home area with a selection of dolls and accessories, at tabletop activities including jigsaws, puzzles, sorting shapes, playing with accessories in the doll's house. The children were observed in the construction area playing with blocks and garages with play accessories to include trucks and cars.
- Montessori equipment to include practical life exercises and sensorial materials to include the pink tower, knobbed cylinders, and the broad stairs were stored on low level shelving and accessible to the children.
- The children observed doing action songs. The children were observed to enjoy these activities and action songs.
- The designated outdoor play area was to the side of the national school. Play equipment and materials provided in the outdoor area supports a range of physically energetic activities and play experiences. There were push cars, tractors, a construction bench (with a latch, door stopper, wheel and switch), a slide, a shop, an activity centre with a slide.
- The person in charge advised that the children could also access under supervision the primary school facilities. There was a sensory area covered with impact absorbing surface with mounts, trees and planters to the front of the primary school. There were pitches, playground areas and planters to the rear of the national school.
- The staff listened to the children in a caring, gentle way when they expressed emotions, and reassured them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions at times. The staff acknowledged and accepted children's feelings (positive and negative) and the relationships between children's actions and other's responses. The children were given choice on what to do next.
- Children's behaviour was managed in a competent and positive manner by the staff. It was observed that minor problems were handled promptly and positively by the staff.
- Staff used positive strategies to support children's inclusion. For example, the inspector noted that the staff acknowledged a child's engagement in an activity 'that is great' 'well done' and used questions such as 'what should we do next?', 'is there any other way to do this?', to allow children to critically think and explore.
- The snacks were supplied by the parents and consisted of a selection of sandwiches with various fillings, wraps, rice cakes and crackers. The children also had a selection of cheeses and fruits to include strawberries, apples, grapes and banana with water to drink.
- The children were given sufficient time to eat in an unhurried manner. The foods provided complied with the service's healthy eating policy. Healthy eating was promoted within the service.
- Drinking water was available for the children in the room and was accessible by the children throughout

the session.

- On the day of the inspection, the children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their level of independence.
- The staff guided and supported children who needed additional help.
- The staff supervised children's hand washing before and after snack time, after toileting, after blowing their noses, after messy play and at drop off and collection times.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets and did not have to wait to use the toilets.
- The staff used the correct language surrounding toileting.
- It was advised by the registered provider that presently two children are wearing pulls. Privacy and dignity are afforded to these children as they are being changed.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax in a designated cosy area off the playroom.

### 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 main entrance door was secure to prevent unauthorised entry.
- The external play areas to the front and side of the premises were secure so that children could not leave the areas unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the areas.
- All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to the children.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were wall mounted and secured to prevent any trip or strangulation hazard.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Daily records of attendance were kept for all the children attending the service.

##### Infection Control:

- Children were observed washing their hands after toileting, outdoor play, messy play and after blowing their noses. The children washed their hands under supervision prior to consuming their snacks.
- Suitable hand-washing facilities were provided with supplies of liquid soap.
- The playroom had cleaning products and foot operated lidded bins.

- The preschool room and sanitary area were well ventilated with the windows open throughout the inspection.
- Tabletops were cleaned immediately prior to children's snack break.
- Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with disposable paper towels and disinfectant spray.
- Mouthed toys were removed after use and sterilised appropriately.
- The adults were observed regularly washing their hands including after disposing of tissues into bins.
- Fixtures, fittings and play resources were observed to be in a hygienic condition. The adults showed awareness of the services procedures including the management of suspected infection when questioned.
- A refrigerator was provided for the storage of perishable foods.
- The children's belongings for nappy changing were individually labelled and in designated storage containers.
- The nappy changing area had a leak-proof, sealable airtight container for the disposal of nappies.
- The nappy changing policy was displayed on the wall of the nappy changing area.
- There were cleaning schedules and records for the playroom, sanitary area, and the outdoor areas.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playroom.

### Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were carried out on the premises to ensure the children were familiar with the procedure in event of an emergency
- The exit routes from the service were free from obstruction during the inspection.

### Outings

- It was advised by the person in charge that the children go on an outing to a local pet farm.
- The service had insurance for outings.
- The person in charge advised that the parents provide consent, a bus is hired, a risk assessment is carried out prior to the outing, emergency numbers are brought and there was a staff member with first aid training, and a first aid box is brought on the outing, in the event of an emergency.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. An immediate action notice was issued in relation to the surface temperature of the electric heater. The temperature of the heater was 57.6 and 57.4°C which could pose potential risk of injury to a child. The registered provider advised on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February that the thermostat has been turned down.

### Infection Control:

2. In the designated quiet/ rest room, adjacent to the Pre-school room, one child size chair had evidence of being frayed and torn, thereby preventing effective cleaning.
3. The covering on the door of the press under the sink in the preschool room was worn and lifted and could prove difficult to effectively clean.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

The registered provider submitted a written response to the office of the early years inspectorate to advise

1. Immediate action was taken on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February to reduce the surface temperature of the electric heater, and the surface temperature will be checked on a regular basis to ensure it does not pose a risk of injury to a child.

### Infection Control:

2. The child sized chair in the designated quiet/rest area has been removed and any damaged chairs or covers that need to be repaired or replaced will be done immediately
3. The covering on the press door under the sink in the preschool room has been replaced and the classroom will be inspected weekly/ risk assessed and any errors regarding the above will be highlighted to the registered provider to correct and reduce risk immediately or as best practicable.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence of the reduced surface temperature on the electric heater.

### Infection Control:

2. The removed child size chair from the designated quiet/rest area.
3. Photographic evidence of the replaced covering on the press doors under the sink in the preschool room.

### Summary Comment

The early years inspector has assessed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to comply with the non-compliances under Regulation 23.

### 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 service provided evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Three adults had current training in first aid responder training.
- (2)(a)(b) The first aid box was appropriately stocked with items safely stored and easily accessible by the adults in a conspicuous position on a high shelf in the preschool 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 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) A written record was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service.  
The last recorded fire drill was on 06/01/2026.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service dated August 2025, and the fire alarm was serviced on 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2025.
- (4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service's insurance with an expiry date of 27/11/2026 covered the following,

- public liability,
- personal accident,
- insurance against fire and theft,
- outings undertaken as part of the service provision.