

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025DR003			
Name of Service:	Karaville Montessori & Childcare			
Address of Service:	Green Acre Grange, Kilmacud Road Upper, Dundrum, Co. Dublin			
Eircode:	D14 K2H6			
Name of Registered Provider:	Kate O'Donohoe, Sara Kearney			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	28/07/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	12
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8			
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland, R Duff			
Title:	Early Years Inspectors			
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

Karaville Montessori & Childcare is a privately owned service located in an urban area of Dundrum South Dublin. The service is open 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and is registered to provide sessional, part time and full day care and education to children aged 2-6 years. The service operates from a purposely adapted facility located at ground level within an apartment complex and comprises of four care rooms; Oasis, Willow, Meadows and Wildflower. Additionally, a fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises. On the day of inspection, the Oasis room was in operation.

Staffing

There are currently six staff employed to work in the service including two registered providers, the person in charge and three childcare staff one of which is employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). There were five adults present on the day of inspection including one of the registered providers, the person in charge and three childcare staff.

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 announced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 (1) (a-c), (2)(a-d), (3), (4) Management and Recruitment

Regulation 11 (1), (2) Staffing Levels

Regulation 19(1) (a), (b) Health Welfare and Development of Child

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 inspectors wish 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*
- (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.*

- (a) (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.*
- (b) (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 a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
 - (b) The designated person in charge and the person appointed to deputise were on the premises at all times during the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service which was confirmed with staff members and the person in charge during discussions with the inspectors.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that six adults were currently employed to work in the service. A total of six files were available for review.
- (a) Nine written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Three written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for six adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
 - (d) Four adults required international police vetting, the required documentation was available for three of the adults.
- (4) Documentation was available to show that the six adults who work directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework

of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (d) Police vetting was not available in relation to one adult who previously lived outside of Ireland for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.
- (3) The registered providers did not ensure the following checks were carried out prior to three adults commencing work in the service.
- Documentary evidence available indicated that three adults had commenced employment within the service prior to receipt of Police Vetting.
 - Documentary evidence available indicated that one adult did not have their references validated before they commenced employment.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Police vetting has been obtained for three staff members and the registered provider has implemented an updated staff checklist.

Where a validated reference cannot be obtained in a timely manner, the efforts to contact the referee will be noted and dated on the reference validation form until we are successful in reaching the referee.

Supporting documentation submitted

Vetting records for three staff members submitted.

Staff file checklist

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(2)(d) (3) has been adequately addressed.

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.*
- (2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.*

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children to meet their care needs. There were three adults available to twelve children in the morning and three adults available to twelve children in the afternoon. The registered provider and the person in charge were available to provide support when required.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement was maintained in accordance with the children's ages and type of service delivered.

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*

- (1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (a), (b)

The inspectors observed care practices that were attentive and child centered throughout the inspection.

Children's morning snacks were provided by the parents and contained a variety of healthy options in line with

the services healthy eating policy. Staff reported that the service provides breakfast, a dinner and an evening snack. Dinner consists of a hot meal and is prepared off site by an external catering company and delivered to the service. Menus were available for review and staff confirmed that they are also shared with parents. Snack time was calm and unhurried and staff were observed to sit with children and encourage independence. For example, encouraging children to open their own lunch boxes and tidy up following snack. Drinking water was readily available to children for the duration of the inspection. Children were encouraged to use the toilet independently and staff were observed to provide praise and positively reinforce children's efforts during this time. Staff supported children in developing good hand hygiene practices, such as washing their hands before meals and after outdoor play. Staff reported that they do not have a designated sleep time however, low level beds and areas with rugs and cushions were available should a child wish to sleep or take a break from activities. Staff engaged positively with children by dropping to their level during interactions and asking open ended questions to invite feedback and promote thinking. Peer interactions were encouraged and staff extended children's learning regarding self-care practices for example discussing why its important to wash their hands and eat their meals. Transitions were smooth and staff were observed to provide advanced warning when they were moving from one activity to the next. A key worker system was in place and staff reported this ensured consistency in meeting children's needs. Connections with parents and families was supported through use of an app, newsletters and informal conversation during drop off and collection.

The indoor environment was laid out with a variety of interest areas and Montessori materials that supported choice and sustained engagement. The materials were arranged on open low-level shelving at the children's level supporting independence, enabling choice and encouraging spontaneous play. Children's literacy and language development and sense of identity and belonging was supported through a print rich environment. For example, the learning environment had clearly labelled interest areas, a family wall, birthday wall, culture wall and an interactive chart detailing the day of the week, month, weather and emotions were displayed around the classroom. The outdoor area contained a variety of equipment offering opportunities for active play, imaginative exploration and social interaction such as; a wooden climbing structure with a slide, bikes, balls, trucks, a mud kitchen and a picnic bench. All children had the opportunity to engage in outdoor play during the inspection and staff were observed to actively engage in children's play during this time.