

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK089
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Name of Service:	Karibu Montessori
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Address of Service:	The Newtown Centre Annacotty Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 DK02
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Name of Registered Provider:	Liza Eyres
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	83	PM	80
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2 nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Street Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan E Browne
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
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Description of service

Karibu Montessori is a registered full day childcare service located in the Newtown Centre in Annacotty, Limerick. It operates Monday to Friday from 07.45hrs to 18.00hrs and provides full day, part time and sessional services to children of all pre-school ages. A registered service for school aged children is offered each afternoon.

The service operates from a two story, purpose build premises. At ground floor level there is a baby room, a wobbler room, a toddler room, two sleep rooms, a kitchen, a manager's office, and a staff room. At first floor level there four preschool rooms and two additional rooms used mainly for the school aged children.

There are two large outdoor play areas located adjacent to the building, one to accommodate the younger preschool children and the second for the older preschool children and the school aged children.

Staffing

The registered provider has leased the business to another childcare provider and named them the designated person in charge. They in turn have appointed a manager and an assistant manager to operate the facility on a day-to-day basis. The registered provider does not work on site as the person in charge works in the service every day.

There are twenty-four staff on the staff roster. Twenty staff employed to work directly with the preschool children at the service have achieved a major award in early childhood care and education or a qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent in childcare.

One staff member works in the kitchen. Three staff are assigned to school age care.

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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, safety, premises and facilities. 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)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(3)(4) – Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11(2) - Staffing levels.

Regulation 14 - Review of pre-school service.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of the child.

Regulation 29(d) Premises.

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

This service is currently at the National Registration Enforcement Panel in relation to unresolved areas of recurring and outstanding non-compliance within the service. On the 03 July 2025 a condition was attached to registration of the service for a period of 12 months regarding Regulation 9 (4) Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 as noted below:

The Registered Provider will be required to comply with the following condition:

- Ensure 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.

The inspection included a review of the condition attached to the registration of the service at the time of inspection.

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Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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, 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.*

(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.

(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) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy was available on the premises.

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- (2)(a) Twenty-four staff files were reviewed on the day. Twenty staff were working directly with the preschool children, and three staff were assigned to work with the school aged children.
- Forty-three written and validated references were available from past employers for staff members employed to work at the service.
- (b) Three validated references were submitted by staff from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff documented on the staff roster. The re-vetting timeframes of every three years as outlined in the early years inspectorate regulatory notice was in place for 23 of the 24 staff. Garda vetting was not within the timeframe for one staff member, please refer to Regulation 23 in the body of the report for additional information.
- (d) Police vetting was available for fifteen staff members who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) Eighteen staff working directly with the preschool children held an appropriate qualification in early childhood care and education or an equivalent such qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(a)(b) Two written and validated references from previous employers or from sources other than past employers were not available for one staff member.
- (d) Police vetting was not available for one staff member who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) All staff vetting procedures were not complied with prior to allowing staff work in the service.
- (4) Two staff working directly with the children in ECCE Room 2 and ECCE Room 3 did not have childcare qualifications being 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.
- Employing staff without completing vetting procedures and having appropriate qualifications can impact on the care and safety of children attending the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(a)(b) Two written references were obtained, validated and placed on file of the staff member in question.
- (d) Police clearance has been obtained for the particular staff member.
- (3) Management will ensure that all staff are appropriately vetted prior to beginning working in the service.
- (4) Both staff members have applied to the relevant authority to have their qualifications recognised and are awaiting confirmation of their qualifications.

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Supporting documentation submitted

Two written and validated references.
Copy of police vetting.

Summary Comment

(2)(a)(b)(d) The evidence submitted addressed the non-compliance identified.

(4) This remains non-compliant and a potential breach of the attached condition, as the registered provider has not submitted evidence to the Early Years inspectorate that the two staff members working directly with the 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.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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

(2) The adult child ratio was correct in the following rooms.

Baby Room - There was 3 preschool child (0-1 yrs.) and 2 preschool children (1-2 yrs.) being supervised by 2 staff.

Wobbler Room - There were 13 preschool children (1-2 yrs.) being supervised by 3 staff.

Toddlers Room - There were 10 preschool children (2-3yrs.) being supervised by 2 staff.

ECCE Room 1 - There were 17 preschool children (3-4 yrs.) being supervised by 3 staff.

ECCE Room 2 - There were 15 preschool children (3-4 yrs.) being supervised by 2 staff.

Pre Preschool - There were 5 preschool children (2-3 yrs.) being supervised by 1 staff.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) The adult child ratio was not correct in the following room at 11.00hrs while staff breaks were taking place.

ECCE Room 3 - There were 18 preschool children (3-4 yrs.) being supervised by 1 staff member. The second staff member present in the room did not have childcare qualifications. A third member of staff was on break.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The corrective and preventive action response stated that sufficient cover for the 1:11 child: adult ratio of the ECCE hours has been provided.

Management will ensure that there is sufficient cover in all rooms during staff breaks.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence was submitted.

Summary Comment

While it is acknowledged that management have stated sufficient cover will be provided in all rooms it has not clarified if all staff will have the required childcare qualification.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 14 - Review of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary preschool service shall ensure that-
(a) at regular intervals, being intervals of not more than one year, a review is carried out in respect of the quality and safety of care provided by the pre-school service to pre-school children attending the service, including a review of the policies, procedures and statements of the service, and

Non-Compliance Information

- (a) An annual review of the safe sleep policy for the service was not evident.
- The safe sleep policy referenced the childcare regulations 2006 as opposed to the childcare regulations 2016.
 - The safe sleep policy was not signed and dated by management to ensure that the policy was in line with up-to-date research and safe practices.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(a) The safe sleep policy has been revised and signed by the designated person in charge and the manager. The policy is in line with childcare regulations 2016. The policy will be displayed in all sleep areas and staff will be made aware of the updates to the new policy.

Management will ensure that all policies are in date with the current regulations and will update policies when required.

Supporting documentation submitted

The revised sleep policy was submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider meet the requirements of the non-compliance identified.

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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.

Non- Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting documentation for one staff member present on the day of the inspection was not dated with in the last three years as per the regulatory notice EYI-RN12.3 renewal of garda vetting published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 01/01/2024. This posed a potential risk to the safety and wellbeing of children in the service.
2. The cords from blinds in the Pre ECCE room were not secured and posed a risk of safety to the children. It was acknowledged that this was addressed during the inspection.

Infection Control:

3. There was insufficient space between cots in the sleep room which posed a risk of cross infection. The measurements between cots varied between 9 centometers,21 centimetres and 35 centimetres. Cots must have a space of at least 50 cm on all sides for infection control, safety and supervision reasons.

Safe Sleep:

4. Staff in the baby room did not have a clear understanding of their role and responsibility in relation to the policy on safe sleep. The following posed a potential risk to the safety and wellbeing of sleeping infants and young children:
 - On entering the baby sleep room, it was pitch dark and the light outside the door was switched off which resulted in it being difficult for staff to monitor a child's breathing, skin colour or to observe a child if they became unwell while they slept.
 - The blackout blinds were fully drawn on all three windows in the room and paper had also been taped to the glass to block out light. Staff stated they were not checking the colour of sleeping babies as they needed to switch on the light. Sleep rooms when fully darkened for day-time naps can disrupt the child's normal circadian rhythm.
 - There was no record of the temperature of the sleep room on the day of the inspection as the thermometer in the room was not switched on at the time of the inspection while 3 babies under the age of 12 months slept. This was at variance with the safe sleep policy which stated the sleep room temperatures must be checked and recorded.

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- Evidence that the policy on safe sleep was being implemented was not available as the safe sleep record was not accurate and recorded in a timely manner. Babies were placed in their cots in the sleep room at 10.00hrs and there was no documented record of them having been checked by staff until 11.40 when the inspectors were present. This was at variance with the safe sleep policy which stated 'children would be checked 5 minutes after they were put to bed and every 10 minutes thereafter'.
- The 10-minute interval safe sleep checks were not recorded accurately or signed by the individual staff member who checked the sleeping child. A tick box system was used which could not identify the actual time a child was checked and the signature of the staff member who checked the child was not recorded.

Fire Safety:

5. The fire exit door on the ground floor level leading to the outside play area was blocked as a large sand box, tricycles and buggies impeded exit from the service in the event of a fire and posed a safety hazard to both children and staff.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting which was outdated on the day of inspection has now been returned. Management will ensure that all staff have up to date vetting at all times.
2. No response received, immediate issue addressed during inspection.

Infection Control:

3. A cot has been removed from the baby sleep room to allow for extra room in between cots. Management will ensure there is sufficient space between cots to avoid the risk of cross infection and allow safe supervision to take place.

Safe Sleep:

4. An extensive revision of our sleep policy has been carried out. The revised policy now fully complies with the childcare regulation 2016. It will be displayed outside the sleep rooms to remind staff of the importance of sleep checks and how they should be carried out and documented going forward. Staff will be reminded to allow enough light into the sleep rooms so that the childrens skin colour can be clearly observed when carrying out sleep checks. Management will monitor the staff and ensure that the safe sleep policy is properly implemented at all times going forward.

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Fire Safety:

5. The fire exit on the ground floor has been cleared, and a sign has been put on the door clearly marking the area as a fire exit. Management will ensure that all fire exits are free from obstructions at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Garda Vetting was submitted.

Photograph of adjusted baby sleep room.

Copy of sleep policy displayed outside the baby sleep room. Room temperature record displayed outside the baby sleep room.

Photograph of the fire exit cleared and sign placed on the door.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider addressed the non-compliances identified.

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

(d)

- Sections of the outdoor play area to the rear of the facility was waterlogged. This was detailed as a non-compliance on the inspection reports dated 9 September 2021, 22 November 2023, 28 June 2024 and 24 February 25 and responses given by the registered provider in previous corrective and preventive actions has not prevented this reoccurrence or been addressed. This posed a risk to the safety of the children.

A child from the wobbler room was observed playing in the outside play area at the rear of the facility where its clothes had got wet because of the wet surface.

Staff from the wobbler room and baby room stated, 'children can only go outside when they have wet suits on as the surface is wet all year round'.

- The following areas did not display evidence of maintenance:
 - The floor covering in the sanitary area off ECCE room 3 upstairs was stained and worn. The toilet bowls in this area and the Pre ECCE room were heavily stained.

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- Paintwork on the walls and skirting boards in the toddler room was flaking off the walls and required repainting.
- Doors in the toddler room and the wobbler room were stained and required repainting.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The outdoor area to the rear of the property is inspected quarterly by a drainage company. The area is only deemed to be waterlogged during spells of extreme rain or a prolonged spell of rain. When these incidences occur, wet gear is available for all children.
 2. The flooring in the sanitary area has been replaced.
- Paintwork on the walls, skirting boards and doors will be completed during the summer months in preparation for the upcoming new term in September.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. No evidence was submitted.
2. Photographic evidence was submitted where floor covering was replaced.

Summary Comment

1. The issue with the waterlogging in the outside area used by the younger age groups has been identified in numerous reports previously and works to address this have not taken place. It is acknowledged that you state that a drainage company inspects the area on a quarterly basis however the issue of water logging remains.
2. Paintwork requirements remain outstanding until evidence of its completion have been submitted.