

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023KY003
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Name of Service:	Scoil na nÓg Montessori
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Address of Service:	Glens South, Dingle, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 DX85
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Name of Registered Provider:	Georgina Diver
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	29/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	14
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy
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).

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Description of service

Scoil na Óg Montessori is located in Scoil an Ghleanna National school, in the rural area in Dingle, Co. Kerry. The service is registered as an early years service, to provide full day and sessional care for children from two to six years. It is also registered as a school age service, operating from an allocated room in the building. Its operating hours are between 08.30 am and 3.30 pm Monday to Friday inclusive. The service consists of one playroom. The children's sanitary accommodation is located outside the playroom, it consists of two toilets and two wash hand basins and nappy changing facilities. The adult sanitary area is located in the national school, consisting of one toilet and one wash hand basin. The outdoor play area located at the front of the building is allocated solely for the use of the children attending the service. In addition, the children have access to the community playground located on the school grounds.

Staffing

There is a total of 5 staff employed in the service who work directly with the children. This includes the registered provider and 1 Access Inclusion Model (AIM) staff member.

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.

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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 person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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) The registered provider is the designated person in charge and a deputy had been assigned to deputise in their absence. The deputy in charge was available to assist throughout the inspection process.
 - (b) The deputy in charge was working at the service when the inspector arrived and remained for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that one new staff member had been employed since the previous inspection. In addition, Garda vetting for one staff member whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal was requested for review. A total of two files were reviewed.
- (a) There were 2 written and validated references on file from past employers.
 - (b) Not applicable, the two required references were provided from a source other than a past employer.

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(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the one new staff member.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable, it was not required for the one new staff member.

(4)

Records demonstrated that the one new staff member had a minimum of Level 5 or above in Early Childhood Education and Care qualification as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there were an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The minimum ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day.

The required adult to child ratios were observed as follows:

There were 3 staff caring for 14 children aged between 3 years and 6 years attending on a full day care basis.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 staff members were on the premises during the hours of operation

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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) Children's enrolment forms were assessed for 10 of the children registered as attending the service. The records inspected had the required detail as listed from (a) to (i) inclusive.

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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

1(a)

Basic Needs:

- On inspection, the outdoor space was used during the session. The children were observed to move about freely within the outdoor environment where they engaged in a range of free play and movement.
- The children had a choice to move between the playroom and the outdoor area as they wanted to.
- The staff encouraged the children to interact and to engage with a wide range of materials, activities and equipment, based on the children's own choices, interests and their age and stage of development.
- The staff facilitated opportunities for small and large group activities and play as evidenced with story time, colouring and building a dinosaur hotel and a bridge of cars with blocks magnets and blocks.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilet during the session. Children were observed to use the toilet facilities independently and under supervision from the staff as required.
- In conversation with the staff, the children's individual toileting needs are accommodated in consultation with the parents.
- The children were encouraged and supported with self-help skills as was evidenced for example when children closed their lunch boxes after eating, placed their water bottles back on the drink's trolley and placed their bags on their labelled hooks.
- Handwashing following prior to the snack time and after using the toilet for example was encouraged by the staff.
- The food is provided by the parent/guardians.
- At the morning snack time and lunch times observed, each of the children had enough time to eat and enjoy their food without being rushed in any way.
- Conversations between the staff and the children ensued during snack time in a relaxed, calm environment.
- The service provided appropriate crockery and cutlery for the children as required.

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- The food was re-heated as needed, for example pasta Bolognese served for lunch.
- The food observed at snack time and for lunch included for example yogurts, sandwiches, rice cakes and a selection of fruit.
- The play activities and care routines observed on inspection were conducted at an unhurried and calm pace, catering for the children's individual needs.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff members were observed to have a positive and caring relationship with children. They were observed to comfort children as needed.
- The staff members spoke to the children in a calm way and positive interactions between staff and children were observed.

Physical & Material Environment:

- The playroom was colourfully decorated with for example a selection of photographs of the children participating in various activities while attending the service.
- The toys and play materials provided were accessible to the children on the open shelving and on the floor in the playroom.
- The room was well ventilated by means of openable windows during the inspection.
- There was ample space in the outdoor area. There was a section with an overhead canopy.
- Outdoors, the children played with sand in the allocated sand table and the staff provided small dinosaurs for sand play when asked for them. They played on the balancing boards, on the obstacle course and with the play kitchen.

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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.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Cleaning agents observed on inspection were stored out of children's reach.
- The external door to the building was secured to prevent unauthorised access.
- The emergency exit door was clear from obstruction.
- The outdoor play area was fully enclosed and secured with gates, walls and fencing.

Infection Control:

- The sinks observed in use by the adults and children had a supply of thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands with the staff on hand to provide assistance, for example after using the toilet and before eating.

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 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) The service had completed monthly fire drills as evidenced on the completed records. The last recorded fire drill took place on 27 July 2026.
- (b) A record of the maintenance for the firefighting equipment and for the wired smoke alarm was available for inspection. It was recorded that firefighting equipment was serviced on 10 February 2026 and the smoke alarm system was serviced on the 30 June 2026.
- (4) A notice of evacuation procedures in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

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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.

Compliance Information

- (1) There were certifications on file demonstrating that three staff members attached to the service had current First Aid Responder (FAR) training completed. As evidenced on the staff rosters reviewed, a staff member trained in FAR was on the premises at all times

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was in place. The service was insured to provide full day care for a maximum of 20 children and the policy was valid until 27 March 2027.