

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC051
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Bartlemy Montessori School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Bishop O'Brien National School, Bartlemy, Fermoy, Co Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P61 P761
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sinead Martin
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	04/03/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	20	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	B Fraher
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

Bartlemy Montessori School is located in the rural area of Bartlemy near the town of Fermoy. This sessional service is registered to provide a service for early years children aged from 2 to 6 years from 9:20 until 12:20, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year, facilitating the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. It operates from a prefabricated unit which is situated on the grounds of Bishop O'Brien National School. The service consists of one care room, two children's toilets, a kitchen area and adults have access to the school sanitary facilities. A secure outdoor play area is located at the side of the service.

### Staffing

The service currently employs two staff and the registered provider who is service based. A total of three adults were working directly with the children on the day of inspection.

### 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.

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 children, registered provider and staff 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.*

*(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 the designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named deputy was present in the service that could deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge and the deputy were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy were on duty at all times during the hours of operation.

(c) There was clear evidence on inspection of the management structure in place and the specific roles of each staff member. This was on display on the notice board.

(2) The recruitment records in relation to two adults, all of whom were employed in the service and working directly with the children and the registered provider were the subject of inspection.

(a) Of the six required references, five were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.

(b) Of the six required references, one was from another source other than a previous employer with a record of validation on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained and were on file for each of the three adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) No staff member had lived outside the state for over six months as an adult; therefore no police vetting was required.

(4) There was evidence that three adults who required childcare qualifications all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 to level 7 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.*

*(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) At the time of inspection, there were the adequate number of adults required, responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at all times.
- (3) The service exceeded the minimum ratio required as per regulation in the care room. The 20 children attending the service were supervised directly by 3 adults.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (j) The registered provider informed the inspector that no child in the service was currently prescribed medication. A medication administration record book was available to use if medication administration was required. There was one record of medication administration available since the last inspection and this was reviewed. The record was completed with a staff signature, request for administration completed by a parent and all other required information.

(k) The inspector reviewed the accident and incident record book from 1 October 2024 to the date of the inspection. A sample of 10 records were reviewed. The records reviewed contained all required information.

## 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

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of the relevant documents.

#### Basic needs:

- Food was provided by the parents or guardians and was stored in the services refrigerator until required. The food observed was healthy and nutritious. Examples of food served for snack time was pasta, yogurts, cheese, rolls, fruit and sandwiches. Staff sat at the children's level and assisted if needed. There was chatter and laughter among the children observed.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children throughout the day.
- Supervision was provided for the children, as they accessed the adjacent sanitary facilities, which were located off the care room.
- The weather on the day of inspection was cold, children observed playing in the outdoor play area were appropriately dressed in coats, hats, wetsuits and boots in keeping with the weather.
- Self-help skills were encouraged by the staff who praised each child's efforts. Examples included children observed bringing their snack from the fridge, zipping up their coats and putting on their outdoor footwear. Staff were nearby to help those who required assistance.
- Children's need for mobility was met with both indoor and outdoor play areas being used on the day of inspection.

### Supporting relationships:

- The staff were observed to show positive regard for the children in the care room on the day of inspection. The children were encouraged and praised during tasks in a warm and caring manner for example when children played with a train set, a toy kitchen and built items.
  - Staff engaged with the children in both group and individual activities. A staff member was observed reading and discussing the story of Jack and the Beanstalk to the children and then listening intently to their conversations and used strategies to extend their thinking and learning. These included using open ended questions, explanations and providing feedback. After that all the children were observed to partake in planting and watering seeds, colouring pictures and building tall stalks from pipe cleaners and cereal, where the staff were observed getting down to their level while discussing and questioning their chosen task.
  - Children appeared very comfortable and settled in the learning environment, making decisions about what and who they played with. A familiarity with the routine of the day was evident as children transitioned seamlessly from one activity to the next. This was observed in the transition from lunch time to outdoor play, as children cleaned away their belongings, dressed in outdoor clothing and went outdoors with two staff members.
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- Individual learning journals were observed in the care room and were available for parents and guardians to review.
  - Staff were observed encouraging positive behaviour. This was observed when two children in the outdoor area had a disagreement and the staff encouraged the use of gentle hands.
  - The inspector observed an upset child in the outdoor area to be comforted by a staff member who responded positively.
  - The atmosphere was observed to be relaxed in the care room at all times during the inspection and teamwork was evident between the staff and the children.
  - Family photos and a birthday calendar were displayed on the walls in the care room which promoted a sense of belonging for the children.
  - In conversation, the registered provider stated that the service communicated with parents and guardians by phone, text message, digital application, email or face to face at drop off or collection and offered meetings to the parents.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service was equipped with suitable furniture, play and work equipment in adequate quantities for the number of children attending and their ages and stages of development.

Furniture included child height tables and chairs for dining and table-top activities. A child sized bench and mat were available in the rest area of the care room. Open shelving units that were accessible had toys displayed for easy access for the children.

The children had access to toys and materials such as arts and crafts materials, a play kitchen, a play shop, construction toys, puzzles, small world toys and books. Photographs of the recent activities children took part in and their artwork were displayed at the entrance area. Outdoor resources included play huts, a slide, a playhouse, digging area with toys and seating. Other outdoor resources included ride-on vehicles, a mud kitchen and picnic tables.

### 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:

- On the day of inspection, the entry gate and door was appropriately secured. This restricted unauthorised access into the building and helped to prevent the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children on inspection.
- The outdoor area was observed to be secured with metal fencing and a timber gate.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- The radiators were covered to ensure children could not access them.

##### Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.

- Children were observed to wash their hands before meals, after messy play, outdoor play and using the sanitary facilities.
- Perishable foods were stored in the refrigerator to prevent food spoilage.
- Lidded, foot pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste during the inspection.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground on wall hooks to be prevent cross infection.
- Staff were observed disinfecting tables before and after food being served.

#### Administration of medication:

- Temperature reducing medicine was stored in the locked filing cabinet out of reach of the children and was in date.

#### Fire safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- Fire extinguishers were secured to the walls.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Records confirmed that each child was checked in on arrival at the service and checked out on departure by a staff member.

(3)

(b) A visitor logbook was used to record all persons entering the premises. This book was presented to the inspector on arrival at the service to sign in and out.

## 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*

*(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

### Compliance Information

(d) Cleaning schedules were available and all the play materials accessed were clean and in good condition.

(e) There were an adequate number of adult and child sanitary facilities with two children's toilets available in the care room and one adult toilet available in the National school.