

# 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, 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>	02/10/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	134 Bank Place, Mallow, Cork. P51 EC59
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Friel
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

Bartlemy Montessori School has been in operation since 2015. While registered to provide a service for early years children aged from 2 years to 6 years of age the service currently accommodates children aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years of age. The service is open from 9.20 am until 12.20 pm, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year, facilitating the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.

Bartlemy Montessori School is located in the rural area of Bartlemy near the town of Fermoy in East Cork. 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, off which there are two children's toilets and a kitchen area. A secure outdoor play area is located at the side of the service and entry to the service is gained by walking through the school playground.

### Staffing

There were four staff, including the registered provider and one Access and Inclusion Support Worker, working directly with the children. In addition, a student on placement was also in the service.

### 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 and safety. The inspections 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 registered provider, deputy, 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.*

*(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) The manager was the designated person in charge and a named person was available to deputise, both were available throughout the morning of the inspection.
  - (b) The staff roster indicated that the designated person in charge and the deputy were available while the pre-school children were present in the service.
  - (c) A clear management structure was available in photographic format in the lobby in the service, detailing staff roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Recruitment records in regards to the four staff members and the student on placement were reviewed.
- (a) (b) There were eight validated references from past employers and two references from sources other than past employers.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were on file for the four staff members and the student.
  - (d) Two international police vetting disclosures were on file for two staff members who had lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer.
- (3) All vetting had been carried out prior to each employee being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child.
- (4) There was evidence that the four adults, who were working directly with the children, had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above 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) There were, at all times, an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the service.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was met. There were nineteen sessional children, aged from two years six months to five years of age, in attendance with three staff members, one Access and Inclusion Support Worker and a student.

### 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.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*  
*(c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of eleven records of early years children attending the service were reviewed. These were found to contain all of the particulars inclusive of (a)-(i) referred to in paragraph 1.

(3)

(c) The records of the early years children in the service were furnished to the inspector and a sample of eleven were reviewed.

### 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

##### BASIC NEEDS:

- The service promoted healthy eating and the food was prepared by the parents/guardians. The children were observed eating filled sandwiches, yogurt, salami, a variety of fruit and vegetables including carrot sticks.
- The weather on the day of the inspection was wet and damp. Children were observed dressed in waterproofs, wellingtons, scarves and hats for the inclement weather.
- Children were observed carrying out self-help skills such as toileting and dressing for the outdoors independently. Adults were available to provide assistance, when required.
- Handwashing was observed by the children throughout the morning including after outdoor play, after toileting and before and after snack.
- A rest/quiet area was in available with children observed sitting on the bench and rocking chair reading books and playing with their friends.
- Staff were heard giving praise and encouragement to children carrying out helping tasks such as cleaning the table and giving out snack boxes to children.

##### SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS:

- During snack and tabletop activities staff sat with the children and were engaged in social conversation which provided opportunities for staff to use strategies such as open questions and feedback to extend the children's thinking and learning.
- Children were given sufficient time to eat their snack without being rushed, and one child was observed sitting eating long after the other children had finished.
- A key person system was in place and staff stated that they carry out observations on their key children which are then shared with parents/guardians. The observations are used to inform the parents/guardians of the children's interests and progress.

- Children were given the opportunity to express their views throughout the morning. Staff involved each child at group time asking question about what they were going to dress up as for Halloween.
- Staff stated they use various methods of communication including a software technology package in which parents/guardians are informed of the children’s daily routines and activities, these are updated twice weekly. Email, phone calls and face to face meetings in the morning and evening, where staff pass on and exchange information, also happen on a daily basis.
- Staff stated planning meetings take place weekly with staff meetings taking place with the registered provider every two weeks. Details of the staff meetings and associated paperwork were furnished to the inspector including staff action plans.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- A variety of age and developmentally appropriate materials and equipment were available encouraging imaginary play for example space and fire stations, a large home corner with dolls and prams and a bakery counter with a till. Opportunities to enhance cognitive development were observed with puzzles, construction materials and blocks provided on low-level shelving providing ease of access and free choice.
- There was clear floor space for the children to move freely in the care room and the layout allowed for staff to easily supervise the children in each area.
- The walls of the service were brightly decorated with posters and seasonal artwork including an autumn tree with leaves stuck on by the children and coloured family templates of each child’s family members. Photographs of the children and their families were visible on one of the walls helping to create a sense of identity and belonging for each child. The family theme was also reflected in a family book which contained pictures of each child’s family group which the children could access independently from a nearby shelf.
- The tables and chairs were age and stage appropriate, and provision was made for children to sit individually or in a group accommodating individual choice.
- On arrival the children were all observed playing in the fully enclosed outdoor play area. A range of developmentally appropriate equipment was available including a slide with safety matting underneath and a seesaw, two tepees and a playhouse for imaginary play along with a variety of vehicles. Children were able to explore the natural environment with natural materials including natural steppingstones made of wood on a graded slope and a stone area with buckets and spades, twigs and soil.

### PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES:

- Planning was available and furnished to the inspector which detailed the short and medium term plans and activities of the service. These included topics such as Settling In, All About Me, About my family and Halloween. Evidence of these activities were visible in the artwork around the service and in the observations on the digital software application.
- Books in use in the book area such as Room on the Broom were related to current activities and themes.
- Children’s language development was supported through group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed throughout the inspection. Examples included a staff member reading “Rusty and Scrap’s adventure” in the outdoor play area to a group of children and children singing “All the leaves are falling down” at circle time along with Halloween songs.

### 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 outside door was secured with a key lock and the inside lock on the door was fitted with a thumb twist lock ensuring that unauthorised adults could not gain entry from the outside and children could not leave unsupervised from the inside.
- The six windows in the service were operated with a key lock preventing children from falling or exiting from the windows.
- The six window cords were secured with hooks, out of the reach of the children.
- Handrails were present at both exit doors to facilitate children walking safely to the outdoor areas.
- Toys and play equipment in the indoor area were in good condition.
- All flexes and cables were secured and inaccessible to the children.
- The outdoor play area was secured with high metal fencing and a bolted gate.

##### Infection Control:

- The two children's sinks in the toilet area and the adult sink in the kitchen were fitted with thermostatically controlled hot water, ranging in temperature from 33.7°C to 35°C, dispensing soap, paper towels in dispensers and a pedal operated bin for the disposal of waste.
- Children carried out handwashing throughout the morning including after outdoor play, after toileting and before and after snack, helping to prevent the spread of inspection.
- Children were observed taking their perishable food from the fridge at snack time helping to prevent the food from spoiling.
- Food was served on individual plates with place mats underneath, preventing the risk of cross infection.
- Children's belongings were placed on coat pegs in the lobby area of the service, off the floor and used wellies were put on an outdoor stand after use.
- Staff and children disinfected the tables before and after serving food.
- Care room cleaning schedules were completed and up to date.

#### Administration of Medication:

- Anti-febrile medication was available in its original container and stored in a locked cabinet.
- There was no administration of medication forms completed by staff since the beginning of the new school term.

#### Safe Sleep:

- A suitable rest/quiet area was available and in use for children who wanted to sit away from noisy activities.

#### Fire Safety:

- Emergency fire exit doors were unobstructed.
- The fire assembly point was located in the school playground a suitable distance away from the service.

#### Outing:

- Staff stated that the children are occasionally invited to events in the adjacent school.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

- (1) A large doll's house in the home corner of the care room was not anchored, posing a safety hazard should it tip or fall on a child.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

## Corrective & Preventive Action

### General Safety:

- (1) The large doll's house has been secured with brackets. In future all furniture will be assessed and anchored if required.

## Supporting documentation submitted

### General Safety:

- (1) Photographs of the doll's house anchored with brackets were received in the office of the inspectorate.

## Summary Comment

The non-compliance under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

## 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) Certificates were on file to verify that two staff members had First Aid Responder training completed. Both staff members were available at all times during the morning of inspection.
- (2)
  - (a) (b) The well stocked first aid bag, which was easily accessible to the staff, was stored in a locked cupboard in the kitchen and was available at all times.

## 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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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 that took place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on 13 September 2023.
  - (b) Written records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the service. The firefighting equipment certificate was dated November 2022 and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 28 February 2023.
- (2)
- (c) The above records were open to inspection by the inspector on the day.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was located on a wall of one of the fire exit door.

### Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the pre-school was insured. A written record was available with the expiry date recorded as 27 March 2024. The service was insured for 22 sessional children. Information included details such as including public liability, outings, fire brigade and employer's liability.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- ((e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The prefabricated building appeared of sound and stable structure.
- (b) The indoor and outdoor doors were safe and secure. The outdoor perimeter was secured with high metal fencing.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (e) There was no adult toilet available in the service. The registered provider must ensure that staff have access to suitable and adequate sanitary facilities.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (e) A staff toilet is now available in the school for the staff, ensuring compliance with the regulation for the requirement for a staff toilet.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

- (e) A photograph of the toilet in the school allocated to the staff in the service and a letter of confirmation of same from the principal of the school were received in the office of the inspectorate.

#### Summary Comment

The non-compliance under Regulation 29 has been adequately addressed.