

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015CE053 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Giggles Montessori Pre-School |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | O'Connell Street, Kilkee, Co. Clare |
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| <b>Eircode:</b> | V15 VA02 |
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| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Deborah Hickie |
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|                      |           |
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| <b>Service type:</b> | Sessional |
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| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 26/03/2026 |
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|                                   |    |    |    |     |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 14 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

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| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate<br>Tusla Child and Family Agency<br>Primary Care Centre<br>Station Road<br>Ennis<br>County Clare |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | A. McCarthy                                                                                                               |
| <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).

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| <b>Conditions if applicable</b> | Not applicable |
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### Description of service

Giggles Montessori Pre-school is a sessional service located in Kilkee town centre, County Clare. The service operates Monday to Friday for thirty-eight weeks each year. The programme of care and education is facilitated in two interconnecting care rooms from 09:15 to 12:15 for children ranging in age from two to six years. The service is located in an adapted single storey building. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

### Staffing

Three adults are employed by the service. On the 26 March 2026 two adults cared for the children in attendance. The registered provider provides an administrative role and works directly with the children. The adults held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications. Records were available demonstrating the adult's engagement in continuing professional development.

### 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, health, welfare and development of child and safety, premises and facilities. The regulations inspected included:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (3)

Regulation 15— Record of pre-school child (1)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 29 – Premises (e)

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. 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, the member of staff and the 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.*

*(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, and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

**(b)**

The designated person in charge was available during the inspection.

**(2)**

Three files were available in respect of the registered provider and the two adults working in the service. The findings included the following:

**(a)**

Six written and validated references were available from past employers.

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(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the adults currently working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was not required in respect of the adults working in the service as the adults had not lived in another state for a period longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 9 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)

During the inspection, an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.

(3)

On the 26 March 2026 the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Two adults cared for the fourteen children attending the service.

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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)  
The registered provider ensured that enrolment forms were completed for the eighteen children enrolled in the service. A sample of ten forms were reviewed and contained the required particulars outlined from (a)-(i).

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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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The children's learning, development and well-being were facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment having regard to the age and developmental stage of the children.

#### Supporting Relationships Around Children:

The adults listened attentively and conversed with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance. Positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions, and the children were offered praise and encouragement. The adults demonstrated an awareness of the children's personal preferences, interests and capabilities. The adults supported the children in individual and group play based activities throughout the session and engaged in open ended discussions. The adults interacted with the children in a kind and respectful manner. A strong sense of teamwork and an ethos of professionalism ensured a collaborative approach in the provision of care and learning.

The children were encouraged to be independent while caring for their belongings, their play materials and equipment, at mealtime and whilst using the toilet. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their age and level of development. The play-based programme of care was child focused, and the children were notified in advance of transitions in activities.

An individual learning journal was available for each child demonstrating the children's progress and creative work. A class journal captured community engagement projects. These journals are shared with parents during and at the end of the pre-school term. The adults discuss the children's day and observations with the parent/guardians during drop off and collection times and through a messaging application system.

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### Physical and Material Environment:

The programme of care was facilitated in two open plan care rooms. The care rooms were bright and spacious and adequately resourced for the age range and the development needs of the children. The children engaged in open ended tabletop activities in the indoor environment and low-level seating and tables were provided. Designated areas of interest were accessible and were appropriately equipped with supporting materials and equipment for the children. The defined interest areas in both care rooms included a home corner, rails with a large range of dress up costumes, a rest and reading area, low level shelving units were equipped with a large quantity of imaginative, constructive and manipulative equipment and materials. The walls in both rooms were illustrated with the children's creative artwork, spring themed artwork and decorations, learning activities, birthday displays and learning aids.

The outdoor play area to the rear of the service offered a space for the children to engage in play-based activities. The outdoor area was enclosed by a wall and gate. This area was partially covered to promote play in all weather conditions. The children have access to sensory play, ride on toys, an activity unit, and a wooden tree house with a slide. The children access the outdoor area daily.

### 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 service was secured to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility.
- The outdoor play area to the rear of the building was secured with a wall and gate to protect the children within.
- Medication and cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.

##### Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facility was equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined pedal operated bins.

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- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, after using the toilet and before mealtime.
- The children perishable food items were stored in the refrigerators.
- The children's personal belongings were stored individually.

### Administration of Medication:

- The adults demonstrated an awareness of the administration of medication policy. The administration of medication policy has been shared with the parents/guardians of the children in attendance.
- Documentation was available detailing pre-consent and a parental signature after medication is administered for each pre-school child that required medication.

### Fire Safety:

- The fire exits and routes were clear from obstruction throughout the service. Signage was available identifying the fire exits within the service.
- Written records of completed monthly fire drills were available.
- The fire assembly point was readily identifiable and identified by the adults working in the service.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 – Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*  
*(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

### Compliance Information

(e)  
The children had access to sanitary facilities adjacent to the pre-school rooms. The sanitary facility was appropriately equipped with child sized toilets and wash hand basins. A sanitary facility was also available for use by the adults.