

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY368		
Name of Service:	Gateway Montessori School LTD		
Address of Service:	1A Wellington Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D04 T992		
Name of Registered Provider:	Alexandra McGann		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time		
Date(s) of Inspection:	06/05/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	38	PM NA
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Brunel building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8		
Inspection undertaken by:	J.Mayock & H.Bourke		
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		

Description of service

Gateway Montessori School Ltd. is registered to provide full and part time care for children from 2 to 6 years of age. The service currently operates from 08:30 to 13:30, Monday to Friday.

The service is located in a period building in a residential, urban area. There are five preschool rooms in the service operating over three floors. The Primrose and Sunflower room caters for children from 2 to 3 years of age. The Lavender room caters for children from 3 to 4 years of age and the Water Lily and Orchid rooms cater for children from 3 to 5 years of age. There is an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs ten staff. There were ten staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection including the registered provider.

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 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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*
- (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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (c) There was evidence of a clear management structure which outlined the roles of authority within the service.
- (2)
- Following a discussion with the person in charge it was confirmed that four adults commenced working in the service since regulation 9 was last inspected on the 5th December 2022. Documentation required under regulation 9(2)(4) was reviewed in respect of these four adults as detailed below.
- (a)(b) There were eight references available from a previous employer for the four adults, all references had been appropriately verified.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for ten of the adults working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all adults.
- (d) International Police vetting was available for three adults who required it.
- (4) Each of the four adults held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were thirty-eight pre-school children attending the service being supervised by nine adults during the inspection.

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-*
 - (b) *appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
 - (b) Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed throughout the inspection. The routine of the service was child led, children were visibly content and happy in their play-based activities throughout the inspection. The Montessori method was practiced in each room for a period of time and children moved freely around the rooms throughout the day engaged in a wide range of Montessori materials and activities including imaginative play, tabletop, mark making and arts and crafts. Staff supported children in their play, sitting with them and involving themselves when invited by a child or by using prompts to extend play and learning. Staff were responsive to children's individual needs and communicated well with the children, using kind tones and gentle language during interactions.

Staff sat with children and engaged in conversation while they ate. Children were encouraged to be independent in using the toilet and cleaning up after activities. Staff demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge of children's individual care needs during discussions with the inspector on the weekly activities. Transitions within the service were managed well. Children were given notice when an activity was coming to an end and appeared to be familiar with the daily routine.

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

The inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- Hand sanitisers, medicines and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including following outdoor play, after using the toilet and nappy changing and before meals.
- Children's nappies were changed appropriately to reduce the risk of the spread of infection.
- A cleaning schedule was in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials were regularly cleaned.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.

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)
A person trained in first aid responder was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of the inspection.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had been recorded as undertaken on 2nd May 2025.

(b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were dated 30th April 2025.