

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL105		
Name of Service:	Green Gables Montessori/Playschool		
Address of Service:	160 Ardilaun, Portmarnock, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D13 X773		
Name of Registered Provider:	Ann Muldoon		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	12/11/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6		
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Coyle		
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).			
Conditions if applicable	Not applicable.		

Description of service

Green Gables Montessori/Playschool is a sessional early years service which has been in operation since the 1990s, with the registered provider taking over the operation and ownership of the service in 2013. Green Gables Montessori Playschool facilitates a maximum of 18 eligible pre-school children aged 2 to 6 years to participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme operates from 9.00am to 12.00midday and 9.15am to 12.15pm each weekday for 38 weeks each year. A number of children who attend this service also attend a separate early years service in the locality on a full day care basis and are dropped off to and/or collected from Green Gables Montessori Pre-school by a staff member from the other service, in order to avail of the ECCE programme in this setting. School aged children are not accommodated in the service. The service is conducted from two adjoining rooms on the ground floor of a residential property in Portmarnock. A fully enclosed outdoor play area is provided to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider and 3 staff members work directly with the children in the service on a daily basis. Two staff members are employed in the service to reduce the adult to child ratio, and when necessary, to work with children with additional needs, in posts funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) scheme.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25 and 26; These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 12/11/2025 in relation to one staff member who did not have completed Garda vetting disclosures available on the day of inspection.

A response was received from the service on the 12/11/2025 which outlined the steps taken by the service to address the immediate action notice. The registered provider submitted the Garda vetting disclosure to the Early Years Inspectorate on the 13/11/2025.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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

(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 of the service and there is a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of inspection.

The files for 4 staff members including the registered provider all of whom work directly with the children were reviewed.

(2)(a) One written reference was available for the registered provider.

Six validated written references were available from a previous employer.

(b) One written reference was available from a source other than a previous employer for the registered provider.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 3 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in relation to the 3 available documents.

(4) The registered provider and 3 staff members who worked directly with the children in the service in the service each held appropriate qualifications on the National Framework of Qualification or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were not available for 1 staff member.

(d) International police vetting was available for the 1 staff member who had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(c) A Garda Vetting disclosure was sent to the inspector on the 13th of November, one day after the inspection.

(d) They were unaware of this requirement at the time of the inspection. Our staff member applied immediately for an ICPC, and we are due to receive this immediately.

Preventive Action

(c) Garda vetting will be reviewed every three years for every staff member and updated accordingly.

(d) The requirement for this certificate will be adapted into their policy and state that this will be reviewed in accordance with Tusla requirements to ensure that it is up to date and readily available for inspector during inspections.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of Garda vetting and international police vetting received.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted by the registered provider in relation to regulation 9 – Management and recruitment has been reviewed and accepted.

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)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- There were 4 adults working directly with 18 children aged 3 years to 4 years 7 months.

(8) (c) Not applicable as there were at least 2 staff members working in the service on a daily basis.

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) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service.

Basic needs:

- The staff members were observed warmly engaging with the children throughout the inspection. The staff members were familiar with the children and their individual needs and were seen using warm vocal tones, positive language and positioning themselves at the children's level when engaging with them. The children were observed to be very comfortable in their environment and sought out staff members for support and guidance as they required it.
- The children bring their own food for morning snack and lunch with them to the service. The children had a fruit snack at 10am and their lunch when they returned to the service following outdoor play. Both meal breaks were observed to be relaxed with the children given ample time to sit and enjoy their food while the staff members sat with the children engaging them in conversation. A system was in place whereby a child in each of the rooms was nominated as a helper and given the responsibility of distributing the lunches to their peers which they were observed to enjoy.
- The children were observed to be mostly independent in their toileting needs with the staff members providing assistance as required, staff members were observed to be responsive to the children's cues, should they need to use the toilet, with discreet supervision and assistance provided to the children when required.
- The personal care needs of the children were attended to promptly by the staff members with the children reminded to wash their hands when necessary. Aprons were available for messy play activities and children were supported in putting their coats on independently before they went outside.
- The practitioners were observed to be calm and responsive with the children and there was an emphasis on praise and encouragement in the service to promote positive behaviour.

- All of the children present on the day of inspection enjoyed time in the outdoor play area located to the rear of the service.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members were observed interacting with the children in a warm, caring and playful manner. Informal conversation was used as a means of extending children's learning and their engagement with an activity through the use of open-ended questioning techniques. The children were praised throughout the session particularly when they were helpful to others, took turns and shared resources.
- The children appeared confident and relaxed in their environment and were observed naturally forming small groups and engaging in a range of activities during the inspection.
- Parents and guardians were observed being welcomed by the practitioners when the children were going home from the service with the opportunity taken for updating the parents and guardians regarding their child's day in the service taken at this time.

Physical and material environment:

- The resources were easily available and accessible on low level shelving. The children demonstrated familiarity with navigating their environment to access the toys and play resources they chose to play with.
- There were 2 distinct learning spaces in the service, and the children were divided into 2 separate groups when indoors with each group spending time in each area. The interest areas in the front room included a well-resourced home corner which included a dolls house, a play kitchen with a range of materials located alongside it to enable the children to extend their play and a shop area. A construction zone and tabletop materials were accessible to the children in addition to a reading and relaxation area. The room to the rear of the service had a wall mounted art easel along with a blackboard with art materials easily accessible to allow the children to participate in art and mark making activities. A broad range of arts and crafts supplies, jigsaws and play equipment to support children's fine motor development were available and accessible for the children to use.
- The theme of the week was numbers, and this was reflected in the artwork the children undertook on the day of inspection in addition to the songs that were sung.
- A broad range of books were provided, and the children's language development was facilitated during the inspection through conversations heard, storytelling and singing.

- An enclosed outdoor area was provided to the rear of the service and was accessed directly from the care room. Raised decking was located to the rear of the area where a range of toys including transport toys, a box of construction blocks and a box of dolls were taken out and placed in the area for the children to use. Artificial grass was located beneath the decked area with a range of ride on and push along toys available for the children to use in addition to a crawl through tunnel. A storage shed with a range of additional resources was located in the outdoor play area and the registered provider stated that the resources that were taken out for the children to use were changed based on the children's interests.

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 entrance doors leading into the premises were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The service's designated emergency exits were unobstructed.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were provided in the sanitary accommodation in the service. The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet, and following messy play.
- Children's lunches which contained perishable food items including meat and dairy products, provided by parents for the morning snack, were refrigerated on arrival to the service. This reduced the risk of bacteria multiplying to levels which could result in food contamination.
- The premises and play materials were in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Up to date documented cleaning schedules were on display in the service.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed being administered on the day.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exits were clearly signposted and were unobstructed.

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) A person trained in first aid including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service as evidenced in the staff roster and the in-date FAR certifications provided for inspection.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions on the premises, out of the reach of children.

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.
- (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 record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. The records indicated and staff members reported that fire drills were carried out monthly. The last fire drill took place on the 17/10/25.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were on display in the care rooms and hallway of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (b) An up-to-date maintenance record was not available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers were last serviced on the 10/01/2024 and the smoke detection system was last serviced on the 12/12/2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(b) Fire maintenance company attended Green Gables on the 14th of January to service fire equipment.

Preventive Action

(b) Fire maintenance company will attend annually to service fire equipment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of maintenance certificate for both the fire extinguishers and the smoke alarms received.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted the maintenance certificate for both the fire extinguishers and the smoke alarm system. The regulatory requirement for regulation 26 - Fire safety measures has been addressed.