

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MO047
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Name of Service:	Greenwood Montessori
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Address of Service:	Greenwood, Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo
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Eircode:	F35 F799
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Name of Registered Provider:	Cathrina Concannon
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	07/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	12
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency. 2 nd Floor St Mary's HQ, Castlebar, Co Mayo. F23HP58
Inspection undertaken by:	B Lavin
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
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Description of service

Greenwood Montessori is a privately owned and operated part time service located in a rural area of county Mayo, near Ballyhaunis. The service is registered to cater for children aged from 2 to 6 years of age and is open from 09:00-14:00hrs. The service is provided from a dedicated section of the registered provider's home. There is one indoor playroom and sanitary facilities. Enclosed outdoor play areas are located to the side and rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are 4 staff employed in the service including the registered provider who works directly with the children. One staff member is employed on a relief basis.

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 and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. On inspection an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15: Record of a preschool child.

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, 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.*

(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 and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspection, the registered provider was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.
- (2) Following a review of the service files and discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that there were 4 members of staff employed in the service.
 - (a) There were 3 written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer.
 - (b) There were 5 written and appropriately validated references available from a source other than recent employer for 3 adults working in the service.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all the staff working in the service. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.
- (d) Police vetting disclosure were available for 2 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) The 4 adults working directly with the children, had evidence of an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 to Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education or qualifications deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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 3 adults working directly with children on the day of inspection.

The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the day of inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service. In the morning there were 21 children present aged between 2 and 4 years with 3 staff members caring for the children. In the afternoon there were 12 children present aged between 2 and 4 years with 3 staff members caring for the children.

(3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained.

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.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) to (i)

A random sample of 10 children's records were reviewed. The records contained the required details as laid out under the regulation.

(3) (c)

The required information was made readily available for inspection in the service by the registered provider on request.

(4)

The registered provider confirmed that the records are retained for the required period of 2 years.

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

- Drinking water was available to all children in individual beakers throughout the day.
- Breakfast of cereal, milk and fruit was available to the children attending the service. In the afternoon the children had a snack provided by parents/guardians. This consisted of sandwiches, fruit, yogurts, cheese and crackers.
- Children were supported during mealtimes with opening food items when needed. Independence was encouraged with self-care skills.
- Children sat at tables and chairs which were appropriate for their height and/or stage of development.
- The staff were observed sitting at the child's level and chatted in a respectful manner.
- The privacy and dignity of each child was respected during toileting and nappy changing.

- Appropriate rest facilities were available in the care rooms and children were observed spending time in this area for short periods of rest throughout the day.
- Children had easy access to the outside areas throughout the day. Children moved freely between indoor and outdoor areas.
- Appropriate outdoor clothing was available to each child. The children spend much of their time outdoors on the day of inspection.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions to sharing toys, equipment and turn taking.
- Children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.

Supporting relationships

- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. The staff member's offered assurance and communicated using soft gentle tones.
- Staff supported children to engage positively with one another. The children were encouraged to engage in play activities that required turn taking and sharing. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together. The children and staff spent time picking apples from the apple tree in the garden and the staff ensured that all the children had time to choose the apples and fill their buckets.
- Emerging interests from the children guide the play and learning. The inspector observed imaginative play of a group game of hide and seek outdoors. Learning themes are centred around emerging interests with the theme for the week being kindness. There was an emphasis on social skills.
- The service provided parents and guardians with daily information, including significant events or activities involving their child, for example, verbal communication at drop off and collection times and through a bespoke childcare application. This childcare application allowed for interactive communication with parents and guardians, sharing of photos, curriculum and learning goals and a description of activities that the children engaged in.

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 written record was available to demonstrate monthly fire drills completed in the service.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke detection system with the last annual service on the 7th January 2025 and the 14th June 2025.
- (4) There was evidence of the fire evacuation procedures setting out the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire in the playroom.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service's insurance with an expiry date of 27/03/2026, was for a part time service, for a maximum number of 22 children. The insurance covered the following,

- public liability,
- personal accident,
- insurance against fire and theft,
- buildings,
- outings undertaken as part of the service provision.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

The nappy disposal bin that was used in the nappy changing area, was not adequate or suitable. The bin was not sealable or airtight.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

A new airtight, sealable nappy bin was ordered and will be used in the disposal of nappies within the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Documentation submitted to the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted were reviewed and the noncompliance identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.