

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW140		
Name of Service:	Ballyflanigan Montessori Pre-school		
Address of Service:	Barnacleagh, Thomastown, Arklow, Co. Wicklow		
Eircode:	Y14 DE62		
Name of Registered Provider:	Jenny Kane		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	12/06/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Bray Co. Wicklow		
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke		
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	N/A		

Description of service

Ballyflanigan Montessori Pre-school is a privately owned service that was first established in 2009. The service is located in an adapted bungalow in the rural setting of Barnacleagh, Arklow Co. Wicklow.

A sessional Early Childhood Care and Educational (ECCE) service operates from 09.15am to 12.15pm Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year.

There are two pre-school rooms but only one is operational. There is a separate kitchen and sanitary area located in the building and a large outdoor area, to the rear of the premises.

The children attending the service have access to the secure outdoor area on a daily basis. The service is registered to provide care and education to children aged between two years and six years of age.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service and employs two additional adults.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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 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*
- (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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information

Following a discussion with the registered provider and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that the registered provider and two other adults work in the service, these files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The registered provider was present and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the remainder of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of three adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for three adults.

(d)

International police vetting was available for one adult working in the service who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Three staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(6A)

One adult was employed under the Access and Inclusion Model.

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.

(8)

(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)

Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the Montessori.

(3)

The correct adult/child ratio was maintained during the inspection. There were three adults present with sixteen children.

(8)(c)

The service is not operated single handedly.

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 main door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspector to the service.
- All toys examined were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route from each pre-school room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- In each of the sanitary areas there was warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- Foot pedal bins were available in all the sanitary area and pre-school rooms for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other items that required disposing of.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snack time and after using the toilet.
- Cleaning schedules were present and maintained in the service.
- Cleaning of all areas of the service was observed after the children went home.

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)
The registered provider and a second adult present were trained in FAR (first aid response) and were available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)(a)
A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place within the hallway of the service.

(b)
The first aid box was available to the children attending the service 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 firefighting 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)
There was a record of fire drills having taken place in the Montessori service on a monthly basis. The last fire drill took place on the 26th of May 2025.

(b)
There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and the smoke detection system on the premises dated February 2025.

(2)(c)

The above records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire, clearly displayed within the Montessori room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The registered provider was able to demonstrate that the children attending the Montessori were adequately supervised continuously throughout their day.