

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX010
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Name of Service:	Ballymurn Montessori Ltd
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Address of Service:	Ballynabrigidane, Ballymurn, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
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Eircode:	Y21 KT32
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Name of Registered Provider:	Adelia Lamba
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	24/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Ely Hospital, Wexford.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Cullen
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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Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Ballymurn Montessori Ltd. is a privately operated full day care service located in the rural village of Ballymurn, in county Wexford. The service caters for up to 55 for children aged 1 to 6 years of age. The service offers a Montessori based curriculum. The service is registered to open 07:30 to 18:40 daily, however is currently operating a reduced operation as a sessional service for children aged 2 to 6 years of age in one of their early years rooms. The service operates from a building to the side of the provider's home and consists of three playrooms, sanitary accommodation, a kitchen and an office. Two large outdoor garden play areas were available to the front and rear of the property.

Staffing

The service currently employs two staff members who work directly with children. The registered provider also works directly with children in the service. Staff members held qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5, 6, and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 – Management and Recruitment, 10 – Policies, procedures and statements of pre-school service, 11– Staffing levels, 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service, 19 - Health, welfare and development of child, and 32 – Complaints. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16. As a result, the scope of the inspection included both the indoor and outdoor environments.

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

This inspection was triggered on foot of information received by the Early Years Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b) The registered provider was the designated person in charge on the day of inspection, and a named person was available to deputise as required.

(2) Documentation was reviewed for the 3 adults working in the service.

(a)(b) Two validated references were available for each staff member from either a past employer, or from a source other than a past employer.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(7) Staff members had been provided with the service's policies and procedures. Staff were trained in Children First and demonstrated awareness of their roles and responsibilities.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Non-Compliance Information

Written policies, procedures and statement were available for the service. The policies reviewed for this inspection were the following: statement of purpose and function, policy on complaints, policy on accidents and incidents and the policy on managing behaviour in the service.

The following policies did not contain sufficient detail to meet the minimum requirements as required under these regulations:

1. Policy on managing behaviour did not refer to the service's child safeguarding statement and there was insufficient detail on supporting staff training.
2. Policy on accidents and incidents failed to provide sufficient information on measures taken to prevent accidents and incidents, procedures to follow when an incident occurs, steps to be taken to contact a parent or emergency services when necessary.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All the written policies and procedures and added the information missing / necessary, the new policy and procedure is shared with parents. All Teachers will attend Children First training online, and they will renew their

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

training after every three years. Time will be set to discuss different Behaviour Management Theories, practicalities and relevance to our setting.

Policies and procedures will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Updated policy and procedure documents.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified has been adequately addressed. Implementation will be reviewed on next inspection.

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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children.

(2) The staff to child ratios were maintained above the minimum requirements. There were 16 children aged 2 to 6 years being cared for by 3 staff.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) – (k)

The registered provider ensured that all relevant information was accessible and available for inspection by authorised persons. Staff records were available, the Tusla registration certificate was on display providing confirmation of the class of service registered. Records of attendance, administration of medication and any accident or incident records was maintained. Policies and procedures were available.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The indoor areas were bright, warm, and homely, this was achieved using natural materials and neutral colours. Low-level open shelving units were used to display Montessori materials and resources which promoted independence and choice making. Throughout the morning children were observed to independently retrieve activities from the shelves and complete tasks, staff supported as needed.

Outdoors, children were observed to engage in a range of active activities. The children had access to several natural outdoor play spaces on the premises. Areas included opportunity to climb, balance, swing and slide. Time was spent in the forest to the front of the main building. This area provided children with numerous play experiences in nature, among trees, long grass, and over bridges. Children were observed to freely engage in active play and discovery. Clear rules and boundaries were reinforced by staff members such as the playing of hide and seek in designated areas only.

Staff members were observed to speak with children in low tones of voice, support and guide children as needed. When a child was upset that their friend did not want to play with them, reassurance was provided and child was redirected to an alternative; 'that's okay, sometimes they may not want to play right now'.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Transitions were managed seamlessly as children were observed to move from Montessori time to morning snack at their own time and pace. As children finished snack, they retrieved a book and sat waiting for a morning circle time to commence.

Parent and guardian communication during collection and drop off periods, provided an opportunity for staff to share information with parents. When children are settling into the service, the registered provider detailed how parents are facilitated to stay in the classroom to support this transition. Additional methods of communication such as phone calls and a multimedia communication application were used to share information, pictures and observations.

(2)(3)

The service policy on behaviour management detailed prohibited practices, staff members and the registered provider detailed that behaviour management in the service focuses on supporting children to regulate their emotions in an age-appropriate manner. The Montessori philosophy of 'grace and courtesy' is used to promote positive behaviour in the service. Behaviour management observed on the day of inspection reflected these approaches.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
- (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-

- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with.

(5) The requirement in paragraph (4) is without prejudice to any requirement to retain the record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) under any other enactment or rule of law.

Compliance Information

(1)

The service complaints policy contained sufficient detail to inform potential complainants of the process to follow, how their complaint will be managed and communication processes during the complaints process.

(2)(3)(4)(5)

The registered provider informed the inspector that no formal complaints had been received by the service.