

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016CC019		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballycotton Montessori School		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ballycotton Community Centre, Ballycotton, Co. Cork		
<b>Eircode:</b>	P25HK83		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Elma Kenny		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	15/04/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM 4

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D Prendergast
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Ballycotton Montessori School is a part time early years service, that also caters for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. It is privately owned and is registered to accommodate children aged two to six years. The ECCE sessional service is facilitated from 9.15am to 12.15pm, each Monday to Friday, over 38 weeks of the year. Part time hours are provided from 12.15pm until 2.00pm. A summer camp is also available and the service was recently registered to accommodate school age care. The setting utilises a combination of Montessori and play based pedagogy.

Located in Ballycotton in east Cork, the service operates from a single storey, community building, which is adjacent to the local primary school. There is one operational care room and the children also have the use of a second interconnecting room. Sanitary facilities and a kitchen are also available, along with a designated outdoor play area.

### Staffing

The service employs five adults, all of whom work directly with the children who attend. This includes the registered provider and two adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. All five adults have achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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/ 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*

*(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 person in charge assigned to the service and a named deputy had been identified to deputise in her absence.
  - (b) The registered provider was available to facilitate the duration of the inspection process. The roster for the service indicated that either the registered provider or the deputy were consistently on duty during operational hours.
- (2) Recruitment records were assessed in respect of the five adults who worked at the service and the following information was obtained:
- (a) There were nine written and validated references on file from past employers.
  - (b) One of the references was from a source other than a previous employer and had been appropriately validated.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were in place for all five staff members. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
  - (d) Documentary evidence indicated that one staff member had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months as an adult and the required police vetting was maintained.
- (4) Written evidence regarding the attainment of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, was on file in respect of the five staff members; copies of the relevant certificates were presented for review.

### 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)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance.
- (2) The correct adult to child ratio was maintained. During the morning sessional service, there were 4 adults available to the 14 children present, who were aged 3 to 4 and a half years. This included one AIM support staff member. In the afternoon, four of the children remained to attend part time care and there were two adults working directly with these children.
- (8)
- (a) There were at least two adults available on the premises throughout the duration of the inspection and at all times, in accordance with the staff roster.

### 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:*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (j) The parents of a child, who had been prescribed specific medication, had provided written consent for staff to administer said medication, as needed. The registered provider stated that the medication had not been administered at the service to date, however, provision was in place to record this information, should it be required; an administration of medication book was available.

### 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)

#### Basic needs:

- Two meal breaks were observed to be facilitated at the setting; the mid-morning snack was accommodated during the sessional service and the children who availed of part time care had a second snack at 12.30pm.
- During mealtimes, a social environment was promoted, as the adults encouraged conversation and the children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their food.
- The inspector was advised that, should the children become thirsty outside of the allocated mealtimes, they could easily retrieve their reusable water bottles from their bags, which were accessible at their level.
- The children's sanitary facilities were located adjoining the main care room and the children were observed to independently access and utilise the toilets and wash hand basins, as needed.
- A cosy area was provided to meet the children's need for rest and relaxation.
- An individual care plan had been devised for one of the children, who may have required medication while in attendance.

- Tissue boxes were available at the children’s eye level, which encouraged them to attend to their own respiratory hygiene.
- The adults were noted to speak kindly to the children and used low tones of voice. Staff members also demonstrated awareness of the children’s individual needs. For example, children were supported to regulate their emotions and were offered choice in relation to upcoming activities.
- The spacious care room allowed children to freely explore, play and participate in various indoor pursuits. A second interconnecting room served as an additional area, where children could engage in quieter play. The children also had the opportunity to partake in outdoor games and activities during the morning.

### 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 entrance door to the service was found to be secure upon the inspector’s arrival. This minimised the risk of unauthorised access.
- The outdoor play space was enclosed by a combination of walls and secured gates.
- The door that provided access to the kitchen was maintained secure when not in use; this was key locked from the exterior, with the key stored on a high-level wall hook.
- Cleaning agents were stored at a height that was out of the children’s reach.
- Firefighting equipment was safely wall mounted.
- It was noted that there were no cables or trailing flexes accessible to children in the care room.
- Safety clips were in use to anchor blind cords.

##### Infection Control:

- The children’s wash hand basins were equipped with a supply of warm running water, liquid soap, paper towels and electric hand dryers. Children were reminded to wash their hands before the mid-morning snack and were noted to wash their hands and use hand sanitiser, following outdoor activities.
- Disposable gloves and aprons were provided for use during nappy changing procedures.

- A refrigerator was available for the storage of children’s perishable snacks and staff advised that such foods had been refrigerated, upon the children’s arrival.
- A trolley was utilised to store the children’s bags.

### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed to be administered to any of the children.
- The available medication was safely stored, in a manner that was inaccessible to children. It was also noted to be in date and was clearly labelled.

### Safe Sleep:

- None of the children were observed to sleep during the inspection period.

### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.

### Outing:

- Not applicable, as an outing did not take place.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. The risk of a child exiting the service while unsupervised was not prevented. A fire exit door in the main care room was fitted with a low-level push bar, which could be opened by children and while a door sensor alarm had been fitted to this door, the alarm was not functioning and did not sound when the inspector opened the door.
2. The Garda vetting disclosure available for one of the adults was not dated within the previous three years, in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice ‘EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting’.

### Infection Control:

3. The nappy changing mat on the nappy changing unit was torn, which impeded effective cleaning. A second changing mat was observed to be stored on the floor and there was evidence of mould visible on said mat. This increased the risk of cross infection.
4. The sleep mat available for the children’s use did not have a wipeable, waterproof surface, as required to reduce the risk of cross infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. The written response from the registered provider stated that a new sounder alarm has been fitted to the door, with an operating battery. This will alert staff members if the fire door is opened by a child. As a preventive measure, regular checks on the sounder alarm will be ensured and staff will alert the manager if the battery runs out again, so that a replacement can be obtained.
2. Updated Garda vetting has been obtained to replace the out-of-date vetting on file. In future, the manager will complete regular checks to ensure that documents are maintained in-date.

##### Infection Control:

3. The mat on the changing unit will be replaced with a new one and the second changing mat has been removed. Staff will undertake checks of the new changing mat, to prevent this reoccurring.
4. The registered provider has stated that a new wipeable, waterproof sheet has been purchased and fitted to the children's mattress.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

1. A photograph of the new alarm on the door.
2. A copy of the updated Garda vetting.

##### Infection Control:

3. A screen shot of the order confirmation of the new changing mat.
4. Photographic evidence and a screen shot of the receipt for the waterproof mattress protector.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider has demonstrated that the non-compliances identified under regulation 23 have been resolved.

### 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) Three of the adults who worked at the service had completed training in First Aid Response (FAR) and the staff roster demonstrated that at least one of these adults was available to the children during the hours of operation.
- (2)
- (a) A well-stocked first aid kit was maintained in the kitchen.
  - (b) The first aid supplies were available at all times, in the event that a child may require treatment.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The insurance certificate presented for review demonstrated that sufficient cover was in place for the part time service.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

(e) Three toilets and three wash hand basins were available for the children's use. A nappy changing unit was also in place for any child who may require same. Staff members had the use of the staff toilet facility in the adjoining primary school, which comprised one toilet and one wash hand basin.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(c) The air temperature in the main care room was not maintained within the required range of 18°C to 22°C. A temperature of 15.3°C was recorded at 10.16am. Later in the morning, a temperature reading of 20.2°C was taken, however, this was after the low temperature had been brought to the attention of staff, who subsequently turned on the electric heaters.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The response received outlined that regular temperature checks will be carried out by staff and that the heating will be left on as needed, to sustain the appropriate temperature.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

The statement from the registered provider is accepted as evidence.

#### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was deemed to meet regulatory compliance with regulation 29.