

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019GY004
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Name of Service:	Kiltiernan Montessori and Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Scoil Cronain, Kiltiernan West, Kilcolgan, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 T2N2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Samantha Geaghan
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	04/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla-Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulations Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A – (1st Floor-Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Co. Galway.
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Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan.
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Title:	Early Years Inspector.
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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

This part-time preschool service was established in 2019 and is in a purpose-built playroom in Kiltiernan national school. This childcare service provides a part time care programme for children aged 2 to 6 years. The pre-school service operates a part time service from 09.00 to 14.00 and a sessional service from 09:30 to 12:30 Monday to Friday. The service has 1 large playroom and a fully equipped kitchen for the preparation of meals. There is a secured play area at the entrance and back of the service, a nappy changing area and sanitary facilities off the main playroom.

Staffing

The registered provider, manager and a student were working directly with the children in attendance. There are five adults employed in the service which includes the registered provider, manager, deputy manager and two students on placements.

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.

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, person in charge, 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.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service. The registered provider was present and working with children during the inspection.
- (b) The manager, registered provider and a student were on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service, which identified the lines of authority and accountability within the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee.

All six adult files were reviewed including which included the registered provider, manager, deputy manager, two students and a relief worker:

- (2)(a) Eleven of the 12 validated references on file in respect of 6 adults were from a past employer.
- (b) One of the 12 validated references were from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the six adults. This was in adherence with the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Documentary evidence indicated that 2 adults had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years and therefore required police vetting. The police vetting was available for inspection.
- (4) Four adults held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of Level 5 to a level 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the four adults.

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) At all times during the period of the inspection, the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained. On the morning of the inspection, there were 13 children present and in the afternoon 5 children present with 2 adults and a student.

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.

Compliance Information

19(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

- The healthy eating policy was available for parents and guardians to view. The snacks and hot meal observed on the day of inspection were appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children.
- Perishable items that were belonging to preschool children were stored in the service fridge.
- Crockery and plates used during children's snack times and were appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children.
- Children had their own labelled water bottle to drink from when thirsty and the service also supplied water.
- Children attending the service were toilet trained and toileted independently or with some assistance or support from adults as required.
- The children's self-care was assisted and encouraged by adults for example to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting, after outdoor play, after using a tissue and after messy play.
- In the playroom the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in a designated cosy area.
- Stackable beds and clean linen were available for sleep as required and one section of the playroom was converted into a sleep room during the day if required.

Programme of Activities and its Implementation:

- A key person system was in place for each child to support their development and to inform curriculum planning. The role of the key person was to liaise with parents and guardians, conduct observations to support each child's developmental needs.
- Each child had a learning journal identifying their likes and preferences, showing their art and craft work for the year.

- The programme of care was flexible and guided by the children’s choices. Children were supported by the staff during periods of individual and group-based activities. The staff sensitively supervised and intervened when necessary.
- The emerging interests were recorded to inform the short-term planning and emerging interests of children.
- Transitions between activities were well planned by staff and were carried out in a calm and relaxed environment. Good communication between adults in planning activities was observed.
- On review of documentation the service took a wholistic approach to each child’s learning and development. They worked in partnership with parents to enhance each individual child’s learning experience while attending the service.
- Documented evidence of observations for children was available and linked to the overall curriculum planning.
- The curriculum was based on different models of best practice in early childhood education. The service had documented evidence of short, medium and long-term planning of educational activities.
- The activities observed were both adult and child led, both indoors and outdoors with an emphasis of the children’s emerging interests, wellbeing and development.
- The theme was ‘Christmas’ and children were observed in preparation for the Christmas concert, doing arts/crafts, circle time and outdoor play.

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 service provided evidence that five adults trained in first aid responder for children were available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) The service had a first aid box with content items in date. It was stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the playroom.

- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 in writing of fire drills indicated that the last fire drill was conducted on the 01/11/2025.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that firefighting equipment was checked annually. Records confirmed that the firefighting equipment was serviced on the 04/09/2025 and the fire detection and smoke alarms were maintained annually, the last date of maintenance was on the 01/10/2025.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire was available on file and was displayed in the lobby of the service.