

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2019GY007
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballyglass Montessori & Afterschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ballyglass National School, Ballyglass, Ardrahan, Co. Galway
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<b>Eircode:</b>	H91 D263
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Samantha Geaghan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/11/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	8	PM	0
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child & Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulations Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Meehan.
<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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

This sessional service known as Ballyglass Montessori and Afterschool is in Ballyglass national school, in a rural area of county Galway. The preschool offers an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), sessional care programme from 09.00 to 12:30 from Monday to Friday. There is one large playroom to the rear of the school building. The service has sanitary facilities and a secured outdoor area.

### Staffing

There are 3 adults working in the service which does not include the registered provider. The adults working directly with the children in the service have completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of a level 5 to a 7 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 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 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.*

(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

- (1)(a) The register provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person available to deputise as required.
- (b) The staff roster indicated that either the designated person in charge or named person were on the premises while the sessional service was carried out.
- All 4 staff files were reviewed including the registered providers.
- (2)(a) Six of the required 8 written and validated references were from past employers.
- (b) Two of the required 8 written and validated references were from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 3 adults for whom they were required. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years.
- (d) Staff files indicated that international police vetting disclosures were required and available for 1 of the staff who had lived outside of Ireland as an adult for more than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The 4 adults in the service had obtained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, ranging from Level 6 to Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- (6A) There was 1 adult employed in the service 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.*

## 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.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained. There were 2 adults working in the service with 8 pre-school children on the day of inspection. A third adult arrived during the inspection for administration duties.

## 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

19(1)(a)

### BASIC NEEDS:

- The healthy eating policy was available for parents and guardians to view. The snacks were observed to be appropriate.
- The snacks supplied by the parents/guardians were healthy and nutritious. They consisted of sandwiches, crackers, cheese, fresh fruit pieces, yogurts with milk or water available to children when needed.
- Perishable items belonging to children were stored in the service fridge.
- Crockery and plates were offered during children's snack times and were appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children.
- All children attending the service were toilet trained and toileted independently or with some assistance or support by adults as required.
- The children's self-care was encouraged and assisted by adults for e.g., to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting, 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.

- Children were encouraged to use positive social skills while playing outside and a group discussion was had in relation to respect, personal space, sharing and taking turns. This was led by the adults.
- There was an outdoor play area to the side of the premises which was sufficiently spacious to accommodate the numbers of children attending the service. The children were observed playing in the outdoor area during the inspection.
- The play equipment and materials provided in the outdoor area supported a range of physically energetic activities and play experiences.
- The theme of the month was Halloween and autumn.

### Supporting Relationships Around Children

- A key worker system was in operation at the service, this in turn supported children's development and help establish meaningful relationships with the adults.
- Transitions were observed to be well coordinated by the adults in turn creating a calm and relaxed environment for children.
- The adults were observed to show the pre-school children kindness, respect, positive regard and were observed to praise and encourage the children during their activities.
- Children's behaviour was consistently managed in a positive manner by adults, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement. Children were shown positive strategies to manage their behaviour during the session.

## 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 a person trained in first aid responder for children was available to the children attending the pre-school service. Four adults had current in date first aid responder certificates.
- (2)(a) There was a first aid box in the playroom, with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.

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

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

In date insurance was available for 20 children on a sessional basis valid until the 27 March 2026.