

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020CC001
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Grenagh Montessori School
-------------------------	---------------------------

Address of Service:	Grenagh Commercial Centre, Unit 11, Grenagh, Co Cork
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	T23 WK69
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Claire Connolly, Marguerite Morley
-------------------------------------	------------------------------------

Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	----------------------

Date(s) of Inspection:	10/12/2024
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM	6
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	---

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Marys Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440
---	---

Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher
----------------------------------	----------

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

Grenagh Montessori school is a registered privately owned early years service in operation since 2020. This service provides education and care to children from 2 to 6 years offering a choice of sessional and part-time day care for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.

The current opening hours are from 9.00 am to 1.00pm and the sessional service operates from 09.30am to 12.30pm each day Monday to Friday.

Staffing

There was a total of 4 staff working in the service on the day of inspection, 1 of whom was the registered provider.

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. 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 registered providers have ensured that a designated person in charge and a deputy in charge were assigned to the service.
- (b) The person in charge was on duty at the service when the inspector arrived for the inspection. The registered provider who was the deputy in charge, attended the closing meeting.
- (c) There was clear evidence on inspection of the management structures in place and the specific roles of each member of staff in the care rooms.
- (2) Recruitment records of all 5 adults attached to the childcare facility were assessed for compliance. The following information was noted:
- (a) From a total of 10 written and validated references, 6 had been provided by a past employer.
- (b) A further 4 written and validated references were from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 5 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (4) Records demonstrated that the 5 adults had achieved at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework with copies of relevant qualifications on file.

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.

Compliance Information

The following policies were reviewed and were found to meet the necessary requirements

- Policy on infection control
- Policy on authorisation to collect children
- Policy on healthy eating
- Policy on recruitment

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 at all times.

(2) Minimum adult to child ratios were observed in all care rooms, over the duration of the inspection. The ratio was as follows:

Morning:

Room name and age range of children	Number of children present	Number of Adults present

Preschool (2 years 6 months to 4 years 10 months)	17	4
---	----	---

Afternoon:

Room name and age range of children	Number of children present	Number of Adults present
Preschool (2 years 6 months to 4 years 10 months)	6	3

(8) (a) On the day of inspection, the service operated with at least two adults present at all times while early years children were present.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and
- (c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 11 records were inspected and were found to have the required details as per (a) to (i) inclusive.
(3) The records were available to the inspector on request.

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;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1)
(a) The registered provider maintained a record of the name, position, qualifications and experience of all employees in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (j)
1. No staff roster was available to the inspector on the day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was made by the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

A staff roster has been updated and put in place and will remain in used in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

A Photograph of the staff roster.

Summary Comment

1. The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance under Regulation 16 (1) (i).

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)

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through:

- Direct observation and discussion with staff.
- Examination of relevant documentation.

Basic needs:

- Snacks which were provided by the parents/ guardians were observed to be mainly healthy and nutritious. Examples included apples, raspberries, brown bread, yogurt and crackers and were stored in the refrigerator.
- Children had their own individual bottles with water being the main choice of drink. These were accessible to the children at all times.
- During the lunch break staff sat among the children, and others walked around and helped children as needed with opening containers or wrappings when a child found it difficult to do so.
- The layout of the room supported the children to move freely within the environment and to actively engage in their chosen tasks.
- Children were observed accessing the toilet individually with the adults present to provide assistance if needed to do so.
- The children were noted to dress appropriately for outdoors with coats on.
- A rest area was available. It was furnished with a low-level sofa in the book area of the room.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed engaging positively with children throughout the morning. During tabletop activities staff were heard praising children's efforts and giving encouragement in relation to each child's chosen activity. Examples included children playing with farm animals and colouring art.
- The encouragement of independence was noted when children were observed putting on and zipping up their coats before going out to play and sweeping spilt items from the floor.
- Staff encouraged communication and language development through discussing topics of interest with the child during conversation and encouraging the child to expand on the discussion on these topics. Examples heard by the inspector were discussions about what the weather is like and what happens to the trees in this season.
- A language poster display was evident in four languages showing translated words such as hello, please and sorry for children and staff to use. This promoted communication between the children and staff.
- The adults working with the children were seen to be sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviour. This was seen when two children argued over moulding dough and the staff member assisted the children to come up with a solution.
- Staff supported an ethos of friendship and working together. This was seen by the inspector when children tables were joined together and they all participated in decorating a long painted Christmas tree.
- The person in charge informed the inspector that they communicated with parents through text messages and email. The inspector witnessed staff communicating verbally on collection and drop off.
- Children sang Christmas carols with delight together in preparation for a future Christmas concert. Staff encouraged all the children to take part in this group activity.
- A child was observed being encouraged by staff to blow her nose, dispose of the tissue and wash her hands after.

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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, the entrance door was secured. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and helped to prevent the risk of children exiting while unsupervised.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition and were free from pinch and crush points.
- The cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The temperature of the warm water in the sanitary accommodations were recorded at 19°C to 19.6°C

Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children, with warm running water liquid soap and a wall mounted paper towel dispenser.
- Children's coats were stored off the ground on wall hooks.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was administered in the service.
- The person in charge informed the inspector that no child attending the service is currently prescribed medicine.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.

Outing:

- The person in charge informed the inspector that the service do not go on outings.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The pedal operated bin in the care room had a broken lid and the pedal was not functioning. A Staff member was observed to handling the lid during the inspection. One staff member placed her hands in the bin to push down the rubbish and did not wash her hands after and continued care of the children in the care room. This poses a risk of cross contamination and infection.

- A staff member was observed to blow her nose and continue to hold the tissue in her hand while touching the tables and chairs in the care room and sit down among children afterwards. This increases the likelihood of contamination and spread of infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was made by the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

- New pedal operated bins have been purchased for the care room. Staff will ensure pedal operated bins are functioning in the future. Staff have been spoken to in relation to infection control, handwashing and infection control measures in relation to nose blowing.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photograph of pedal bins submitted.
- The statement from the registered provider is accepted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1). The attendance book was available in which the inspector observed that all of the children present on the day had their check in and out times completed for the duration of the inspection.

(3) (b) Visitor's record was kept in writing of any person entering the premises and the inspector was asked to sign in and out of the premises.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The available records demonstrated that one of the adults had undertaken First Aid Responder (FAR) and the relevant certification was on display.