

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2021GY006
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballymana Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ballymana National School, Cahergal, Craughwell, Co. Galway
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<b>Eircode:</b>	H91 A3P1
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sarah Cannon
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/11/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM	0
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation 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

The service operates a sessional service for pre-school children aged between 2 and 6 years of age. The service offers an early childhood care and education sessional care programme from 09:30 to 12:30 Monday to Friday. The service is in Ballymana national school, near the village of Craughwell. There is one designated playroom, sanitary facilities and an outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

### Staffing

There are 5 adults working in the service which includes the register provider. The 5 adults working directly with the children in the service have completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education above the minimum requirement of FETAC level 5 to a level 6.

### 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.

(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 ensured there was a named designated person in charge. There was a named person who could deputise as required.
- (b) The registered provider and designated person in charge were present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

Five adult's files were reviewed which included the registered provider:

- (2)(a) There were 8 of the required 10 written validated references from past employers available in respect of the 5 adults working in the service.
- (b) There were 2 written validated references on file in respect of the 5 adults from a source other than the previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 5 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years.
- (d) No staff had worked outside the jurisdiction for 6 months or more while over the age of 18 years of age and so in turn did not require police vetting for that jurisdiction.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that all adults working directly with children had a major award of a minimum of FETAC level 5 to 6 in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained, there were 3 adults working in the service with 10 pre-school children.

## 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 snacks supplied by the parents were healthy and nutritious and consisted of sandwiches, crackers, cheese, fresh fruit pieces, yogurts with milk or water available to children when needed.
- Children's perishable items for their snack were stored in the service fridge.
- Crockery and plates were offered and used during children's snack time 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.
- Children were observed washing their hands at appropriate time throughout the session and were supervised by adults.
- In the playroom the children had the opportunity to rest in a designated cosy area in the corner of the playroom.
- Children were supported by adults in a positive caring way, they interacted with children and picked up on children's individual cues for support.
- There was an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises which was sufficiently spacious to accommodate the numbers of children attending the service.
- The play equipment and materials provided in the outdoor area supported a range of physically energetic activities and play experiences.
- Bibs were provided for children for messy play, arts and crafts.
- The theme of the week was 'Science Week' and children carried out various experiments.
- Children were observed playing in the playroom, at circle time, free play and in the outdoor play area.

#### Supporting Relationships

- A key worker was assigned to each child for support, observations, feedback to parents, recording childrens milestones and to inform curriculum planning.
- Communication with parents is at drop off and collection and each child had a communication book that was sent home at the end of the week.
- Transitions were well planned and in turn the children moved from one activity to another in a calm relaxed manner.
- Adults were observed to show empathy, to speak to children in a caring way throughout the session.
- The play equipment and materials provided in the outdoor area supported a range of physically energetic activities and play experiences.

### 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 for children was available to the children attending the pre-school service. One adult had an in date certificate as a first aid responder.
- (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

The service had in date adequate insurance for 18 preschool children on a sessional basis which was valid to 27/03/2026.