

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025DR005
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Name of Service:	Ashgrove Creche and Montessori School
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Address of Service:	1 Dundrum Road, Churchtown Lower, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D14 NW80
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Name of Registered Provider:	Andrea Byrne
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Duff
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

The private childcare facility provides sessional and part-time care for pre-school children aged two to six years of age. The hours of operation are between 08:00hrs and 13:00hrs and the service can accommodate a maximum of 10 children attending on a part-time basis or 13 children on a sessional basis. School aged care is offered outside the opening hours of the preschool service within the premises. The service is located at ground level in an adapted commercial unit in an urban area of Churchtown, south county Dublin. It is a purposely adapted and has one open plan care room, a kitchen, and sanitary accommodation. There is an enclosed outdoor space to the rear of the premises

Staffing

The service currently employs two staff members. The registered provider does not work in the service but was present on the day of inspection. A member of staff from the registered providers other service arrived subsequent to the inspector's arrival to allow the person in charge leave for a meeting.

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 announced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 (1), (2), (4) Management and Recruitment

Regulation 11 (1), (2) Staffing Levels

Regulation 19(1) (a), (b) Health Welfare and Development of Child

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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required, both were on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

The inspection included a review of the required documentation for three staff members present on inspection. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for each of the three staff members present on inspection. The following documentation was available;

(a)(b) Of the six written and validated references that were required, one was available from a past employer and five were available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for three staff members present on the day of inspection. Garda vetting disclosures from all staff members were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4) Records were available evidencing that three staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent.

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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children for part-time services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were eight children attending the service being supervised by two adults on the day of inspection.

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*
- (1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

A calm and welcoming atmosphere was evident on arrival at the service. The two staff members and eight children were engaged in a range of table-top and floor activities. Both staff members were attentive and responsive to the needs of the children throughout the morning and were observed to respond to children in a calm and timely manner throughout the inspection. Children were engaged in a range of Montessori and play based activities and had the opportunity to move freely to a new activity.

Circle time was interactive with all children having an opportunity to take part in songs mentioning children's names and in conversations about the weather, days of the week and months. A child who didn't want to take part was facilitated to play in a different area of the room.

Identity and belonging were promoted in the classroom with children's photos displayed above coat hangers, a birthday wall showed photos of children and children's families were included on a family tree.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to new activity and for mealtimes. The service provides all food for children. Children had the opportunity to choose snack; water was available throughout the inspection. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment.

Child sized tables and chairs allowed the children to eat and engage in tabletop activities. There was evidence that equipment and materials provided were based on the children's individual needs and emergent interests.

Suitable toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and accessible to children. Children were observed to choose play materials and return them when finished. The room also had cushions and floor mats to facilitate rest or provide a place for children to take a break from activities.

The outdoor areas was well equipped with a range of toys and materials to support play experiences.

Engagement with families and parents is facilitated by the daily sharing of information on the child's day. This is shared through conversations at drop off and collection and supported by electronic means.

On the day of inspection transitions from preschool to home were observed to be friendly and informative to parents or guardians collecting children.