

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY049
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Name of Service:	Burren View Creche & Montessori
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Address of Service:	76A Burren View, Ennis Road, Gort, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 D658
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Name of Registered Provider:	Linda Fallon
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	08/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM	19
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park Hospital, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel and F. Duffy
Title:	Early Years Inspector and Inspection Registration Manager

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).

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Description of service

Burren View Creche and Montessori is a private early years care and education facility providing both Montessori and play based curricula. It has been in operation since 2004 offering a choice of full-time, part-time and sessional services. The service is registered to accommodate children aged from 1 to 6 years old. Daily opening hours are from 08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday and the service is open for 49 weeks of the year. This includes children enrolled on the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, which is facilitated over 38 weeks annually from 09:00 to 12:00.

Burren View Creche and Montessori is in the town of Gort in south Co Galway. There are three care rooms namely- Montessori ECCE, Pre-ECCE and Toddler/Wobbler. In addition, there is a designated sleep room, two children's sanitary areas, one adult toilet, a nappy changing room, kitchen and office. The outdoor areas are located at the side and rear of the service.

Staffing

There are five adults employed in the service including the registered provider and a cleaner, who works outside of the service hours. In addition, a student is currently on work placement.

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.

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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 inspectors wish 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*

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(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider was the person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service as required.

(b) The person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspectors arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. The registered provider was observed carrying out nappy changing and providing cover for staff breaks.

(2) There was one adult employed since the last inspection on 14 August 2025 and one student on work placement. Therefore, both files were reviewed. In addition, the files of two existing staff members whose garda vetting disclosures would have required renewal were reviewed.

(a) Three of the four required written and validated references were from past employers.

(b) The remaining one of four required validated references was from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for both the adult employed since the last inspection and the student on work placement. In addition, garda vetting renewal had been completed for both existing adults demonstrating compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every three years.

(d) Curricula vitae on file for one adult and the student indicated that neither had lived outside the State for a period of six months or longer as adults.

(4) There was evidence that one adult had attained a Level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education. The student on work placement did not require a qualification.

(7)(a) There was evidence that one adult and a student had received induction on commencement of their role,

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including policies and procedures of the service, safety and the staff handbook.

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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at all times.
- (2) The adult child ratios were met. There were 3 adults working directly with 23 early years children in the morning and 3 adults and 1 supervised student working directly with 19 early years children in the afternoon.
- (8)(a) Documentary evidence was available to indicate that there were two adults on the premises while the early years children were on the premises.

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

(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.

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Compliance Information

Supporting children's relationships:

- During the morning snack at 10:00 the key person in the Wobbler/Toddler care room was observed engaging positively with the children. Examples included the staff member assisting a child in a highchair with their food while talking to the children sitting at the table. The atmosphere, at the time, appeared happy and relaxed.
- The staff member in the Pre-ECCE room began their working day just as snack started. The staff member used that time to engage positively with the children- greeting the children individually and warmly, showed affection, chatted with the group about the activities for the day whilst encouraging and supporting them to eat their snack.
- The staff member in the Wobbler/Toddler care was observed comforting and offering a child support. This included cuddles, reassuring words and an ice pack when the child required additional care.
- On speaking with the staff and through observation on inspection in the Pre-ECCE and Montessori ECCE, parents were provided with daily information on their child's experiences in the pre-school including their meals and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times and by phone calls if necessary.
- Children were supported in transitioning between activities in the Pre-ECCE room. The children were given notice of the transitions, were actively engaged in cleaning up after one activity and preparing for the next activity and assisted if required with any tasks they were completing.

Programme of activities:

- A timetable of the routine of the Wobbler/Toddler, Pre-ECCE and Montessori ECCE care rooms was visible on the wall. In line with the service's curriculum policy the registered provider furnished a notebook of curriculum planning for the care rooms which detailed themes from January to May 2026.
- Children in the Wobbler/Toddler and Pre-ECCE care rooms were facilitated in making their own choice in selecting play equipment and activities they wished to engage with which were positioned on easily accessible shelving. Turn taking and sharing was promoted by the key person with children encouraged to give the toy they were finished playing with to a waiting child.
- On the day of inspection, the children in the Pre-EECE room were observed at free play, playing with animal figurines, building/constructing with blocks and interlocking materials, identifying animals displayed on cards and making jigsaws. The children in the Montessori ECCE room were observed at free

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play, listening to stories, singing songs, sharing and discussing what they did over the weekend, building/constructing with blocks and interlocking materials and making jigsaws.

- The children in the Pre-ECCE room and the ECCE Montessori room shared the outdoor play area for 30 minutes on the morning of the inspection. They played on a slide, in a tree house, running and chasing, engaged in imaginative play and bursting bubbles a staff member was blowing from a bubble maker.

Non-Compliance Information

19(1)(a)

The registered provider did not ensure that each child's well-being was facilitated, as demonstrated by the following observations: -

1.

Staff in the outdoor area did not respond to the cues of distress displayed by a child aged 2 years 10 months old. The child was observed visibly upset and crying for a period of 12 minutes between approximately 11.22 and 11.34 and was not comforted by either of the 2 staff present. One staff was heard saying in a loud tone of voice "who's crying, stop crying" but did not attend to the emotional and physical needs of the child. This was at variance with the service's Behaviour Management Policy which stated, "Staff respond to infants in a timely and appropriate way when they cry or become upset".

2.

The basic needs for comfort of a child aged 4 years and 8 months were not met as they were placed to sleep on the floor of the Montessori ECCE care room, potentially impacting the physical comfort of the child. This was at variance to the sleep policy of the service which outlined that floor beds would be provided for sleeping children with a safe and comfortable sleep surface. In conversation, the registered provider stated that the child would not sleep on the mats available.

19(1)(b)

1.

In the Montessori ECCE room staff were observed to make negative comments when communicating with the children. The following examples were observed:-

- On three occasions, between 10.29 and 10.32, one child who was playing with another child was told he was "obsessed" with the other child in front of their peers.
- A staff member was heard saying "If you don't stop doing that to each other there will be no outside".
- The staff member was observed removing a child from the slide because the child was "not listening to me".

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- On another occasion the adult asked the child in front of his peers “What’s wrong with you, you are hyper today”.

These interactions were at variance with the services Behaviour Management Policy which outlined that staff would provide positive guidance, support and encouragement to children using appropriate tones and body language. This could potentially impact the child’s emotional development.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a)

- The submission received from the registered provider did not meet the requirements.
- The submission received from the registered provider did not meet the requirements.

(1)(b)

- The submission received from the registered provider did not meet the requirements.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(a)

- There was no supporting documentation submitted by the registered provider.
- There was no supporting documentation submitted by the registered provider.

(1)(b)

- There was no supporting documentation submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

This regulation 19 (1) (a) points 1 and 2 and (1) (b) point 1 remains non-compliant as the registered provider’s response did not meet the requirements and no corrective actions were submitted to address the findings.

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

Infection Control:

- Children’s bags in the Wobbler/Toddler, Pre-ECCE and Montessori ECCE care rooms were stored on a shelf away from the floor area.
- Perishable food including ham sandwiches and yogurt were observed to be stored in the afternoon in the service fridge in the kitchen preventing the food from spoiling.

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- Hot water, measured at 32°C, dispensing soap and paper towels were available in the children's sanitary areas, along with pedal operated bins for the disposal of paper waste.

Safe Sleep:

- Records of the 10-minute physical sleep checks of children asleep in the designated sleep room were furnished to the inspector throughout the periods children were observed sleeping. Examples included two children asleep from 10:20 and a further 4 children asleep from 13:15. These documented the position, colour, breathing and the name of the staff member who conducted the checks along with the temperature of the sleep rooms.
- The temperature of the designated sleep room was maintained between the recommended 18°C and 22°C for children over 12 months ensuring the safety of the sleeping children. Examples included the temperatures recorded at 10:20, 10:57, 12:40 and 14:05 which were as follows; 20.6°C, 20.6°C, 20.8°C and 21.5°C respectively.
- The blind cord on the window was secured with a hook which was inaccessible by the children.
- Ambient lighting was provided ensuring staff could see the children while carrying out the physical sleep checks and walking around the cots.
- The cots were placed at least 50 centimetres apart.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

The following non-compliances posed a risk of cross contamination to the children:

- An adult changing two children at 10:15 in the Wobbler/Toddler changing area did not wear an apron while changing either child, contrary to the service's infection control policy which outlined that gloves and aprons would be used to clean bodily fluids. In conversation, the staff member was not aware of the requirement for single use aprons to be worn on all nappy changes.
- The pedal on the nappy bin in the Wobbler/Toddler changing area was broken and the adult was observed opening and closing the lid with their hands for each nappy change. In conversation, the adult stated it had been broken "for a few weeks" and the registered provider had been informed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

- The submission received from the registered provider did not meet the requirements.
- The pedal bin in the Wobbler/Toddler changing area has been replaced.

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Supporting documentation submitted

1. There was no supporting documentation submitted by the registered provider.
2. The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The action taken by the registered provider addressed point 2 of the non-compliance identified. The finding at point 1 remains non-compliant as the registered provider's response did not meet the requirements.

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) Certificates were available to evidence that two adults in the service had First Aid Responder (FAR) training completed. The staff roster indicated that a person trained in first aid was available while the early years children were on premises.
- (2) (a) (b) The suitably equipped first aid box, easily accessible by the adults, was available while the children were on the premises.

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

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(b) the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) Written records were available of the monthly fire drills which took place in the service. The date recorded of the most recent fire drill was noted as 28 May 2026 with previous dates including 30 April and 27 March 2026.

(b) Written records were available detailing number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service and the smoke alarms. The firefighting equipment certificate was dated 16 April 2026 and the smoke alarm record was dated 7 May 2026.

(2)(c) Both the firefighting equipment certificate and the smoke alarm record were open to review on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

The registered provider ensured that the service was insured. A certificate was available to evidence that the service was insured for 30 full day care children. The expiry date was noted as 27 March 2027. Details included cover for public liability, fire and theft.