

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC045
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Name of Service:	Bandon Montessori and Creche (Meadowlands)
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Address of Service:	Meadowlands, Bandon, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P72 K406
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Name of Registered Provider:	Aine Murphy
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	19/08/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM	17
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Department, Child & Family Agency, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co Cork P81 PD78
Inspection undertaken by:	Ms. O'Reilly
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
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Description of service

Bandon Montessori and Creche (Meadowlands) is a privately owned full day care service in operation since 2008. This service is registered to cater for children from 0 to 6 years offering a choice of sessional, part time or full day care service and for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service is registered to operate from 08:00 to 18:00 hours each day Monday to Friday. The service is located in a two-storey building that is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of Bandon town. There are two care rooms on the ground floor of which one care room is divided by a low wooden barrier into the Infant Montessori room and the Junior Montessori room. The second care room downstairs is the Senior Montessori room. There is one care room located on the first floor namely the Senior Montessori KMD room. The playroom on the first floor was not in operation at time of inspection. There are two designated sleep rooms adjacent to the Infant Montessori room that are available for children to sleep. There is a secured outdoor play area provided to the rear of the premise.

Staffing

At time of inspection, there were 12 adults associated with the service, and this includes the registered provider and business partner who are not serviced based. All staff who work directly with the children hold a relevant award 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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, and*

(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) There was a person in charge and a deputy to deputise as required.

(b) The named person in charge was present when the inspector arrived at the premise on the day of the unannounced inspection and was present throughout the inspection process.

(2)

Documentation was assessed in relation to the requirements of Regulation 9 for 12 adults. This included the registered provider, her partner and a staff member from the sister service called to do administration work. Ten staff were employed to work directly with the children in the service.

(a) There were thirteen validated references on file from past employers.

(b) There were eleven validated references available from sources other than previous employers.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of each of the twelve adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Two police vetting records was available on file for the two adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more, while over the age of 18 years.

(4) The ten adults who worked directly with the children all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, or an equivalent qualification, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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)

On the day of the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the three rooms in operation on day of inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained in the following rooms.

Infant Montessori room

There were 4 children aged between 1 and 2 years present on a full day care basis with 1 adult in attendance in the morning and evening session.

Junior Montessori room

There were 5 children aged between 2 and 3 years attending full day care with 1 adult in attendance in the morning and evening session.

There was a floating staff member available to assist with the care of the children between the two rooms.

Senior Montessori Room

There were 8 children present aged between 3 to 5 years with 1 adult in attendance in the morning and afternoon

The person in charge was observed to assist when required in all three rooms in operation on day of inspection

Senior Montessori KMD Room (first floor)

This room was not in operation at time of inspection.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (i)

A sample of 10 of the children’s registration forms were reviewed and were found to contain all of the elements of information as required by Regulation 15(1) (a) to (i) inclusive.

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (h) Electronic record of when each child arrived and departed from the service each day was recorded on each child's online application.
- (i) Electronic records of the weekly staff roster indicated the time the staff commenced, finished and lunch time break each day.
- (k) Electronic records of all accidents/incidents were individually recorded under the child's name and sent to the parent/guardian to read and sign, with details on how they are dealt with or treated.

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

Basic needs:

- The staff members were observed speaking with the children during snack time and using it as an opportunity to enhance social interaction with the children which promoted a relaxed atmosphere.
- Support and assistance offered by the adults during snack and mealtimes was appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children in their care. For example, in the Infant and Junior Montessori rooms the children had the opportunity to feed themselves. The available cutlery were suitably sized and easily handled by the children.

- It was observed that children’s cues for tiredness were addressed. Children were prepared for sleep in a kind and caring manner; tight clothing was removed, and soothers and comfort blankets offered as required in the Infant and Junior Montessori rooms.
- The adults were observed to demonstrate patience and kindness in their interactions with the children, as was noted when the children’s efforts were readily acknowledged and when children were calmly assisted to resolve minor conflicts.
- An online application to share information with parents regarding their children’s activities of daily living was in place that included food and drink, sleep time, play activities, toilet and nappy changing.
- Children’s toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Independent use of the toilet was encouraged. The staff members were observed to supervise and assist where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying, and the children were supported and encouraged prior to eating, post toileting and nappy changing and post outdoor play in the Senior Montessori room.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children within the care rooms outside of allocated mealtimes.
- There was adequate space in the care rooms to accommodate a variety of play activities. A mixture of adult led play and child directed play was facilitated in each room and during outdoor play.

Physical and Material Environment

- The Montessori rooms in operation on the ground floor were child friendly, bright, laid out with materials largely accessible to the children.
- The air temperatures of the playrooms were between 19°Celsius and 20°Celsius.
- There were an adequate number of child sized tables and chairs available in each of the Montessori rooms. Highchairs were available for the younger children.
- The shelving was set low in the rooms to display play materials which were mostly plastic and wooden in nature and easily washable. The low shelving facilitated easy access to the materials by the children.
- The Infant and Junior Montessori rooms had age-appropriate equipment such as, shape sorters, activity centres, pull along toys, handheld toys for example farm and zoo animals and construction blocks and ride on toys.
- The room for the older children had interest areas that included, a wide range of tabletop activities and games to encourage companiable interaction. There were cars and trucks, different sized blocks and a variety of art and craft materials. a fine motor skills area, a home corner suitably furnished with dolls, buggies, dress up and small utensils to prompt imagination and pretend play.
- Play materials in general were found to be in a good state of repair with no pinch points or sharp edges.

- There was a soft seating area in the playrooms and staff informed me that this area allowed a child to opt out of play activities and relax if they so wished.
- There was a secured outdoor play area which had a hard and an artificial grass surface area. There was ride on and push toys and a slide to encourage the children to master gross motor skill play. The children were observed playing outdoors in group and singular play closely supervised by staff.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The children appeared to enjoy the nutritious food provided by their parents/guardians and were afforded ample time to eat and drink at a relaxed pace. All of the snacks and meals observed being eaten on the day were healthy, sufficient and nutritious.
- There was a hot meal provided by the parents/guardians and reheated for all the children in attendance.
- The children had access to their own labelled water bottles so that they could help themselves to drinks when they were thirsty

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:

- Cleaning agents were stored out of the children's reach.
- First aid boxes were appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- Water temperatures at the wash hand basins were thermostatically controlled, so as not to exceed 43°C.
- The staff members bags and belonging were stored out of reach of the children.
- The windows at adult height were opened in the playrooms and in the sleep room in operation on day of inspection.
- There was a handrail fitted at child height for children's use on the staircase and the staircase was well lit.

- The outdoor area was noted to be fully enclosed and adequately secured.

Infection Control:

- Suitable handwashing facilities were available in the toilet and nappy changing facilities. Warm water, liquid soap and sensory wall mounted paper towel dispensers were in place. Handwashing by the children was observed before lunch time meal and after using the toilet and following outdoor play.
- Personal waste including used tissues, and all cleaning waste was appropriately disposed of in foot operated pedal bins in the service.
- Non-contact bins were available for the storage of used nappies.
- The adults and children had access to a sufficient number of toilets and wash hand basins on day of inspection.
- In general, the playrooms, toilets and nappy changing facilities in the service were visibly clean on day of inspection. There were weekly cleaning schedules on display.
- There was a large fridge available in the kitchen to store the children's perishable foods for their snacks and meals.

Safe Sleep:

- There were two designated sleep rooms located beside the Infant and Junior Montessori rooms. There was only one sleep room in operation on day of inspection. There were an adequate number of standard cots with correct fitting mattresses. Each of the mattresses was fitted with a waterproof mattress cover. It was observed that sleeping children had physical observations conducted, recording position, colour and breathing of the child. The air temperature of the sleep room registered at 20°Celsius. There were stackable beds available for the children over the age of 2 years that required a sleep. Individual clean linen was available for each sleep equipment.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Adequate distance was not observed between each cot and stacking bed when children were asleep in the Junior Montessori sleep room on day of inspection.
2. One of the waterproof cot mattress covers was torn which compromised thorough cleaning after use, increasing the potential risk of cross infection.
3. The following are areas observed on the ground floor where surfaces were not provided with a smooth, durable, easily cleanable surface therefore increasing the potential risk of cross infection.
 - (a) There was a number of areas visible at child height in the Junior Montessori playroom and sleep room where wall paint had peeled off.

- (b) While the child height wooden barrier between the Infant Montessori room and the Junior Montessori room was painted. The paint was no longer present in the upper part of the wooden barrier.
- (c) While the person in charge stated that the nappy changing area had been renovated. The renovations to the wall at one side of the nappy changing room had not been fully completed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA 2) received from the registered provider the following was stated:

Infection Control:

1. Following a discussion with staff it was advised, that the second sleep room should have been used to avoid space issues between cots and low beds on day of inspection. This issue will be further discussed at next staff meeting about ensuring the second sleep room beside the Infant +Junior Montessori room is used when a lot of the children in attendance require a sleep after lunch each day.
2. In the written response, the registered provider stated that a new mattress was purchased. The manager of the service will include in the monthly maintenance checklist, the checking of each cot mattress and waterproof mattress cover in the service are in a proper state of repair.
3. In the written response the registered provider stated a painter visited the service and has undertaken to commence the following painting of walls and woodwork in the service by mid-October 2025.
 - (a) The Junior Montessori playroom and sleep room will be painted.
 - (b) The child height wooden barrier between the Infant Montessori room and the Junior Montessori room will be painted.
 - (c) The painting and renovations to the nappy changing room located on the ground floor will be completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Photographic evidence of one of the sleep rooms where the cots were located was forward to the Early Years Inspector. From the photographic evidence provided, there appeared to be adequate space provided between each cot.
2. A copy of the purchase invoice for the new mattress and a copy of the monthly maintenance checklist template that included the checking of the cots and low beds, was forward to the Early Years Inspector.

3. A copy of the email, of painters quotation for the redecoration of service and the timeline given of when the works will be commencing, mid-October 2025, was forward to the Early Years Inspector.

Summary Comment

The registered provider response and evidence submitted was assessed. The service deemed to meet the regulatory requirement of Regulation 23 (1)(2).

Regulation 23 (3) (a)(b)(c) The painting and renovations to the service, as stated in reply, will commence mid-October 25. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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) There were two staff working in the service that had a current certified First Aid Responder certificate (FAR) on day of inspection.

(2) (a) There were sufficiently stocked first aid boxes available in the service, which was safety stored out of reach of children.

(b) At all times when the service was in operation, first aid supplies were accessible to the adults if in the event that a child may require treatment.

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

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

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A record of monthly fire drills carried out was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place on the 17 July 2025
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced in September 2024. The emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced on 14 March 2025.
- (4)
- The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was insured. Insurance was valid until 27/03/2026.