

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC046
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Name of Service:	Bandon Montessori and Daycare
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Address of Service:	18 Rosewood Lawn, New Cork Road, Bandon, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P72 VK25
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Name of Registered Provider:	Aine Murphy
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	15/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	29
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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 Daycare is a privately owned early years service in operation since 2004. This service provides education and care to 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 current opening hours are from 08:00 to 18:00 hours each day Monday to Friday.

Bandon Montessori and Daycare is situated in a residential area on the suburbs of Bandon town in Co. Cork. It operates from a purpose built detached two storey building. There are three care rooms in use, namely the Infant Montessori room, the Junior Montessori room and an upstairs care room, referred to as Montessori Senior room. There is an outdoor area located to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There were 13 adults associated with the service. Ten staff that worked directly with the children and a relief staff member from a sister service. The registered provider and her partner are not serviced based. The eight staff present at time of inspection were involved in the direct care of the early years children who attended. All staff who work with the children hold a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent qualification, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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*
- (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) There was a named person in charge and a deputy to deputise as required.
- (b) The 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.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service.

(2)

Documentation was assessed in relation to the requirements of Regulation 9 for 13 adults. This included the registered provider, her partner and at the request of the person in charge, a relief staff that came to assist with the care of the children from the sister service. Ten staff were employed to work directly with the children in the service.

- (a) There were sixteen validated references on file from past employers.
 - (b) There were ten validated references available from sources other than previous employers.
 - (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of each of the thirteen adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) A police vetting record was available on file for three of the adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more, while over the age of 18 years.
- (4) The 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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- During the period of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in attendance.
- (2) Taking into consideration the age range of the children present in the service and the duration of their stay, the adult to child ratios were maintained in line with the required ratios, as follows:
- On the day of inspection there were 31 children present in the morning and 29 children in the afternoon with eight adults directly supervising them.
- Infant Montessori room – there were 6 children of which 5 were aged between 1 and 2 years and one was aged over two years. Two of the children were settling in and the 4 remaining children attended part time/full day care with two adults in attendance.
 - The Junior-Montessori room – there were 10 children in attendance, all were aged between 2- and 3-years. All children present were attending the full day care service with 2 adults in attendance until 11:30 hours and then a third member of staff commenced.
 - The Senior Montessori room – there were 15 children all aged over three years. One child attended sessional service, one child attended part time. Thirteen children attended full day care service with two adults in attendance until midday when a relief staff member from the sister service came to assist while the inspection took place.

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:

- (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

On the day of inspection, a sample of each of the following records were reviewed

- (i) On review of the hard copy of the staff roster for the last three weeks including the week the inspection took place. The weekly staff roster indicated the time the staff commenced and finished in the service 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

1(a)

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.
- The food eaten by the children for their snacks and dinner meal was appetising and healthy and was provided by each child's respective parents or guardians.
- Children were prepared for sleep in a kind and caring manner, tight clothing was removed, and soothers were offered as required prior to sleep time.
- The requirement for sleep was child lead in the Infant Montessori room. All children were observed sleeping in suitable sleep equipment during the inspection.
- 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.
- There was adequate space in the care room to accommodate a variety of play activities. A mixture of adult led play and child directed play was facilitated in the playrooms and during outdoor play. The children were observed playing outdoors closely supervised by staff.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The Montessori rooms were child friendly, bright, laid out with materials largely accessible to the children.
- There were an adequate number of age-appropriate chairs available for the younger children and child sized tables and chairs for the older children in the playrooms.
- There was low shelving or containers available in each of the three Montessori rooms that facilitated easy access to the play materials by the children.
- For the younger children in attendance, there were a selection of age-appropriate equipment such as, a selection of books, shape sorters, activity centres, pull along toys, handheld toys, sound making materials and construction blocks.
- There was a selection of tabletop activities and games for the older children to encourage companionable interaction. There were cars and trucks, different sized blocks and a variety of art and craft materials.
- It was noted that each care room was provided with many windows that could be opened easily providing natural ventilation. The toilet areas and nappy changing rooms were provided with either natural or mechanical ventilation.
- The outdoor play area was located to the rear of the premises and was secured by high walls and secured gates. The outdoor area was divided into 3 separate areas by low fencing. There was a grass area mainly used by older children for ball games, tyre play. A second area was fitted with artificial grass and was provided with a playhouse; The third area was provided with roof cover and was fitted with shock absorbing ground surface. This area was provided with low play equipment, push toys and shatter proof mirrors and balance beam. There was a storage shed available in an area not used by the children to store the play materials and equipment.

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

- All of the snacks and meals observed being eaten on the day were healthy, sufficient and nutritious such as yogurts and different fruits at the mid-morning snack.
- There was a hot meal provided by the parents/guardians and reheated for all children attending full day care service.

- The children had access to their own labelled water bottles so that they could help themselves to drinks when they were thirsty.
- The children were provided with appropriate cutlery and crockery at snack and mealtimes and were afforded ample time to eat and drink at a relaxed pace.
- There was a fridge available in each care room to store the children's food for their snacks and meals.

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 box was appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- The staff members bags and belonging were stored out of reach of the children.
- Emergency fire exit doors were unobstructed.
- The partially covered outdoor play areas were adequately secured.
- The staff kitchen was not accessible to the children so they could not access any hazardous materials such as sharp knives or cleaning products stored there.
- There were no visible flexes or electric cabling observed within children's reach in the playrooms.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap and paper towels were in place. Handwashing by the children was observed before mid-morning snack and lunch time meal and after nappy changing and using the toilet and following outdoor play.
- The children had access to a sufficient number of toilets, nappy changing facilities and wash hand basins which were clean and in a good state of repair.
- There were step ups and toilet seats available for the children's comfort and safety.
- The children's soothers were suitably stored in individual plastic containers when not in use.
- Personal waste including used tissues, and all cleaning waste was appropriately disposed of in foot operated pedal bins in the service.
- Non-contact bin was available for the storage of used nappies.

- The children nappy changing toiletries were situated within labelled baskets beside the nappy changing unit.
- 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.

Safe Sleep:

- A designated sleep room was located beside the Infant Montessori room. There were 5 standard cots. Each of the mattresses was fitted with a waterproof mattress cover. There were stackable beds available for the children over the age of 2 years that required a sleep.
- It was observed that sleeping children had ten-minute physical observations conducted, recording position, colour and breathing of the child.
- The air temperature of the sleep room registered at 21°Celsius.
- Individual clean linen was available for each sleep equipment. There was an adequate distance observed between each cot when children were asleep in the sleep room and between each stacking bed in the Junior Montessori room when it was converted into a sleep room after lunch on day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. There was no thermostatically controlled hot water from the following wash hand basins:
The wash hand basin located in the nappy changing area in the Infant Montessori Room.
The wash hand basins located in the Junior Montessori Room children's toilets.
2. In general, it was found that the water from the thermostatically controlled wash hand basin taps were not spontaneous, and the water pressure was low throughout the service at various times during the inspection. This would impede effective hand washing, increasing the risk of cross infection

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The registered provider stated that they had engaged a plumber to address the issue, and in the meantime, arranged for the children to use an alternate sink which had instantaneously available hot water. The registered provider stated the plumber will be on call to deal with issues related to hot water should they arise going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

A photograph of a child using the alternate sink was sent in.

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation has been met. This issue will be assessed at 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 three staff working in the service on day of inspection that had current certified First Aid Responder certificate (FAR)

(2) (a) There was a 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 fire fighting 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 23 June 2025
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced in September 2024.
- (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, with insurance for 51 children valid until 27 March 2026. The records detailed the category of service covered, full day care. The name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.