

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC346		
Name of Service:	Réiltín Beag Montessori		
Address of Service:	S.G.M.I., New Inn, Glanmire, Co Cork		
Eircode:	T45 VX70		
Name of Registered Provider:	Aishling Kenefick		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	10/09/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440		
Inspection undertaken by:	D Prendergast		
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		

Description of service

Réiltín Beag Montessori was established in 2014. It is a privately owned, sessional service, that is registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years. This includes children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.

Located in an urban area of Glanmire in Co Cork, the service operates from a prefabricated building, on the grounds of Scoil Ghleanna Maghair Íochtaigh. It consists of one care room, with adjoining sanitary facilities and a storage room. A designated outdoor play space is directly accessible from the care room. Staff sanitary facilities are available in an adjacent building.

Staffing

There are four adults employed at the early years service and directly involved in the care of the children. This includes the registered provider and two adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. All of the staff members were present on the day of the inspection.

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 registered provider, 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) The registered provider was in charge of operating the early years service and a named deputy had also been assigned. This information was displayed in writing.
 - (b) The duration of the inspection was facilitated by the registered provider. The staff records indicated that either the registered provider or the deputy was available at all times, while the children were present.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider, it was determined that one new staff member had been employed since the previous inspection. On the day of inspection, a student was present on an educational work placement programme. A total of two files were reviewed.
- (a) Four written and validated references were required in total. Of these, three had been provided by past employers.
 - (b) One further reference had been obtained from a source other than a previous employer.
 - (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the staff member. Garda vetting was not required for the student, who was aged under 18 years.
 - (d) Not applicable, as there was no evidence that international police vetting was required.
- (4) Evidence of attainment of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications, was on file for the adult.

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) The staffing levels were adequate in meeting the needs of the children.
- (3) At the time of inspection, the adult to child ratios exceeded the requirements of the regulation. There were 4 adults responsible for the direct care of 15 children, who were aged 2 ½ to 4 ½ years.

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:*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) Information regarding the type of service provided and the age range of children accommodated, was available in writing.
- (h) Daily child attendance records were documented in a roll book. Records dated between 28 August 2025 and 10 September 2025 were reviewed and were found to have been completed in full.
- (k) There were two accident and incident records dated within the current year. These records detailed the incidents which had occurred and both were signed by a member of staff and the relevant child's parent.

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 children's mid-morning snack was facilitated shortly before 11.00am. This part of the daily routine was observed to be relaxed and unhurried, with conversation and social interaction encouraged. Staff members were readily available to assist any child who required help to open lunch boxes or food packaging.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children both during and outside of the designated snack time. Over the course of the morning, the children were observed to retrieve their drinks from their bags, as needed.
- When accessing the adjoining sanitary facility, the children were supervised by an adult, who encouraged self-care and independence, through verbal prompts.
- A cosy area was available in the care room, for any child that required quiet time or space to relax.
- Adequate space was provided within the indoor environment for the children to freely explore their chosen activities and interest items.

Programme of activities:

- The setting implemented a play based, emergent curriculum and followed Montessori pedagogy. The registered provider advised that the curriculum was predominantly informed by the children's interests, as well as seasonal events.
- Throughout the morning, the adults promoted language development through informal discussion, for example, when talking to the children about sea creatures and by acknowledging their activities. Language was also encouraged through singing, story time and the incorporation of Irish words and phrases.
- An actively engaging environment was facilitated for the children, who appeared focused as they participated in free play tasks, such as imaginary play, construction, creating with play dough and making jigsaws. The children also had the option of moving between the indoor and outdoor environments.

Access to the outdoor area provided further opportunities for exploration, supported gross motor skill development and helped to promote a calm atmosphere.

- Staff members were observed to positively acknowledge the children's interests and achievements, as was noted when a child showed one of the adults the house they had built. The adult responded with encouraging words, smiled at the child and took a photograph of the house for the child's scrapbook.

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:

- Entry to the rear of the school grounds, where the service was located, was via a secured gate. This minimised the risk of unauthorised access.
- An enclosure of fencing and gates ensured adequate security of the outdoor play environment.
- A restrictive opening device was fitted on the cupboard under the sink in the care room, which prevented children from accessing the contents within.
- The warm water at the children's wash hand basins was recorded below 43°C, which minimised the risk of scalding.
- There were no blind cords accessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the children's reach.

Infection control:

- Good handwashing practices were supported through the availability of warm running water at each of the wash hand basins, along with liquid soap and disposable paper towels. The children were supervised by adults, as they washed their hands in preparation for the mid-morning snack and were reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- Suitable storage was in place for the children's belongings; cubby shelving was used for their bags and wall hooks were provided for hanging their coats.
- The tables used for snack time were sanitised before and after the meal break and the floor was also swept, when the children had finished eating.
- Adequate ventilation of the care room and sanitary area was ensured through open windows.

Fire safety:

- There were no fire safety concerns noted at the time of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

The available refrigerator was not used to store the children's perishable snacks, which were observed to include cheese, yogurts and ham sandwiches. This increased the risk of food spoilage.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The written reply from the registered provider outlined that the children's perishable snacks are placed into the refrigerator upon their arrival each morning. However, on the day of the inspection, the registered provider had been speaking with a parent when the inspector arrived and subsequently forgot to put the snacks into the fridge. This daily morning task has now been allocated to another member of staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was forwarded.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted have adequately addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 23.

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) Evidence was available to demonstrate that two of the adults held current First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and that at least one of these adults was rostered to work at the service during the hours of operation.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

Insufficient first aid supplies were maintained. All of the available sterile eye pad dressings, medium wound dressings and extra-large wound dressings were noted to be out of date. It was acknowledged that a receipt of purchase for replacement first aid materials, was forwarded following the inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

New first aid supplies were purchased on the day of the inspection and corresponding receipts were forwarded. The first aid box is accessible on the left side of the classroom, on a shelf inside the main door. As a preventive measure, a monthly check of the first aid box has been allocated to a member of staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

A receipt for the purchase of the new first aid supplies and photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The corrective action implemented by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 25.

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)
- (b) Documentation provided by a fire safety company demonstrated that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on 12 September 2024.
- (4) The service's fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the care room.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The last recorded fire drill was noted to have taken place on 4 February 2025. Prior to this, the most recently documented fire drill date was 19 November 2024. Fire drills should be conducted on a monthly basis, to ensure that children and staff members are familiar with safe fire evacuation procedures.
- (b) A record of servicing dated within the previous 12 months, was unavailable for the smoke alarm. This is required to ensure efficient functioning of the smoke detection and alarm system, in the event of a fire.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (a) Fire drills had been carried out at the service every three months, however staff are now aware that a fire drill must be carried out every month. A reminder in relation to the monthly fire drill has been added to the calendar for the remaining school year and this task has been allocated to a member of staff.
- (b) The main school is responsible for the annual maintenance of the fire equipment and could not provide a record of the most recent servicing of the smoke alarms. A fire safety company has since attended the service to test and service the smoke alarms. This fire safety company will continue to carry out an annual service on the smoke alarms.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1)
- (a) A copy of the service's recent fire drill.
- (b) A certificate of servicing for the fire detection and alarm system.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances identified under this regulation have been adequately addressed.