

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR038
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Name of Service:	Broadford Montessori Preschool
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Address of Service:	Ballinteer Scouts Den Ballinteer Dublin 16
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Eircode:	D16X9V0
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Name of Registered Provider:	Emma Mc Cann
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	26/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Brunel Building Heuston South Quarter Saint John's Road West Dublin 8. D08 X01F
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

Description of service

Broadford Montessori is a privately owned early years' service located in a residential area in south county Dublin. Early education and care is provided on a sessional basis for children aged 2 years to 6 years between the hours of 8am and 12pm Monday to Friday. The programme of care is facilitated through a blend of a Montessori and play based curriculum. The service operates from one large open plan room. This premises is used by a local scout's group, outside of the service's operating hours. The service has use of an outdoor area to the side of the premises.

Staffing

There are a total of 3 adults employed in the service including the registered provider. The registered provider works directly with the children. On the day of the inspection, there were 2 adults caring for 18 children.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2) and (4)-Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(3) Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15 Record of a pre-school child

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

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of Child.

Regulation 28-Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection focused on the preschool room.

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
- (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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived to the service.
- (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.
- (2) The files of the registered provider and two staff who work in the service were reviewed.
- (a) Three written and verified references were available from past employers.
- (b) Three written and verified references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and two adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International Police vetting was available for one staff member who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that three adults who worked directly with the children in the service held 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.

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 registered provider ensured there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2) During the Inspection, there were 2 adults caring for 18 children aged 3years - 5 years old. The minimum ratios of adults to children was maintained at all times during the 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.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1) The records of 10 children who were attending the service were reviewed and contained the following particulars:

(a) The name and date of birth of each child.

(b) The date on which each child first attended the service.

(c) There was an area on the registration form where the date when a child would cease to attend the service will be recorded.

(d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service were also available.

(e) Names and contact details of other adults who were authorised to collect children were available.

(f) The documentation available supported the recording of specific illnesses, allergies, disabilities and dietary preferences for children.

(g) The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner was available.

(h) Parents had indicated which immunisations their children had received.

(i) There was written parental consent for medical treatment of children in the event of an emergency.

(4) The registered provider was aware that the records referred to above must be retained for a period of two years after the child leaves the service.

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

A busy and welcoming atmosphere was evident on arrival at the service and throughout the inspection. Children were engaged in a range of activities and had the opportunity to move freely to a new activity. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed children by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. Language used by the staff members was observed to be encouraging, supportive and informative. Identity and belonging were promoted in the classroom with children's family photos, and artwork displayed on the walls of the care room and visible to children. Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to a new activity and to remind them of snack time. The service uses a rolling snack time allowing children to eat when they feel hungry. Drinks were readily available within the care room. The children brought snacks from home. Snack time was a social occasion with children and adults sitting together having the opportunity to chat about the morning. 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. Equipment was rotated mid-morning to allow children have access to different materials, however, children also had an opportunity to keep toys they hadn't finished with. The room had a mix of Montessori materials, toys and equipment which were laid out on low level shelving units and accessible to children. 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 area was equipped with a range of toys and materials to support play experiences. Children enjoyed freedom of movement in the outdoor play area and were observed to engage in a range of activities without restriction, this supports their social, cognitive, gross and fine motor development.

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.

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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorized persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. In addition, the outdoor play area was securely gated restricting unauthorized persons from gaining access to this area and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Toys and equipment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- The outdoor area was observed to be suitable and safe with domestic bins stored out of children's reach and all outdoor play materials maintained and in good condition free from hazards.
- Anti-febrile medication and cleaning agents were stored in a locked press or out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Both the indoor and outdoor environment were maintained in a clean condition. Daily and weekly cleaning checklists were followed by staff and displayed on the walls in the service.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and pedal operated bins.
- The children and adults washed their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored in their original packaging out of reach of children. Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of procedures to safeguard children when administering medicine. This included getting written consent from parents or guardians, having a second staff member present as a witness during administration, and maintaining detailed records shared with parents or guardians upon collection. A care plans was available for a child who required regular or emergency medication.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

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 sessional service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for the 22 children and an expiry date of 27 March 2025.