

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR050
Name of Service:	Poppins Montessori
Address of Service:	2 Highfield Drive Marley Grange Estate Rathfarnham Dublin 16
Eircode:	C16C924
Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Hosey
Service type:	Sessional
Date(s) of Inspection:	11/02/2025
No of pre-school children:	AM 16
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Saint John's Road West, Dublin 8. D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	Rachael Duff
Title:	Early Years Inspector
Conditions if applicable	Not applicable

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).

Description of service

The service is a privately owned service which was established by the current registered provider in 2002. Early education and care is provided on a sessional basis to children. It caters for children aged 3 to 6 years of age and operates each day from 9.15am to 12.45pm, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from an open plan purpose-built room attached to the domestic dwelling of the registered provider in Rathfarnham, south county Dublin. The children also have access to a playroom in the registered provider's own home and a large enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There were three adults present on the day of inspection and all of them were working directly with the children including the registered provider.

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 19 -Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

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

Regulation 25 First Aid.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures

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 inspector arrived unannounced 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 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) Evidence was available to show that three adults who worked directly with the children in the service and the registered provider 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.
 (3) During the Inspection, there were 3 adults caring for 16 children aged 3-5 years old.

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.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a pre-school child shall not be-

- (a) permitted access to the internet,*
- (b) photographed, or*
- (c) recorded*

while attending the pre-school service other than in accordance with the terms of the consent of a parent or guardian given in the form specified in the service's policy on the use of the internet and photographic and recording devices.

Compliance Information

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

A calm and welcoming atmosphere was evident on arrival at the service. Three staff members and sixteen children were engaged in a range of table-top activities. Staff members were attentive and responsive to the needs of the children throughout the day and were observed to respond to children in a calm and relaxed manner throughout the inspection. Language used by the three staff members was observed to be encouraging, supportive and informative. For example, when children shared information with the inspector about their Antarctica display, staff supported them with reminders and prompts about a recent visitor to the service thus supporting their ability to recall and retell the experience.

Identity and belonging were promoted in the classroom with children's family photos, community wall and artwork displayed on the walls of the care room and visible to children. 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 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.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to new activity and for lunch time. Children brought in their snack from home. Snack time was a social occasion. Three staff were observed sitting chatting with the children while they ate. 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. Suitable toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and accessible to children. On the day of inspection, the children took part in a music workshop provided by an external agency.

The outdoor area was well 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.

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 registered provider 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 prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Grapes and tomatoes in children’s lunch boxes were observed to be cut into appropriate bite sized pieces.
- Toys and equipment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Radiators were thermostatically controlled.
- The outdoor areas were observed to be suitable, safe and secure 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 to include disinfectant sprays and liquids were stored on high shelves and in high cupboards.

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 facility was 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.
- The children's lunches were stored in the fridge in their room.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, it was observed that all emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction.

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) The service provided evidence that an adult trained in First Aid Response was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the service.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drill took place on 9 January 2025.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced on 14 August 2024. Smoke alarms were serviced on 12 February 2025.
- (2)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- (4) Procedures detailing the steps to take in the event of a fire were displayed on the door in the care room.