

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS100
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Name of Service:	Eager Beavers Montessori
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Address of Service:	3 Beverly Downs, Knocklyon, Dublin 16
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Name of Registered Provider:	Patricia Robinson
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	09/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor Brunel Building Heuston South Quarter St. John's Road West Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	L.A Webster and N.Ruddy
Title:	Early Years Inspector and Inspection and Registration Manager

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
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Description of service

Eager Beavers Montessori is a privately owned service that operates from the registered provider's home located in South Dublin. The service operates at a sessional capacity, delivering the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9 to 12:30pm Monday to Friday over 38 weeks of the year. The premises consists of one care room, a cosy reading corner, sanitary facilities and a secure outdoor area located at the rear of the residence.

Staffing

This is a single-handedly run service, the registered provider was present and working directly with the children on the day of 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 and safety. 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider 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*

(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) (b) The registered provider was the designated person in charge and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) It was evident through discussion with the registered provider that they operate the service single handedly with another adult available to provide assistance as required. The records of the registered provider and emergency person were reviewed.
 - (a) Two written and verified references were available from a past employer in relation to both adults.
 - (b) Two written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer in relation to both adults.
 - (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and emergency person. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was not required, as no adult had lived in a state outside of Ireland for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The registered provider, working directly with the children, held a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 7 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1) There were 9 pre-school children being cared for by 1 adult on the morning of inspection.
- (3) Ratios were maintained during the inspection. One adult was caring for 9 children aged 3 years to 5 years.
- (8) (c) The registered provider ensured that the second person, who was familiar with the service was available in an emergency. This person was available in the service on the day 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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

(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) (a)-(i) Eleven children's records were assessed. Information with the relevant details were outlined in (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), and (i) of the regulation.
- (3) (c) All child records were available for inspection.
- (4) The registered provider advised all records are retained for the required period.

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.

Compliance Information

Basic Needs:

- On the day of inspection, the children were observed to be engaging in various forms of play, moving freely throughout the care room.
- The registered provider regularly checked in with the children if they needed to use the toilet throughout the morning to ensure that their needs were met.
- When transitioning from the outdoor area for snack time, the children were supported to engage in good handwashing practices to promote their personal hygiene.
- Individually labelled bottles of water were freely available to the children throughout the morning.
- During snack time, children's lunch boxes were laid out to encourage the children to independently pick up their box. Individual plates were available to the children so that they had a choice to use their lunch box or a plate for eating.

Supporting Relationships:

- The registered provider was observed to be very kind, caring and respectful with their interactions towards the children, which maintained the calm and relaxed atmosphere of the room.
- While engrossed in activities, the registered provider was observed to show great interest in the children's creativity and curiosity, which evidently showed the children's ease and comfort with the registered provider.
- There was further evidence displayed within the reading corner outside of the pre-school room that supported the children's sense of identity and relationships through a 'family wall' which had photographs of the children's families, recognisable community landmarks within the locality, and photos of children's transitions from pre-school to primary school.

- The registered provider promoted play and engagement through music time and additional conversations throughout snack time by telling funny stories and talking to the children about healthy food choices.
- Children were supported by the registered provider to assess the risk associated with some of the play equipment that promoted risky play to enhance their learning and understanding during play.

Physical and Material Environment

- The care room was spacious and inviting, providing a calm atmosphere for the children.
- There were clear, designated play areas for the children to play and explore in, including a cosy area, book area, construction, home corner and space to engage in literacy and numeracy activities.
- Children played independently with materials and sought support from the registered provider when needed.
- The tables and chairs in place were child sized, age and stage appropriate to provide a place for children to sit, play and eat.

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:

- The door to the service was secure upon the inspector's arrival. The registered provider attended to the door to allow access to visitors into an internal hallway. A second door between the care room and front door prevented any unauthorised persons accessing the premises without the registered provider's knowledge.
- The second, internal door was promptly secured throughout the inspection process; that prevented unsupervised children leaving the service.
- There was a secure safety gate on the stairs outside of the pre-school room that prevented any children from wandering elsewhere in the building .

- The outdoor area was safe and secure, allowing children to freely engage in a range of play activities. There were a range of toys and play equipment outdoors that were in good condition and free from any hazards.
- There was a secure, locked storage shed located in the outdoor area that was not easily accessed by children.
- All cleaning equipment was safely stored away and out of reach of children.
- All lunch boxes were stored safely in the fridge to avoid any food potentially becoming spoiled.
- Through observation, the registered provider closely supervised the children throughout snack time to identify any potential food hazards that may pose a potential choke risk.
- Through discussion, the registered provider disclosed that the premises is a nut free/popcorn zone and was knowledgeable surrounding the danger posed by beaded necklaces which would be immediately removed if a child was wearing them.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper handtowels dispensed from wall mounted units within the sanitary area were readily available for hygienic handwashing and drying.
- Children were observed washing their hands when transitioning in from the outdoor area before their snack.
- Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used paper towels and waste.
- A cleaning record was in place and the premises throughout were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not given at the time of inspection; written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The registered provider was familiar with the practices required for the administration of medication to a child attending the service.

Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills had been carried out and the registered provider and emergency person were familiar with the fire safety evacuation procedures of the service. Fire exits were unobstructed and in discussion with the registered provider, they rotated exits to mimic the presence of a fire, and used the alarm bell to ensure children were familiar in the event of a real emergency.

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 registered provider was trained in First Aid Response (FAR), expiry date August 2027 and was immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2) (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, and unobstructed if needed to access quickly within the pre-school room.
- (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available at all times to the children attending 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 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 in writing as kept of all fire drills that had taken place on the premises, the last recorded fire drill was dated the 10 April 2025.
- (b) There were records available detailing the maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire/smoke detection system in the premises dated the 8 August 2024.
- (4) Notices were visibly displayed, detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.