

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS127			
Name of Service:	Bright Sparks Montessori & Daycare			
Address of Service:	18a St. Anthony's Avenue, Clondalkin, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Co. Dublin			
Eircode:	D22 X234			
Name of Registered Provider:	Laura Cullen			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	21/08/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	12
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown health centre, Loughlinstown drive, County Dublin.			
Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill			
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

Bright Sparks Montessori and Daycare is one of two services privately operated by the registered provider. The service is registered to provide full day, part-time and sessional care and offers an Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme. A school age service is also provided. Children enrolled in the service are aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years. The service operates Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 18:00.

The service is located in a purposely adapted property in a residential area in Clondalkin Dublin 22. Care is provided across three rooms. On the day of inspection one room named the pre-school room was open. The other rooms were closed due to low numbers over the summer months. An outdoor play area was available for the children on the premises. This area was divided into two separate spaces.

Staffing

Thirteen adults are employed in the service including the registered provider and a cook. On the day of inspection three adults worked directly with the children. The registered provider does not work directly with the 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 area of governance, information and records, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Compliance was assessed under the following regulations:

9(1)(a)(b), (2) (a)-(d) and (4) Management and Recruitment

11(1), (2), (8)(a) Staffing Levels

15 (1)(a)-(i) Record of Pre-School Child

19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child

23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

25 (1), (2)(a) and (b)

26 (1)(a), (b) and (4)

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), (b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required. The person in charge was available on the premises.

(2) Three new adults were employed since the last inspection on the 05 December 2022. The inspection focused on records for these adults in relation to regulations (2)(a),(b) and (d), and (4). Records for all thirteen adults were inspected for regulation 9(2)(c).

(a) Five written validated references were available from previous employers.

(b) Not applicable, as none of the references provided were from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available for thirteen adults employed in the service. Twelve of these were dated within the previous three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as none of the adults employed had live in another state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4) There was evidence available to demonstrate three adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) A second written validated reference was not available for one adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) Second written reference was validated. Going forward all employees references will be validated before commencing employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of validated reference.

Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions submitted. The regulatory requirement has been met.

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.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twelve children attending the service being supervised by three adults 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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of eleven records were reviewed for children who were attending the service. The records reviewed contained the following information:

- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
- (b) The date on which the 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) There was authorisation for the collection of the child.
- (f) The record available supported the recording of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child.

- (g) The name and telephone number of each child's medical practitioner was recorded.
- (h) A record of immunisations received was recorded.
- (i) There was written consent for appropriate medical treatment of a child in the event of an emergency.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b) The daily routine was observed to be child-led which supported children's learning development and wellbeing. Children were observed throughout the inspection to be visibly content and happy in their play and activities this was reflected by the relaxed atmosphere of the service. Adults were observed acting in a supportive role, extending learning when invited by the children through conversations and prompts. Adults used respectful language and encouraged and praised children during all interactions observed by the inspector.

The service had a weekly meal plan which detailed a range of nutritious meals and snacks served to children at regular intervals throughout the day. Mealtime was a sociable experience. For morning snack children were offered cheese or ham sandwiches and apples and oranges. Children were given water and offered milk with their snack. Some children requested more sandwiches and were provided with an additional serving by staff. Staff were observed sitting with children and engaging in conversation with children promoting a calm atmosphere.

The classrooms provided a range of developmentally appropriate and valuable play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced and set up with a variety of materials. Defined areas of interest including a home corner, messy play area, a bookshelf with age-appropriate books. The materials were all observed to be easily accessible to the children at all times on low level shelving and child sized tables and chairs were available to the children for tabletop activities.

Suitable rest areas were available to allow children take a break from activities. Staff reported the children do not sleep however suitable low-level beds are available if children are tired and want to sleep. The children had access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The area was well resourced with a variety of play materials and equipment. The doors from the classroom to the play area were left open throughout the inspection making the outdoor space an extension to the indoor environment. Children moved freely between these areas. Staff reported that they communicate daily with parents at drop off and collection.

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 entrance door to the service was secured a to prevent unauthorised entry and to prevent children exiting unsupervised. A smart doorbell system was in place. The outdoor area was secure with a high wall
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Staff maintained a written record of cleaning completed and the environment was clean.
- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Children were supervised hands before eating, and after outdoor play. Staff practised good hand hygiene and wash their hands prior to serving snack. Foot pedal bins were in working order and used.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated an understanding of the procedures to administer medication safely if needed. A sample of eight medication records forms were reviewed and completed correctly including two staff signatures and the parent's signature.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clearly marked and unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting available for one adult was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring Garda vetting to be renewed every three years.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was renewed as required for one adult. Staff files will be reviewed at the beginning of each term and Garda vetting near expiring will be renewed.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copy of updated Garda vetting.

Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions submitted. The regulatory requirement has been met.

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) A person trained in first aid for children was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2) (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was safely stored and easily accessible on the wall of the pre-school room and available to children attending the pre-school at all times.

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) There was a monthly record of fire drills available. The last fire drill was completed on the 28 July 2025.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record for the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarm was available. These were dated the 01 April 2025 and the 17 June 2025.
- (4) A notice for the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position on the notice board in the main reception.