

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY034			
Name of Service:	Bumblebee Montessori and Childcare			
Address of Service:	16-17 Churchwell Mews, Belmayne, Dublin 13			
Eircode:	D13 A060			
Name of Registered Provider:	Emma Crowe, Nichola Higgins			
Service type:	Full Day			
Date of Inspection:	29/02/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	42	PM	38
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 7th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8			
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Finnegan Hayes			
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

Bumblebee Montessori & Childcare is a privately run service located in a residential area in North Dublin. The service currently operates from 8am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday but is currently assessing a return to the registered hours. There are four care rooms in the service. Two care rooms on the ground floor housed the Baby room catering for children aged 1-1.5 years old and the Toddler room catering for children aged 1.5-2 years old, along with a cot room, office, kitchen, and sanitary facilities. The Toddler room was closed on the day of inspection for refurbishment. There were two care rooms on the first floor which housed the Junior Montessori room catering for children aged 2.5-3.5 years old and the Senior montessori room catering for children aged 3-4 along with sanitary facilities. A secure outdoor area was located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 14 staff including the registered provider and a cook. Eleven staff were present on the day of inspection including 10 staff who were working directly with the children and the cook. The registered provider attended the service for a period during 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under;

- Regulations 9(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(3)(4) Management and Recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels,
- Regulation 16 (1)(j)(k) Record in relation to Preschool children.
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of child.
- Regulation 24 Checking in and out and record of attendance.
- Regulation 25 First Aid.

However, on inspection additional non-compliances which posed a risk was identified under;

- Regulation 30 Minimum space requirements.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment, Regulation 16, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 24 Checking in and out and record of attendance. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby and Toddler rooms and did not include the other care rooms.

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, person in charge, 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 registered provider ensured there was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required. The deputy person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2) A review of the roster and conversation with management confirmed there are 14 staff currently employed in the service including the registered provider; four of whom have commenced employment since the last inspection in March 2023. The files of all four staff who commenced employment since the last inspection were reviewed along with Garda vetting disclosures for all staff currently employed and the qualification of one staff member which was outstanding since the previous inspection.

(a)(b) Eight written and verified references were available in relation to four staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 14 staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in relation to one staff member. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff member who had resided outside of Ireland for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that three staff members who worked directly with the children 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) There was no evidence to show two staff members who worked directly with the children held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. This included the outstanding qualification from the previous inspection and a qualification for one new staff member. This was a non-compliance on the last inspection the preventive actions have not been sufficient to prevent recurrence.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) Both employees have applied to the DCEDIY for recognition of their current qualification, and the service are awaiting a response. One of the employees has since left the service. Management will ensure all new employee's qualifications are on the DCEDIY list of approved qualifications.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of submission to DCEDIY for recognition of qualification reviewed.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has attempted to address the non-compliance under Regulation 9(4) however this remains outstanding; the registered provider must submit proof that the qualification has been deemed eligible to the Inspectorate once it is received from the DCEDIY.

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) There were 42 preschool children being cared for by 9 staff members on the day of inspection. A floating staff member was also present in a supernumerary capacity.

(2) Ratios were maintained in the care rooms. The following was observed on the morning of inspection;

- In the Baby room six staff were caring for 17 children aged 1-2.5 years old from the baby and toddler rooms combined.
- In the Junior Montessori room one staff member was caring for 7 children aged 2.5-3.5 years old.
- In the Senior Montessori room two staff members were caring for 18 children aged 3-4 years old.

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:

- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(j) A sample of 4 medication administration records were available for review on the day of inspection. All records were completed in full with the required information.

(k) A sample of 12 accident/incident records were reviewed on the day of inspection. All records were completed in full with the required information.

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 was securely locked on arrival to the service which prevented unauthorised persons gaining access to the service while also prevented children leaving unsupervised.
- Internal doors were fitted with high handles to prevent the children from leaving care rooms unsupervised.
- Windows which were accessible to the children were fitted with restrictor devices.
- Cleaning supplies were stored out of reach of the children throughout the service.
- Radiator covers were in place preventing injury to the children.
- Child proof locks were fitted on presses where required to prevent children accessing dangerous items.
- Blind cords were secured to prevent a risk to the children.

Infection Control:

- Warm water and dispensed hand soap and hand towels were available throughout the service to facilitate adequate hand washing.
- Handwashing was done frequently throughout the day as per the service policy.
- Bedlinen was individual for each child and was laundered weekly.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed conducting physical checks of sleeping children and details of these checks were recorded in line with their policy.

Fire Safety:

- Staff were aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire emergency.
- Fire exit routes and doors were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for one staff member however, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

- Items were observed to be stored in the sanitary area used by the baby room which posed a risk of cross contamination for example a net bag of toys which had been sterilised was observed hanging from a shelf over the sink while boxes of children's clothes and shoes which were not sealed appropriately were stored on shelves above the toilet and nappy changing unit.

Infection Control:

- Mattresses in the cot room were observed not to have wipeable covers or mattress protectors which posed an infection control risk. This was a non-compliance on the previous inspection in 2023. The preventive actions have not been sufficient to prevent recurrence.
- The lid was broken off a pedal operated bin in the Baby room. The bin was used for disposal of contaminated items such as tissues which posed an infection control risk.
- Children did not have access to hygienically dispensed handtowels in the Junior montessori or Senior montessori sanitary areas as the dispensers were empty. Children need to have the necessary equipment to facilitate adequate handwashing.
- Tissue in the staff toilet was not hygienically dispensed and was observed to be wet and difficult to remove from the roll and no paper handtowels were present. Hygienically dispensed tissue and paper handtowels are required for adequate handwashing.
- Bedlinen was stored and observed to hang down touching other beds on the stackable beds used by children in the toddler room. This posed an infection control risk.

Fire Safety:

- The written paper attendance record was not completed with the attendance time of all the children present on the morning of inspection. It is acknowledged that a full attendance record was available on a software application however staff advised that they would bring the paper record in the event of a fire emergency. The attendance records used for a fire drill must be completed in full to ensure the safe evacuation of all children in the event of an emergency.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting has been completed for this staff member. The service will ensure everyone has their Garda Vetting renewed every three years.
2. Items were removed from toilet area, cleaned, sanitised, and put back into the classroom. Management spoke with staff regarding the sanitary areas and will do regular checks in sanitary areas to ensure they are kept free from risk of cross contamination.

Infection Control:

3. New washable mattress protectors have been bought for each cot. The service will continue to check each cot and change when needed.
4. The bin has been replaced. All bins will be checked and replaced when needed.
5. The hand towel dispensers were broken, and we were waiting on new dispenser. The service have since had the new hand towel dispensers fitted in every room the service will ensure the cross over time will be as short as possible when replacing old or broken units.
6. All dispensers have been hung back on the wall. The service will ensure the cross over time will be as short as possible when replacing old or broken units.
7. New flat sheets have been purchased for the beds to ensure that the sheets won't touch. The service will continue to use the flat sheets so that there can be no cross contamination.

Fire Safety:

8. Both forms of attendance records would be brought in any case of a room evacuation. This is done at each fire drill. The service will ensure the written attendance record along with the electronic record is completed each day.

Supporting documentation submitted

Updated Garda vetting declaration and photographs were reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) Staff were observed to greet children at the door on arrival and return children to their parents at the door at home time.

(3)(a) Entrance to the service was controlled by a buzzer system and staff were observed attending the door to allow access on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(3) (b) A record of visitors to the service was not consistently maintained for example a review of the visitor book showed that contractors who were on the premises on the day of inspection had not signed the visitor book for any of the days which staff advised they were present. The inspector was not asked to sign the visitor book on arrival in the service. An accurate visitor record is required to ensure the safety of the children. This was a non-compliance on the previous inspection in 2023, the preventive actions have not been sufficient to prevent recurrence.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The visitor book was put in the drawer because of painting being carried out. It has now been taken out and put back on the shelf for visitors to sign when they arrive at the building. All staff have been advised of the need to have outside visitors sign in. Management will ensure this book is in use at all times and available to all future visitors.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of visitor book displayed was reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 24.

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 ensured that an adequate number of staff were trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and that a staff member trained in FAR was available on the premises throughout the opening hours of the service.

(2) (a)(b) Adequately stocked first aid boxes were observed in the care rooms. These were stored out of reach of the children but accessible to staff if needed.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) The registered provider did not ensure an adequate amount of clear floor space was available in the Baby room on the day of inspection. Children and staff from the Baby room and Toddler room were observed to be combined in the Baby room due to ongoing renovation work in the Toddler room; ten children were aged 2 years old, and seven children were aged 1 year old were present. Forty-Three metres squared was required based on the age of the children present; a maximum of 28 metres squared was available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

As explained on the day; this was a once off as our Toddler room was being painted. The service usually get our painting done at the evenings and weekends. All renovation works will be carried out in the evenings or weekends.

Supporting documentation submitted

No documentation provided.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 30.