

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DY044

Name of Service: Casa dei Bambini Montessori

Address of Service: 12 Kincora Ave, Clontarf, Dublin 3

Eircode: D03 K304

Name of Registered Provider: Catherine Devereux

Service type: Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 18/09/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	19
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 7 th Floor Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01K
Inspection undertaken by:	L.A Webster
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.
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Description of service

Casa dei Bambini Montessori is a privately operated service located in a residential area in North Dublin. The service operates from a converted retail unit encompassing one classroom with a small kitchenette and sanitary facilities. The service is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 25 children aged 2-6 years. The service provides one part-time session from 8:30am-1pm daily and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme offering sessional care from 9am-12pm daily, 38 weeks per year in line with the programme rules. A fully enclosed outdoor area is available onsite to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 3 childcare staff. Additionally, the registered provider works within the service. On the morning of inspection there were 4 adults present, including the registered provider and 3 childcare staff.

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 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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 required.
 - (b) A review of the roster evidenced that either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
- (2) A review of paperwork and discussion with the person in charge showed that there are currently 3 staff employed by the registered provider to work within the service. The files and qualifications of the registered provider and all staff were reviewed.
- (a) There were 8 written and validated references available from past employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 4 staff members. However, the service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for 1 adult who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that all 4 adults who worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification that is deemed of equivalence by the minister

Non-Compliance Information

- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) had not been completed prior to one person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service following review of the staff records on the day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Renewal of documentation is sought for appointed staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions proposed by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 9 (3).

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) On the day of inspection, there were 22 children being cared for by 4 adults throughout the morning and 19 children being cared for by 3 adults in the afternoon.
- (2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children within the care room.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of ten children's records were reviewed as part of the inspection. All records contained the required information as required under (a)-(i) above.

(3) (c) All child records were available for inspection.

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

Basic needs:

- Individually labelled beakers of water were available within the care room for children at all times.
- Staff showed kind and gentle approaches to children, especially for children who were still transitioning into the service.
- An ambient cosy corner was available for the children to take some time to wind down throughout the morning.

- A strong emphasis on children's independence and responsibility was supported throughout the morning. Children were observed to engage in real world tasks such as washing cutlery, chopping fruit, using scissors and taking part in designated job roles. Staff ensured to supervise and step in when needed.
- To support children's belonging and identity, birthday walls, family walls and children's individual art was displayed throughout the care room.

Supporting Relationships:

- A strong sense of teamwork was identified throughout the inspection and staff ensured that this was modelled to the children to support their ongoing learning.
- Staff were observed to use kind and warm tones when speaking to the children and were positive in their approaches. This was evident throughout the day and when children were smoothly transitioning from outdoors to indoors and for smaller transitions such as moving from activities, snack time and handwashing.

Physical and Material Environment:

- Developmentally age and stage appropriate tables and chairs were present throughout the care room to allow children to engage in tabletop activities independently and comfortably.
- Designated play areas were spaced throughout the care room to allow children to engage at various stations.
- Toys and equipment were in good condition and allowed for children to engage in various types of play.

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 to the service was appropriately secured upon the inspector's arrival. The service entrance operated through a buzzer system that allowed entry into a main hallway and a second door is securely locked to prevent children from leaving the service unsupervised and restrict any unauthorised access to the service. Additionally, the outdoor area was securely fenced and gated.
- The care room was in good condition, with no visible hazards or trailing wires observed.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely and locked away out of reach of children
- Shelving units were firmly anchored to the wall to ensure stability and safety.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water and dispensed soap were available to support adequate hand hygiene.
- Both staff and children showed familiarity with routine handwashing before snack and after play.
- Pedal operated bins were available for disposal of contaminated items.
- Windows were open in the care room to allow the fresh circulation of air.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not given on the day of inspection and in discussion with the registered provider, medication is not stored on the premises. However, the registered provider reiterated their knowledge of the storage of emergency medication should a child need it.

Fire Safety:

- All fire emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This helped ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for two adults; however, these disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed.

Infection Control:

2. At 10:32am it was observed that a staff member was preparing fresh fruit and cheese for the children's snack without the use of disposable gloves. This is at variance with the services infection control policy which states "*Disposable gloves suitable for food preparation must be used*".
3. During the preparation of snack time, it was observed at 10:35am that one child who was tasked with chopping fruit for the children wiped their nose directly on to their hand while handling the fruit. This was brought to the attention of the staff member who directed the child to wash their hands. At 10:38 the child was observed to repeat the same action that went unobserved. This posed a cross-contamination risk to the children.
4. Children's lunches are brought in from home and contained perishable items which were stored in a small storage bench and not in a refrigerated environment. This posed an additional cross-contamination risk to children. This was a non-compliance on the previous inspection in 2024 and has not yet been addressed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. All vetting in need for renewal has been processed for re-vetting. Vetting reviews to take place bi-annually.

Infection Control:

2. Disposable gloves suitable for food preparation have been added to the environment and are now used during all food preparation.
3. Any child with a runny nose will get a different classroom job that does not involve food preparation.
4. A new, bigger fridge will be bought for the classroom.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic Evidence.

Infection Control:

None submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions proposed by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 23

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 of July 2026 and was immediately available to the children attending the service. Additionally, the person in charge ensured that two staff held up to date FAR certification and were immediately available to the children as needed.
- (2) (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, and unobstructed if needed to access quickly.
- (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available at all times to the adults caring for 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) The records available demonstrated that fire drills are held monthly within the service and the service conducted a fire drill on the 15 September 2025.
 - (b) A record was available detailing the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm systems in the premises.
 - Records demonstrate that the firefighting equipment had been serviced annually, with the last service taking place on the 05 September 2025.

- Records demonstrate that the smoke alarms have been serviced on a quarterly bases with the last service taking place on the 05 September 2025.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) A visual notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was not conspicuously displayed around the service. This posed a risk to staff and children in the event of a fire, and having knowledge of what steps to take.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A visual notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire has been displayed around the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic Evidence.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions proposed by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 26.

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 that the pre-school service was adequately insured, with an expiry date of 27 March 2026.