

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DY173

Name of Service: Queen B's Creche, Montessori and Afterschool

Address of Service: Lock Keepers Walk, Royal Canal Park, Ratoath Road, Dublin 15

Eircode: D15 Y761

Name of Registered Provider: Bernadette Hill

Service type: Full Day

Date of Inspection: 24/04/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	30	PM	25

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	L Jameson & E Griffin
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

Queen B's Crèche, Montessori and Afterschool provides full day, part time and sessional care to children aged 0 – 6 years. The service is registered to operate from 07:30am – 06:30pm and currently operates from 08:00am – 05:45pm. The service is comprised of three care rooms, namely the Baby room, the Pre-Montessori room and the Montessori room, with sanitary accommodation located off each care room. A room that is adjoined to the Baby room is used as a sleep room for children in the Pre- Montessori Room. There is a cot room, a kitchen, a staff room and staff sanitary accommodation located in the service.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service in a supernumerary capacity. The registered provider employs thirteen adults to work in the service, including the deputy person in charge, nine early years practitioners, one administrator, one kitchen staff and one cleaner. On the day of inspection, the deputy person in charge, the administrator, eight early years practitioners, one kitchen staff, one cleaner and one student were present when the inspectors arrived unannounced in the service. The registered provider was not present on the day of 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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 Record in Relation to Preschool Service. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby room and the Pre Montessori room and did not include the Montessori 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the deputy person in charge, administrator, 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.*

(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 needed.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff members were aware of their own role and responsibilities.
- (2) A review of the roster and conversation with the deputy person in charge showed that the registered provider currently employs thirteen adults. The full staff record of thirteen adults employed to work in the service and one student were reviewed.
- (a) Seven written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Seventeen written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the thirteen adults employed in the service and one student.
- The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.

- (d) Documentary evidence showed that eight adults had lived in a state other than Ireland for more than six consecutive months as an adult. International police vetting from the relevant countries was available for seven staff members.
- (3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to nine adults who had access to the children.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the eight adults 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

- (1)
- (b) A review of the roster and staff sign in record showed that the designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge was not on the premises at all times on the day of the inspection; from 08:00am to 09:00am, neither were present. This posed a potential risk to the children.
- (2)
- (a) Three written references were available from past employers for two adults; however, documentary evidence was not available to confirm a validation check had been completed.
- (b) One written reference was available from a source other than a past employer for one adult, however, documentary evidence was not available to confirm a validation check had been completed.
- (d) International police vetting was not available for one staff member in relation to one country that they had lived in for longer than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (3) Evidence was not available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to five adults who had access to the children. The following was observed:
- Three written references were available from past employers for two adults, however documentary evidence was not available to show validations had been obtained prior to commencement in the service.
 - One written reference was available from a source other than a past employer for one adult, however documentary evidence was not available to show a validation had been obtained prior to commencement in the service.

- A Garda vetting disclosure and two reference validations for one adult were dated after their commencement in the service.
 - International police vetting for one adult was dated after their commencement in the service.
 - International police vetting for one adult was not available for one country they lived in for longer than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) Documentation was not available to demonstrate that two adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. It is acknowledged that a qualification certificate was available for two adults however it could not be established that these were approved qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) (b) Management have reviewed the roster and will ensure that the designated person in charge and deputy person in charge will be on the premises at all times during operational hours of the service.
- (2) (a)(b) Management have carried out the required checks on employee references and will ensure that all reference checks are completed before employees commence in the service.
- (d) Police vetting has been obtained for one adult and added to the staff file. Management will ensure that any required international police vetting will be obtained for new staff members before they commence employment in the service.
- (3) Management will ensure that all required checks and documentation is obtained prior to all new employees commencing in the service.
- (4) The required qualification for one adult has been obtained and added to the staff files. Management will ensure that all new employees will have the required qualification to work in the early years setting.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) (b) No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.
- (2) (a)(b) Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.
- (d) Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

(3) Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

(4) Documentation in relation to one adult has been reviewed. Outstanding documentation in relation to one adult will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 9(1)(b), 2(a)(b)(d) and (3). The registered provider has also addressed the non-compliance under (4) in relation to one staff member however, the non-compliance under Regulation 9(4) remains outstanding in relation to one staff member. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. Eight staff were caring for 30 children when the inspectors arrived in the service. The deputy person in charge was available in a supernumerary position to provide cover in rooms as needed.

(2) The adult child ratios were maintained for the duration of the inspection.

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:

- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (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

- (1)
- (g) the required policies, procedures and statements of the service were available in the reception area and office and open to review by the inspectors, parents and guardians.
 - (h) Documentary evidence of the children’s arrival and departure times was available in the care rooms.
 - (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.
 - (j) The registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for a sample of ten medicine administration records that were reviewed on the day of inspection.
 - (k) The registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for a sample of ten accident and incident records that were reviewed on the day of 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-

- (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) (b) The following practices were observed on the day of inspection which supported the health, welfare and development of the children attending:

- The children appeared to be happy and confident in their environment, evidenced by a sense of familiarity and good relationships between staff members and the children attending the service. Staff members engaged in positive interactions with each other and the children on the day of the inspection.
- Staff members were attentive to children’s individual needs, for example, two children in the Baby room were new to the service. Staff members were observed to interact warmly and kindly to support the children and their individual needs. Staff members discussed the service’s settling in period with the inspectors, demonstrating familiarity with the process.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children in the care rooms, facilitating a comfortable area to eat meals and take part in tabletop activities.
- The care rooms were designed to support the age and developmental stages of the children attending the service, equipment and materials were stored at a low level to encourage the children’s independence and decision-making skills.
- A review of the service’s menu and discussion with staff members showed that the children receive four meals per day – one of these are brought from home.
- Appropriate and respectful nappy changing procedures were observed on the day of inspection. The children who were toilet trained used the toilet independently with discreet supervision provided by staff. Nappies were changed at scheduled times and more frequently when required. The staff wore clean aprons and gloves for each nappy change, while engaging in meaningful interactions with the children.
- Children’s artwork, photographs, birthday charts, family and new sibling walls were displayed throughout the care rooms and service, supporting the children’s sense of identity and links between home and the service.

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 leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. A buzzer system was in place which was managed and monitored by staff members.

- The outdoor play area was fully enclosed. A section of the outdoor area was separated by a fence and gate and was used by the children in the Baby room, providing the younger children the opportunity to play outside at the same time as the older children.
- Flexes and cords were secured safely out of reach of the children.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.

Infection Control:

- The care rooms and sanitary areas were equipped with warm water, liquid soap and hand paper towels. Staff members were observed to support children with handwashing at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas to ensure the hygienic disposal of contaminated materials. Staff were also observed to dispose of soiled nappies in the external bin.

Administration of Medication:

- Anti febrile medication was observed to be in date, stored in the correct packaging and out of the children's reach. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff members were observed to physically check and record the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children every 10 minutes, as follows:
 - Two children in the Baby room who were observed to nap in the cot room on the morning of the inspection.
 - Children sleeping in the cot room on the afternoon of the inspection.
- The lights were observed to be dimmed and the blinds drawn in the sleep rooms, facilitating a calm environment for sleeping children.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained for sleeping children over one years old in the sleep room adjoined to the Baby room.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The water temperature in one wash hand basin in the sanitary accommodation between the Pre-Montessori room and Montessori room was recorded as 47°C. This posed a potential risk of injury to children.
2. A press in the Baby room which contained bubble solution was observed to be unlocked on the day of inspection. This posed a potential risk of injury to children.
3. The following was observed in a room where children were sleeping unsupervised by staff members, posing a risk of potential injury to children:
 - Five stackable beds were observed to be stored upright against a wall.
 - A radiator cover was observed to be missing a panel, leaving an area of the radiator exposed and accessible to children.
4. The following was observed in the outdoor play area, which posed a potential risk of injury to children:
 - Four drain covers in the outdoor play area were observed to be loose and could be easily lifted, with underground drainpipes potentially accessible to the children.
 - A wooden beam in the outdoor play area was observed to be broken.
5. The soft ground surface in the outdoor play area was observed to be damaged and worn, with potential trip hazards as follows:
 - A gap of 4cm between the doorway and the soft ground surface was observed at the Pre-Montessori room.
 - A gap of 6.5cm between the doorway and the soft ground surface was observed at the Montessori room.
 - The soft ground surface was observed to be uneven in areas around a drain cover and in the centre of the outdoor play space.

Safe Sleep:

6. Children who slept in a sleep room adjoining the Baby room and were over two years of age were observed to sleep unsupervised on low level beds. Children sleeping on low level beds must be supervised by a staff member at all times. This posed a potential risk to children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The boiler control has been adjusted to lower the temperature and staff members will carry out daily water temperature checks.
2. Management have reminded staff about the safe storage of all bubble and cleaning solutions, ensuring they are kept in a safe place. Management will supervise the staff and remind them of the importance of keeping these products out of the reach of children.
3.
 - The stackable beds will be stored lying flat on the ground and management have informed staff not to store them upright against the wall.
 - The radiator is not in use as there is an air conditioning and heater unit on the wall. The radiator cover will be removed and replaced.
4.
 - The drain covers have been cleaned and glued back down. Management will ensure to supervise them at all the time to always keep it safe for the children.
 - The wooden beam has been removed and replaced. Management will ensure to supervise them at all the time to always keep it safe for the children.
5.
 - The gaps between the doorways in Montessori and Pre Montessori and the soft ground surface are fixed. Management will ensure checks of the garden surface are carried out on a regular basis.
 - The soft ground surface is ongoing now, as the children's safety is paramount. Management will ensure checks of the garden surface are carried out on a regular basis.

Safe Sleep:

6. A staff member has been assigned to supervise the children at all times in the sleep room. All staff are aware that children should be supervised when they are in bed.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence has been reviewed in relation to the above.
2. No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

3. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.
4. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.
5. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Safe Sleep:

6. No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23. The actions taken will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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 on arrival and their attendance and departure were promptly recorded.
- (3) (a) The service entrance was adequately secured, and person in charge greeted the inspection team at the door to allow access.
- (b) A visitor book was available and provided to the inspection team to sign on arrival to the service.

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

- (2)
- (a) The first aid box available in the service was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous location on the premises.
 - (b) First aid boxes were available for the children in attendance in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) Documentary evidence was available to show that three adults held in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificates, however, no adult was immediately available to the children in the event of an emergency between 08:00am – 09:00am on the day of the inspection. This was evidenced in the scheduled attendance in the service's staff roster and staff sign in record.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) Management have updated the roster to ensure that a staff member who is trained in First Aid Response is on the premises at all times during the operational hours of the service and more staff are getting trained in First Aid Response.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 25.