

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL020		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Baloos Montessori		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	8 Beaverbrook, Donabate, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	K36 WY03		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Eileen Mooney		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	09/11/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	AM Coyle		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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).			
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable		

### Description of service

Baloos Montessori is a sessional early years' service which was established in 2008 by the registered provider. The service provides sessional preschool care and education to children aged 2 to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9am to 12:30pm. The service is located in a room directly adjacent to the registered providers family home. An outdoor area directly behind the service is available to the children.

### Staffing

The service employs 5 staff members including a relief staff member. The registered provider works directly with the children attending the service.

### 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 & safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child.

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, 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) The person in charge in the absence of the registered provider was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise when required.

(b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection and the person in charge in the absence of the registered provider was present for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b) Two written, validated references were available for the registered provider and for 2 staff members employed in the service.

Two written references were available for 2 staff members employed in the service.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and for the 4 staff members.

(d) International police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 5 staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with children in the service held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) Two written references that were available for 2 staff members were not validated with the persons who provided the references.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The references were confirmed by the person who provided them at the time, but I omitted to write this confirmation on each of the references. I have signed & dated the references now.

#### **Summary Comment**

The evidence submitted by the registered provider in relation to Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment has been reviewed and accepted.

### 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 was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The correct adult to child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection. There were 3 adults caring for 18 children aged 2 years 11 months to 4 years 10 months.

### 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-  
(c) an authorised person.

### Compliance Information

(1) A sampling process was used in relation to the children's records. All 9 sampled registration forms were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

(3)(c) The children's records were open to inspection as requested by the inspectors

## 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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

### Compliance Information

(1)(h) Details of children's daily attendance including arrival and departure times were recorded on a digital application within each care room.

(k) The service had a record in writing of accidents, injuries and incidents involving pre-school children. The records sampled and found to be clear and legible, and included parental signatures to document that they had been informed and were aware of the relevant incidents on the day they occurred.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) A record was not maintained in the service of the name, position, qualifications, and experience of one employee in the service.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

An updated cv for the staff member has been provided and is now in her staff file.

## Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of staff member's curriculum Vitae

## Summary Comment

The evidence submitted has been reviewed and accepted. The non-compliances observed under regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service have been adequately addressed.

## 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*

## Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

### Basic needs:

- There was a warm and child centred atmosphere in the service, children were observed to be comfortable in their surroundings and sought out staff members for support and guidance as they required it.
- Parents provide food for the children's snack time. Food was stored in a fridge located in the care room. The children were invited to help with handing out lunchboxes and water bottles. There was a relaxed and sociable atmosphere at snack time, with children chatting among themselves and the staff members contributing to the conversations.
- The staff members were observed to be responsive to the children's cues should they need to use the toilet, with supervision and assistance provided when required.
- A comfortable rest area comprising of 2 comfortable chairs located alongside some reading resources were provided should a child chose to opt out of activities at any time.
- The staff members were observed to be very respectful towards the children in their care with positive body language and gentle tones used.

## Supporting relationships around children:

- The 3 staff members were consistent in their interactions with the children, providing regular praise and encouragement, asking open ended questions to give the children opportunity to express their thinking and feelings and ensuring that each child in the session was happy and engaged in activity.
- The staff members were friendly and relaxed with each other and the care procedures and planned activities were smoothly implemented.
- The staff members encouraged the children to engage positively with each other by adopting simple social rules such as turn taking, sharing in play activities and resolving minor disputes. The children were supported to be responsible through tidying up after activities and caring for their own personal belongings. Children's achievements were acknowledged through recognition and praise which contributes towards the children having a sense of belonging in the service.

### Physical and material environment:

- In the care room the play materials and equipment were displayed and accessible on low level shelving to promote the children's choice and independence when selecting their play opportunities.
- The service was well resourced with a home area which included a play kitchen with crockery and kitchen utensils for the children to extend their play. Additionally, construction materials, transport toys including train tracks and cars, jigsaws, small world and tabletop resources, art materials and a large dolls house with a range of play accessories were available to the children. A broad range of Montessori materials were provided for the children to use.
- A range of books were available in the care room to support the children's language and reading development.
- The outdoor area was located to the rear of the service, a section of the outdoor area was covered with a rigid plastic roof and was directly accessible from the main care room. The door between the care room and this space was open throughout the inspection which facilitated the children to access the area as they chose. The area was surfaced with wooden decking and contained a range of play materials including a play kitchen, a dolls house and dolls cradle, a dressing table, a garage and transport toys along with a table and chairs. Robust plastic sheeting divided this area and was lifted to enable the children to access the remainder of the outdoor play area. This area was surfaced with safety tiles, a climbing frame with swings and a slide was available in addition to a crawl through tunnel, 2 playhouses and a sensory table with gravel provided. All of the children enjoyed time in the outdoor area on the day of inspection.

## 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 doors leading into the service were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and preventing unauthorised persons gaining access to the service.
- Emergency exits were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

- The premises and play equipment were in a clean and hygienic condition. Up to date cleaning schedules were on display in the service.
- Thermostatically controlled running warm water, liquid soap and single use paper towels were available at all wash hand basins to support effective hand hygiene procedures in the service.
- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating. Children were gently reminded, to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- The children's snacks which they brought with them from home were stored in the refrigerator.

##### Administration of Medication:

- No child required medication to be administered on the day of inspection.

### 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 including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions on the premises, out of the reach of children.

### 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) A record was maintained of fire drills which had been completed in the service. The most recent fire drill recorded as having taken place on 09/10/2023.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers were certified as having been serviced in July 2023 and the smoke alarms were serviced on the 17/07/23.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.