

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MH015		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Bridget's Montessori		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Balsaran, Duleek, Co. Meath		
<b>Eircode:</b>	A92 HWF9		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Bridget Woods		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	14/09/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	49	PM 12
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre Commons Road Navan Co Meath		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	AM Cunningham		
<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

Bridget's Montessori is operating a sessional and part-time service. The service can accommodate up to 66 pre-school children attending at any one time. The operating hours are 09.00am to 14.30pm for pre-school children availing of sessional and part-time hours each weekday. The age range catered for are children aged 2 years to 6 years. The service consists of three care room and sanitary accommodation adjoining them. The outdoor area is available to the back of the premises and fencing is erected around the premises.

### Staffing

There are nine staff members employed in the service including the registered provider. A volunteer was also present on the day of 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,& 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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
- (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.

(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 designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Twenty validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for 9 staff members and the volunteer.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The nine childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

(b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

#### Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed on the day of inspection:

- **Bumblebee room:** Two staff members cared for 18 preschool children, ranging in age from 2 years 5 months to 3 years 4 months. Fourteen children attended a sessional service and 3 children attended on a parttime basis.
- **Butterfly room:** Two staff members cared for 16 preschool children, ranging in age from 3 years 3 months to 4 years 5 months. Eleven children attended a sessional service and 5 children attended on a parttime basis.

- **Ladybird room:** Two staff members (one AIM support) cared for 16 preschool children, ranging in age from 2 years and 9 months to 3 years and 8 months. Twelve children were attending a sessional service and 4 children attended on a parttime basis.

The registered provider was also present in the service and was not assigned to a specific room.

(8) The registered provider ensured that there were always two adults on the premises when the service was in operation, as evidenced in the staff roster maintained in the service.

### 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,

#### Compliance Information

##### Basic care needs of the children:

- The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence. Regular hand washing was observed by the children.
- Children proudly showed the staff their completed work and staff were overheard praising children efforts and saying "well done, you did a great job" calling the child by their name. The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children with family walls and conversation with children about siblings, their pets and activities.

##### Supporting relationships around the children:

- The staff spoke to all children in a positive way and listened attentively to each child. They used welcoming facial expressions and gentle vocal tones and the children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.
- The staff members were observed sitting and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required. All children enjoying meaningful, sustained play with tabletop activities, art and crafts and free playing with lots of conversation and laughter observed.

- Transitions were handled smoothly in all care rooms with staff giving the children ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- Children were assisting with personnel care in the preschool rooms where required or requested and children who were independent were encouraged and supported to be independent.
- The children availed of energetic outdoor play on the day of inspection.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b) The registered provider has stackable beds available for the children if they require a sleep. Children did not sleep on the day of inspection. Cosy areas are available within the care rooms for children.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The care rooms had areas of interest with well supporting equipment which incorporated natural/sensorial materials, Montessori equipment, art and crafts and a range of suitable toys. Low level shelving facilitated children to select and replace items of interest.

The outdoor space had a grass surface, artificial grass and a hard surface area. The outdoor area was well developed and supported with lots of different activities and areas to play which included ride on toys, slides, balls, sand pits and toy kitchen, climbing frame, bug hotel, a path for ride on toys, tunnels, planting area, goalposts, construction area, balance beams, buddy bench, and a covered area so the outdoor area could be used in all-weather types

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

Children attending the sessional service brought in their snacks from home. The children attending the parttime service received their lunch from the service which on the day of inspection consisted of yogurts, oranges, apples, crackers, and some cheese.

### 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 premises were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.
- The external outdoor play area was secured.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.

##### Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided to support effective hand hygiene in the sanitary accommodation in the service.
- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and following outdoor play.
- An up-to-date cleaning schedule was available.

### 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) Records demonstrated that the date and time of attendance and departure in respect of each pre-school child is recorded on a daily basis.

(3)(a) All persons are approved by an employee prior to entry to the pre-school.

(b) Visitors are announced and approved by an authorised staff member on arrival, the visitors' details are entered into the visitors' book.

### 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 Staff member was trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and available to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) (a)(b) The first aid box available in the service was suitably equipped and stored in conspicuous locations on the premises and were available for the children in attendance, in the event of an emergency.

### 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 all fire drills which had been completed in the service. Fire drills were carried out monthly.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire extinguishers. The firefighting equipment were serviced on the day of inspection 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) An up-to-date maintenance record was not available for the smoke alarms in the service. The last maintenance certificate available was March 2021.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective Action

The registered provider requested inspection/maintenance of our fire alarms from our alarm system provider on the day of our Tusla Inspection, and maintenance was carried out on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023. Attach is the documentation.

### Preventive Action

The registered provider will ensure not to miss the annual inspection next year, reminders put in place.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Certificate of smoke alarm maintenance submitted to the inspectorate.

## Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider addresses the non-compliance in 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 is adequately insured for 66 children, expiry date on the insurance certificate was dated 27/03/2024.