

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH016		
Name of Service:	Bright Beginnings Montessori		
Address of Service:	Bohermeen National School, Bohermeen, Navan, Co. Meath		
Eircode:	C15 XF79		
Name of Registered Provider:	Emma Mangan, Tracie Reilly		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	13/02/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	39	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham		
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

Bright Beginnings Montessori was established in 2009. The service provides a sessional service to children from 2 to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). The sessional service operates from 09.15am to 12:15 hours. The service is located in a prefabricated building on the grounds of Bohermeen National School and consists of 2 separate rooms with sanitary facilities. An outdoor area is available onsite to the service.

Staffing

Two registered providers and six staff members are employed in the service. Two relief staff members are also available to the service when required.

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 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.

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

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 inspector arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) Ten files were reviewed, and the following was noted.

- (a) & (b) Twenty validated written references were available for the staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the staff members. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes for three staff members as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

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

(4) The staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 to level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(6A) One staff member is employed to provide AIM support.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

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

(3) The adult/child ratio was correct;

Room 1: Three adults (one staff member provided AIM support) cared for 21 children attending a sessional service (aged between 3 years to 5 years).

Room 2: Two adults cared for 18 children attending a sessional service (aged between 3 years to 5 years).

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

Basic Needs:

- The service has a healthy eating policy. A snack is provided each day by the children's parents in line with the service policy.
- Drinks in individual labelled beakers were readily available to the children on a low-level shelf.
- Children who had recently toilet trained were supported to use the toilet as necessary throughout the day.
- Children enjoyed freedom of movement through the day. Staff supported children to engage in activities and supported choice for children who wanted to play something else.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed to use gentle tones when speaking to the children and were observed to use encouraging language to support children.
- Staff supported children to engage in transitions in a supportive and encouraging way by singing songs and allowing children time to move through the transition unhurried.
- Children enjoyed making Valentine cards and staff praised all children for their efforts.
- Staff spoke in a gentle empathetic manner about the children and their families and were supportive of the varied and individual lives of the families. It was Confirmation Day in the national school and some of the children left early to attend the event.
- Children help with giving out lunches to their friends which promotes confidence, self-esteem and a sense of belonging in the care room.

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

Child sized tables and chairs were available which allowed the children to engage in tabletop activities and mealtimes comfortably. A variety of toys and equipment were available in the care room and were grouped together into defined interest areas. Books were maintained in good condition and displayed at a level suitable for the children to choose and access independently. A cosy area with a soft mat and seats were available for children to rest during the day. The outdoor area provided opportunities for a range of play types and provided space for gross motor activities not appropriate for the indoor environment.

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 preschool has a coded door which prevents unknown persons entering the premises.
- The outdoor area is adequately secured with a high fence.
- Toys and equipment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- Low level presses were secured with child proof locks.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, dispensed soap and paper handtowels were available to support adequate hand hygiene.
- Handwashing was completed regularly throughout the day after outdoor play and before mealtimes in line with the service policy.

- Pedal operated bins were available for disposal of contaminated items such as used tissues.

Fire Safety:

- Staff were aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency.
- Fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for all staff members. However, three staff members vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Infection Control:

2. Lunches were not stored in the fridge to prevent the growth of food poisoning bacteria.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting has been obtained for 1 staff member and is filed with previous vetting disclosures. Garda vetting is currently being processed for the two-remaining staff. These will be kept on file once received and submitted to the Inspectorate.

The registered provider will include in each staff members cover sheet in the staff folder, the date for renewal.

Infection Control:

2. The registered provider sent out a message via our whatsapp groups for room 1 and 2 to all parents, reminding them about storing lunches in the fridge.

On Tuesday March 4th at the staff meeting, the registered provider and staff discussed various ways to help comply with this requirement. Parents were involved in the implementation of storing lunches in the fridge.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of requesting garda vetting for the two staff members submitted to the Inspectorate.

Correspondence with parents submitted regarding storing children's lunches in the fridge.

Summary Comment

The registered provider demonstrated compliance regarding the correct storage of children's lunches.

In relation to Garda vetting renewal for 3 staff members, this has been received for one staff member. However, the registered provider has not submitted evidence to demonstrate that the Garda Vetting for the remaining 2 staff members has been updated. The non-compliances found have not been adequately addressed.

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.

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

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises

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 written record was available of fire drills which were completed monthly in the service. the last recorded fire drill was 13th January 2025.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment was last serviced 23rd April 2024 and the smoke detection alarms were last serviced 4th December 2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service

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 service was adequately insured for 44 children at any one time. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28th March 2024 to the 27th March 2025.