

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY141
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Name of Service:	Room to Bloom Montessori
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Address of Service:	Moyglass, Fethard, Co Tipperary
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Eircode:	E91 XT66
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jacqueline O'Connell
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	06/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary E91RF38
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Inspection undertaken by:	Antoinette McNamara
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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	N/A
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Description of service

Room to Bloom is a private service operating from a prefabricated building in the rural village of Moyglass Co Tipperary. A sessional service is provided for children aged 2 to 6 years of age over 38 weeks per year, 09:00 to 12:00. There is a strong ethos on outdoor play which is central to curriculum delivery. The service also offers a school age service.

Staffing

The registered provider along with three staff work in the service daily. Qualifications were held in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5 and above the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and recruitment,

Regulation 10 Policies

Regulation 11(1)(3) Staffing levels,

Regulation 19 (1)(a) (3) Health, welfare, and development of the child,

Regulation 22 Food and drink,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of the child,
Regulation 25 (1)(2)(a)(b) First aid

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider is the person in charge and oversees the operation of the childcare facility. A second named person in charge can deputise, as required.

(b) A person in charge was present on the day of inspection. A person in charge was present daily.

The staff files for three staff and the registered provider were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for each staff member working at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member working in the service. Garda vetting had been renewed, in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting documentation was available for one staff member working in the service, who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

(4) Certificates of qualifications for the staff working with children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies were assessed for compliance and were deemed to meet the necessary requirements:

- Policy on managing behaviour
- Healthy eating policy

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) The registered provider ensured that there were enough adults to respond to children's individual needs.

There were 4 staff directly working with 23 children.

(3) The person in charge ensured that the adult to children ratio was maintained. The service exceeded the minimum child to adult ratio required under the regulation.

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

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic needs:

The service had a healthy eating policy. The children brought a packed lunch to eat at snack time. Perishable foods were stored in a fridge in the service. Staff sat with the children during snack time to supervise them, encourage conversation and to help if needed, for example with opening lunch boxes. A child friendly food pyramid was displayed on the wall of the service. Children had access to their water bottles during the day. The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the service. The available space within the care rooms supported the children to explore their environment and to freely engage with materials. On the morning of inspection children had the opportunity of free play followed by singing and practicing their Christmas songs. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own level of personal care appropriate to their level of development. For example, children who were toilet trained were able to access the toilet throughout the day. Tissues were freely available for children to blow their own noses and wipe their faces. The children were reminded by staff to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as after using the bathroom. The classroom had direct access out on to an enclosed play area. Outdoor play was promoted and included as part of the daily programme of activities. Children had wetsuits and wellingtons in the service which allowed them to play outside year-round.

Physical and material environment:

The indoor environment was warm, bright and well ventilated. There were two interconnecting rooms which the children could move between on the morning of inspection. A wide variety of defined areas of interest were provided for the children to play with. These included a kitchen and role play area, dress up area, puppets, book corner with cosy couch, building blocks, a farm table, and craft area with a large art easel. Low level shelving provided children with access to a wide selection of activities, suitable for stage of the children's development such as Montessori toys and puzzles. Adequate space was available for children to engage in both floor and table play independently and in groups. The room was laid out with appropriately sized furniture and a large range of developmentally appropriate equipment and materials which were well organised. The walls of the service were decorated with the children's autumn artwork. Children's identity and belonging was fostered through the display of a birthday wall and personalised coat hooks for the children. Pictograms timetables were displayed at the children's eye level so that they could see what was happening next. There was a nature table present in the

service which was themed to autumn. The walls were also decorated with the weather, the alphabet, numbers, the solar system and the life cycle of some wildlife such as chickens, frogs and butterflies.

There was an outdoor classroom available in the service. The outdoor play area was large and secure with a wide range of activities available to the children. There was a covered area available, a large blackboard, a music wall, a life size abacus, a life skills boards, mud kitchens, sand pit, balance beams, an area for messy and water play, ride on toys, climbing wall and a playhouse. As well as the wide range of materials outside for play there was a bug hotel. On the morning music played in the outdoor area while the children were playing outdoors. The service also had access to the national school playing field and basketball court.

Supporting relationships

The children were cared for by the same team of staff each day, which supported the development of secure relationships between the children and their main carers. The favourable adult to child ratios in each room ensured that each child received as much individual time as they required and helped the staff to know the children better, to discover their likes, needs and emergent interests.

(3) The service's policy on managing behaviour met the requirements and specified that the practices or the threat of any practices that are disrespectful, degrading, humiliating, exploitative, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are not carried out on any child while attending the service. Staff members were observed to treat the children with respect and a positive regard. They sat with children in small groups or individually, engaged in conversation with and listened attentively to the children as they spoke.

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

The service had a healthy eating policy. A child friendly food pyramid was displayed on the classroom wall. All foods eaten by the children were supplied by their parents. Perishable foods were stored in a fridge in the service. Staff sat with the children during snack time to supervise them, encourage conversation and to help if needed, for example with opening lunch boxes. Drinking water was available to the children throughout the day, should they become thirsty at any stage. Morning snack consisted of a wide variety of foods, including fresh fruit, sandwiches, yogurts, rice cakes, crackers and 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 premises was secured to prevent children leaving unsupervised and unauthorised persons gaining access. The entrance gate was locked, and a member of staff had to open the gate to allow access. The outdoor area was also secure. Cleaning agents and hazardous materials were stored inaccessible to children. Radiator covers and pinch protectors were present to prevent injury to children.

Infection control:

There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand drying throughout the service. There were designated children's toilets available to the children. Designated staff toilets were also provided. Handwashing reminders and steps were present in the sanitary accommodation. There were disposable gloves and aprons available for staff. There was also a sink in the classroom. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day such as after using the toilet. A tissue station was available to the children in the classroom. Pedal bins were in operation to avoid cross contamination. Hand sanitizer was available in the service.

Fire safety:

Fire exits were found to be unobstructed on the day of inspection.
There were fire evacuation procedures displayed in a prominent area within the service.
Firefighting equipment was present in 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

- (1) There were staff trained in first aid responder (FAR) available to the children attending the service.
- (2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the service.