

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW120
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Name of Service:	Twinklers Montessori
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Address of Service:	Coral Leisure Centre, Seaview Avenue, Ferrybank, Arklow, Co Wicklow
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Eircode:	Y14 X753
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Name of Registered Provider:	Bernie Halpin
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona Condon
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

Twinklers Montessori is a sessional service which is located in Arklow town, County Wicklow. It is located in a leisure centre and consists of a care room, sanitary accommodation and a storage room. This service is registered to provide care and education for a maximum of 22 children aged between 2 to 6 years of age and operates from 09:30 to 13:00 daily. There is a small outdoor area at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are two adults employed to work directly with the children, one of whom is the registered provider.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. 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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the Registered Provider on 11 February 2026 in relation to a non-compliance identified in relation to Regulation 25 - First Aid. There was no adult present who had a current qualification in First Aid Response. In addition, there was no adult present with an up-to-date qualification in Paediatric First Aid.

A response from the registered provider was received and accepted 12 February 2026.

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

(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

(2) Files for two adults were reviewed.

(a)(b) Four written and validated references were available for two adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for two adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as no adult had been employed outside the state for a period of more than six months as an adult.

(4) The two adults employed held major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at National Framework for Qualifications.

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) There were two adults working directly with fifteen pre-school children during the inspection.

(3) The adult/child ratio was maintained throughout the morning.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (a)-(i) Twelve files were examined. The records required in writing in relation to (a)-(i) above was kept for each child. The children's files were located in a secure place 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, and

Compliance Information

Basic Needs of Infants and Children

- Snacks which were provided by the parents in line with the healthy eating policy of the service were enjoyed by the children on the day of inspection. Staff provided assistance to children as required. Drinking water was provided with the children's snack and was freely available at all times
- Children used the toilet independently and assistance was given if required.
- Each room had access to the outdoor area where age-appropriate toys and equipment was available.

Supporting Relationships around Children

- There was evidence that the service worked in partnership with parents. The staff communicate information to parents daily at drop off and collection times.
- Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed them by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. The staff comforted the children when they became upset - holding them and talking to them in soft tones.
- Staff encouraged children to resolve any disagreements which arose between themselves. However, if needed the staff members intervened skilfully, and used distraction and re-direction if needed.

Physical and Material Environment

- The play resources available to the children were accessible, organised and stored on low level shelving which allowed the children to select and replace items and materials of interest.
- There was an adequate amount of age-appropriate furniture and equipment available in the room. Equipment included Montessori equipment, construction, home corner, toy animals, puzzles and a library.
- There was evidence of the children's artwork on display in the room.
- An ambient temperature of 18.5°C – 22°C was maintained in the care room.

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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.
- Documentary evidence was available that fire drills were being carried out on a monthly basis as per best practice guidelines.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelving and were inaccessible to the pre-school children.

Infection Control:

- Children were encouraged to wash their hands regularly including before snack and after using the toilet. Effective hand hygiene practices were observed and in accordance with the services infection control policies and procedures. Pedal operated bins were available in the sanitary areas and in the care rooms.
- The premises play equipment, and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Cleaning schedules were maintained in the care room and sanitary area and the environment was clean.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. Written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. Medication was stored safely. Staff were aware of the procedure to be undertaken should medication be required

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 for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school room.

(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) An adult with a current certificate in First Aid Response was not available to the children attending the pre-school service. The registered provider had a certificate which had expired on 10 November 2025.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The first aid course was completed on 28 February 2026.

The registered provider has set a reminder on the phone and noted the renewal date in the diary and will contact the instructor well in advance to organise re-training.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the First Aid Certificate for the registered provider which expires on 28 February 2028.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 25.

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) Documentary evidence was available that fire drills were being carried out on a monthly basis as per best practice guidelines. The last fire drill was carried out on 16 January 2026.

(4)

Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.