

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WW158
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Footprints Montessori Pre-school
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	8 Carrig Villas, Killincarrig, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A63 NX63
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Helen Grace, Linda Grace-Devine, Suzanna Grace-Carney
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	30/09/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	31	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Mona Condon
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

Footprints Montessori Pre-school is registered to provide sessional care and education to pre-school children from two to six years of age. The service operates two sessions each morning one from 9.30am to 1pm and a second from 10am to 1.30pm. The pre-school operates in a domestic home which has been adapted for use as a pre-school. It is located on the outskirts of the village of Greystones, Co. Wicklow. There are three childcare rooms. The Busy Bee and Clever Cats rooms are together on one side of the hallway while the other two rooms, Dippy Ducks and Eager Elephants Rooms are located on the other side of the hallway. Sanitary areas for the children are available on the ground floor and on the first floor of the premises. The service has an outdoor area at the rear of the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment.

### Staffing

There are three registered providers, two of whom were present during the inspection. The service employs five staff members to provide direct care to the pre-school children.

### 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 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.

## Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered providers, 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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

One new staff member was employed since last inspection.

(a)(b) Two written past employer validated references were available in respect of one new adult employed.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for one new staff member. 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 the new adult employed had not lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Documentary evidence was available to confirm that all adults had 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.

### 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 four adults present working directly with thirty-one pre-school children on the day of the inspection. A fifth adult was available to give support wherever needed during the morning session.

(3) The adult/child ratios were 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.*

*(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)-(i)

Twelve files were examined.

In relation to the files examined, the record 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.

(3) (c) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) (a)-(i) was open to inspection on the premises by the inspector.

### 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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

### Compliance Information

(1)

(h) A record was available of each child's attendance with their time of arrival and departure.

(j) Documentation was available to demonstrate that signed parental consent was required prior to administering medication to a pre-school child. A method to record medication administration was in place.

(k) Written details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service were available. This was signed by a staff member, manager, and the parent of the child.

### 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 lunch and after using the toilet. Effective hand hygiene practices were observed and in accordance with the service's 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 each care room and in the sanitary areas 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.

##### Outings:

- The registered provider stated that outings are carried out by the service. A comprehensive outings policy was available.

### 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) An adult trained in First Aid Response was present and immediately available to the pre-school children.
- (2)(a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school room and hallway.
- 2(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the 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 in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 22 of September 2025
- (1)(b) Records were available detailing the number, type, and maintenance of fire- fighting equipment. and smoke alarms dated November 2024 and October 2025 respectively.
- (4) Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

## Compliance Information

The children present were supervised at all times when indoors and outdoors during the session.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

*A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.*

## Compliance Information

The insurance certificate was available and covers 42 children. It has an expiry date of 27 of November 2025.