

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WW165		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Hollyoaks Montessori Pre-school		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	St. Peter's National School, Hawthorn Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow		
<b>Eircode:</b>	A98 YH93		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Susan Carey		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	06/10/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	16	PM No.
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Level 7, Brunel building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham Dublin 8		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R Phillips		
<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>	N/A		

### Description of service

Hollyoaks Montessori preschool operates from within St. Peters National school, Bray Co. Wicklow. The service provides a sessional early years' service to children from 2-6 years of age and currently operates from 09:00-12:00hrs Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. The Montessori room has a sanitary area, and use of a large outdoor play area and the school hall also.

### Staffing

The service employs two staff on a permanent basis and are in the process of recruiting another. The registered provider manages the service and works directly with the children in the service.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

- 9 (1)(2)(4) Management and recruitment,
- 11(1)(3) Staffing levels,
- 15(1)(a)-(i), (3)(c) Records of a preschool child,
- 19 (1)(a) Health Welfare and Development of the child,

23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,

25 (1)(2)(a)(b) First Aid, and

26 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c) (4) Fire Safety measures.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Records of a preschool child.

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, deputy person in charge, 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 registered provider is the designated person in charge and has a named person to deputise as required.
  - (b) The person in charge was present on the inspector's arrival and remained throughout the inspection.
  - (c) It was evident that there was a clear management structure in the service.
- (2)(a)(b) The following references were made available in respect of the two staff files:  
four written validated references, three from previous employers, one from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for both staff. Garda vetting records demonstrated that the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for both adults employed.

(d) Police vetting certification was not required as neither member of staff resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.

(4) Both staff members including the manager held qualifications in childcare of at least level five or 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) On the day of inspection, the inspector observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the preschool children.

(3) There were 16 children being cared for by two adults, with the person in charge also working directly with the children.

### 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 sample of 10 enrolment records for children were reviewed. The information required was documented as outlined below:

(a) The name and date of birth of each child.

(b) The date when each child first attended the service.

(c) A section was available for recording the date when the child ceases attending.

(d) The name, address and telephone number of parents and information where parents can be contacted.

(e) Names and contact details of other adults authorised to collect the child.

(f) Medical information, allergies, dietary preferences, additional needs, and other information specific to the child.

(g) The name and telephone number of the child's medical practitioner.

(h) Immunisation details.

(i) Signed parental consent for medical treatment in the event of an emergency.

(3)(c) The above records were made readily available for inspection.

### 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 children's own water bottles were available to them on a low-level trolley throughout the inspection.

The children bring a lunch prepared at home, and the staff sat with them and engaged in conversation with them while they ate. The children's independence was encouraged in managing their personal belongings.

The sanitary area within the classroom was accessible to the children to use independently under supervision.

##### Supporting Relationships around Children:

The 'My family' wall was at the children's eye level, promoting a sense of belonging in the service and facilitating a connection to home.

A healthy ethos was implemented in relation to supporting the children's emotional wellbeing and literacy. The staff were heard encouraging the children to express their feelings and offer one another kindness when managing minor disputes.

Settling in and transitions were made as smooth as possible in the service. Staff offered additional support to a child who was unsettled in the early morning. The staff managed transitions well by letting the children know in advance what was going to happen.

In conversation with the registered provider, it was evident that the service is embedded in the local community.

The staff in the service have training in a programme to promote the children's speech and language development. The staff liaise with speech and language therapists to provide this programme in partnership with parents to the children who require this support.

Further evidence of their role in the community promoting smooth transitions to primary schools locally was evident in conversation with the registered provider who facilitates a sharing of the children's profiles in partnership with parents to the schools that the children will go to.

##### Physical and Material Environment:

Low level open shelving facilitated the children's choices of activities and play materials. There were ample Montessori play materials and puzzles. There was a cosy area where children could rest and a library area.

The children engaged in imaginative play in the Doctors waiting room, sensorial play with colourful ribbons and painting and modelling dough. Gross motor development was promoted with play materials such as balance boards and space to run and jump in the hall. There is also a large playground with a sensory garden and slide and climbing walls and structures. The children sang together at circle time.

**Programme of Activities:**

The daily routine was written in messaging sent to parents and on the classroom wall.

Plans for activities based on children’s emerging interests was facilitated in the service as evidenced by the children taking a few minutes in the morning while playing with modelling dough engaged in conversation to plan their days activities and choices. The Inspector also observed plans documented by staff relating to children’s emerging interests. A second opportunity after lunch was given for the children to plan the remaining activities. Individual child led care was evident in this service, with individual learning plans for the current developmental stage of each child, as well as individual inclusion plans to promote each child’s learning and development.

**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**

The inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

**General Safety:**

The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.

All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.

There was a fridge provided where the children’s lunchboxes were stored to prevent spoiling of perishable foods.

The radiators were covered to prevent scalds.

**Infection Control:**

There was warm water, liquid soap and hand towels available to facilitate handwashing and prevent the spread of infection. The children were observed washing their hands after messy play and using the toilet and before eating.

The staff cleaned the tables before and after eating.

There was completed cleaning schedules observed and the room and materials were observed to be clean and in good condition.

Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal operated bins in the sanitary area and classroom.

### Administration of Medication:

In conversation with the staff, it was highlighted that no child receives regular medication or has a care plan this term. However, there was evidence of care plans for previous children who attended. The registered provider detailed the procedure if a child is unwell that staff contact parents/guardians who are usually nearby and collect the child. There was signed consent for administration of anti-pyretic medicine if required, but the staff stated they very rarely have to give medicine in the service.

Medicine was stored in its original packaging, in date and out of reach of children, as required.

### Fire Safety:

The fire exits were observed to be unobstructed, and sign posted.

Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous places, and the fire exits were signposted.

### Outing:

The registered provider stated the service doesn't currently take the children on outings.

## 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)  
Two adults with in-date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificates were present throughout the inspection. Discussion with the registered provider highlighted that there is always someone with FAR training available to the children in the service. The manager of the service also has FAR certification for administration of adrenaline in an emergency.

(2)

(a) (b) Two fully stocked first aid boxes were safely stored in a conspicuous location in the service.

## 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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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 detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had taken place on 11 September 2025.

(b)

The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on 03 September 2025 and that maintenance of the smoke alarm system had taken place on 30 September 2025.

(4)

There were Fire exit signs, fire action signs, and emergency evacuation procedures displayed prominently on the walls in the care room and on the corridors throughout the building.