

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015WW191

**Name of Service:** Westfield Montessori School

**Address of Service:** Westfield House, Sidmonton Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow

**Eircode:** A98 H923

**Name of Registered Provider:** Deirdre Costello

**Service type:** Part Time, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 08/01/2026

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM	8
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	H. Bourke
<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).

**Conditions if applicable** N/A

### Description of service

This private Montessori service was first established in 2003. The service operates from an adapted premises located on the grounds of the registered providers home in a residential area of Bray Co. Wicklow.

The service comprises of one large care room, a sanitary area, and a large outdoor area which the children have access to daily. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between two years and six years of age.

The registered provider operates a part-time and sessional ECCE service for 38 weeks of the year Monday to Friday 09:00 to 13:00. Learning is facilitated following a Montessori curriculum and is integrated with a play-based child led curriculum.

### Staffing

The registered provider and one other staff member work in the Montessori.

### 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, second staff member 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 was in charge of the service and there was a named staff member who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider was on the premises at the time of arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Written references were available with respect to two staff members.

(c)

The required Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of two staff members.

(d)

Police vetting was available for the two staff members as both staff members had lived outside the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.

(4)

One staff member held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 7 and the second staff member had a qualification deemed equivalent on the National Framework of 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.*

*(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)  
The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service at all times.

(2)  
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were two adults employed and present with ten children on the day of inspection.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1)  
*(a) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that—  
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*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

#### **BASIC NEEDS:**

- Children were supported and encouraged to be independent with using the toilet but were supervised appropriately. Hand washing following using the toilet was observed and visible prompts to encourage same were in place.

- Small incidents between children were managed in a professional and caring way, making sure that the conflict was resolved in an appropriate way and that children were happy to go back to their activities.
- Children were given opportunities to make choices as to which activities they wished to do and were supported in their choice. Examples of some activities included drawing, playing with dolls, using Montessori equipment and imaginative role play.
- All children were observed enjoying freedom of movement within the Montessori room and in the garden area.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- There were low level tables and chairs and low-level shelving with equipment that was visible, available and accessible to the children.
- Children's artwork was displayed on the walls in the Montessori room.
- The Montessori has a secure outdoor area located to the side of the premises. The outdoor area was safe, suitable and secure. The children had access to a wide variety of toys to play with but also had the freedom to enjoy kicking a football and running around the grassed garden.
- The Montessori room was maintained at comfortable temperature of 19 °C throughout the morning.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-*

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day,*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The registered provider ensured that there were suitable play facilities for all children attending the service, both in the care room and the outdoor area.

(b)

While no child attending the service required rest during the inspection, there was a suitable rest area available to the children to use should they require it during their day.

### 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 main door to the Montessori room was securely locked on arrival of the inspector to the service.
- All toys examined were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- There were two emergency exit routes in the Montessori room both were free from obstruction and clearly marked.

##### Infection Control:

- There was a sanitary area located in the Montessori room. There was warm running water at 43°C, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- A foot pedal bin was available in the sanitary area and in the Montessori room for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other waste matter.
- Table cleaning was observed before snack time.
- Hand washing by the adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and returning from the outdoor area.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the Montessori service.

### 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.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

The registered provider ensured that all children attending the Montessori were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The registered provider ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people had access to the Montessori.

(b)

The registered provider had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the Montessori.

(4)

The registered provider was able to demonstrate that the visitors' book was kept for a period of one year from the dates to which it relates.

### 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 was one adult trained in FAR (First Aid Response) and available to the children throughout the inspection.
- (2)(a)  
A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place in the Montessori room.
- (b)  
The first aid box was available to the children attending the service at all times

### 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 firefighting 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)  
There was a record of fire drills having taken place in the Montessori service. The last recorded fire drill was 18 December 2025.
- (b)  
There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke detectors on the premises dated 30 September 2025 and 5 January 2026 respectively.
- (2)(c)  
The above records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of what procedures should be followed in the event of an emergency, displayed in the Montessori room.