

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015WX033 |
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| Name of Service: | Coisceim Montessori |
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| Address of Service: | Ardeen, Wood Road, Bunclody, Co. Wexford |
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| Eircode: | Y21 XP28 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Bernadette Mahon |
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| Service type: | Sessional |
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| Date of Inspection: | 30/04/2025 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 22 | PM | NA |
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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | C. Ryan |
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| Inspection undertaken by: | Tusla Early Years Ely Hospital, Ferrybank Wexford |
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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).

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| Conditions if applicable | n/a |
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Description of service

Coisceim Montessori is a privately owned preschool service which opened in September 1999. It is located on the outskirts of Bunclody Co Wexford. The service offers a play-based programme of care to children aged 3 to 5 years. The service operates from 09:00 to 12:00 Monday to Friday and can accommodate up to 22 children. The service is located in a building to the rear of the registered provider's family home. The service consists of an entrance hall, a large playroom, children's toilets and an office. There is a large outdoor play area behind the building which is fully enclosed.

Staffing

There are two staff working in the service, which includes the registered provider who works directly with the children. The staff working directly with the children in the service held the minimum Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) level 6 and above qualifications in Montessori Education and Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of child,
Regulation 24 Checking in and out and record of attendance,
Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),
Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4) and
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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, person in charge, 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)

On the day of the inspection the registered provider was the designated person in charge of the service. There was a second named staff member available to deputise as needed.

The staff files for two staff working in the service were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a)(b)

There were validated references for all employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were not required as none of the staff had lived or worked outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

Certificates of qualifications for all staff members working directly with the preschool children were available on file.

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)(3)

During the inspection, there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the service. On the day 2 staff members cared for 22 children.

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

(1)(a)

On arrival at the service the staff and children were engaged in a celebrating a child's birthday and welcomed the inspector. The children were observed to be confident and familiar with the staff and enjoyed telling the inspector about their morning activities.

The setting was child centred, and the atmosphere relaxed with plenty of laughter heard during the morning. The children were observed to be happy and the staff discussed how the daily routine was led by the children's interests.

On the day of inspection, the children had decided that they wanted to eat their lunches outside. The staff facilitated the children's expression to eat outside and ensured hands were washed before helping the children to bring their lunch boxes out.

The garden was enclosed to the rear of the service. The area was enclosed by a high fence, trees and natural hedge borders. The area was large and covered with a mulch bark. There were swings, playhouse, sandpits, a covered area with seating, benches, footballs, bikes, climbing frames and a new large play bus. The children were fully immersed in free and imaginative play in the outdoors area.

Indoors, children used the playroom that was bright with lots of room to move about, explore and engage in activities, with well-defined and resourced interest areas. The room had been recently repainted and children's artwork, including drawings of their own families were prominently displayed around the room. There was a supply of toys and equipment stored on low open shelves in the room. Areas of interest included a home corner, dress up clothes, reading materials, art materials, puzzles, jigsaws, blocks and small world toys.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

The staff maintained the daily attendance record for checking in and out children to 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 was evidence to demonstrate that a staff member was trained in FAR and first aid for children available to the children attending the preschool.

(2)(a)(b)
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

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.

(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)
The last recorded fire drill was carried out on 5th March 2025.

(1)(b)
A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system were serviced in March 2025.

(4)
There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a valid certificate of insurance for a sessional service for 22 children.