

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016WW004		
Name of Service:	Little Bunnies Montessori		
Address of Service:	St. Andrews (Old School), Eglington Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow		
Eircode:	A98 NX24		
Name of Registered Provider:	Aisling Walsh		
Service type:	Part Time		
Date of Inspection:	15/01/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	36	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow		
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke		
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

Description of service

This privately owned Montessori was first established in 2016 and is located in the urban setting of Bray Co. Wicklow. This part-time service is open from Monday to Friday between the hours of 09.00 am and 2.00pm. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between two years and six years of age, this includes a sessional ECCE service for 38 weeks of the year, with staggered start times 09.00 am to 12.00pm and 09.30am to 12.30pm. A school age service is also provided. The premises is a single storey prefabricated building with two pre-school rooms and a secure outdoor facility that the children have access to on a daily basis.

Staffing

There are seven staff members employed in the Montessori service, this does not include the registered provider. There were six staff present on the day of inspection.

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 manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Compliance Information

The registered provider has submitted a Change in Circumstance form to the registration office to change the email address of the service, designated person in charge, phone numbers of the service and that an afterschool service is provided. The completed form was sent on the 22nd of January 2024.

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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

Compliance Information

The files for seven adults were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The manager of the Montessori was present on the day of inspection and a named person was able to deputise as required.

(b)

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

(c)

There was a clear management structure present in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of seven adults.

(c)

Completed Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for seven adults employed.

(d)

International police vetting was not required as no adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Seven members of staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or had a qualification deemed equivalent.

(6)

One adult was employed pursuant to the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion model.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The Infection Control Policy was available and reviewed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

There was no Nappy Changing procedure available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A new Nappy Changing policy has been implemented in the service and rolled out to all staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the new Nappy Changing policy was submitted with the CAPA response from the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective action has addressed the non-compliance found in relation to Regulation 10- Policies and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that during the operation of the Montessori that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2)
The registered provider ensured that the minimum adult to children ratio was maintained, there were six staff present with 36 children on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)
There was a minimum of two adults present on the premises throughout the operational hours of the Montessori and this was confirmed by reviewing the staff roster.

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.

(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above list of particulars, was kept in respect of each child attending the Montessori.

(3)(c)

The manager ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

(5)

The manager had evidence that all children's records were kept for a period of 2 years from the time a child started at the pre-school service.

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 was securely locked on arrival of the inspector to the service.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in the Montessori.
- All toys were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- There was a large, suitable, safe and secure outdoor area to the front of the Montessori.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in the Montessori rooms were free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- The Montessori had its sanitary areas and nappy changing area between the two pre-school rooms. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available in both areas. A foot pedal bin was available in each area for the disposal of used paper towels.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and outdoor play.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the Montessori rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

On the day of inspection, the follow practices were observed during a nappy change in the sanitary area.

1. A staff member kept their disposable gloves on during the entire nappy changing procedure including returning the child to the care room.
2. A child was allowed to lift the lid of the foot pedal waste bin, with their hand, to dispose of their used paper towel following hand washing.
3. The nappy changing area was not cleaned down between nappy changes.
4. A staff member was observed not to wash their hands at the start of the next nappy changing process.
5. The nappy changing area was not prepared with a new nappy and nappy disposal bag before a new child was brought out for nappy changing, this was carried out when the child was on the nappy changing table.

6. An unused nappy disposal bag was returned to the storage basket following a nappy change before the staff member removed their used disposable gloves.

Good nappy changing practices are essential to the prevention and spread of infection in a pre-school service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

There was a staff meeting to discuss in detail the non-compliances of issues with nappy changing in relation to Infection control. Attached is the document that we now have up on the walls in the nappy changing area as a reminder to all staff of how nappy changing should be carried out on a daily basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

A copy of the new Nappy Changing policy was submitted with the CAPA response from the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The new Nappy Changing policy along with staff training should address the non-compliances found on the day of inspection Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, Infection Control (1-6) and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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

(3)(a)(i-iv)

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

(b)

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

(4)

The manager was able to demonstrate that the visitors book was kept for a period of one year from the dates to which it related.

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)

The registered provider ensured that a person trained in FAR first aid was available at all times to the children attending the Montessori.

(2)(a)

The manager ensured that there was a well-equipped First Aid box easily accessible in both Montessori rooms.

(b)

The First Aid boxes were always available to the children attending the Montessori.

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 that had taken place in the premises and the last fire drill took place on the 18th of December 2023.

(b)

There was a maintenance record available for the firefighting equipment dated the 6th of September 2023 and the smoke detection system dated the 3rd of March 2023.

(2)(c)

The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were clearly displayed in each Montessori room.

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 adult to child ratios operating within the Montessori ensured that there was adequate supervision of the children attending the service at all times.