

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:	24/03/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	37	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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 09.30 and 14.00. 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, 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 six adults employed in the Montessori service. The registered provider does not work directly in the service but is available to cover if required. There were five staff present on the day of inspection. The registered provider arrived at the service after the inspection had started.

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 wellbeing 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.

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

Regulation 11 - Staffing Levels

Regulation 19 (1)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

Regulation 25 - First aid

Regulation 26 - Fire Safety measures

Regulation 27 - Supervision

Regulation 29 - Premises

However, on inspection a non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under

Regulation 8 – Notification of Change in Circumstances

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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 II - Registration and Register

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed 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) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

The registered provider failed to notify the Agency of a new building replacing the old Montessori building.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A Change of Circumstances form has been sent and will notify Tusla of any changes going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

A photograph copy of a completed Change in Circumstances form was submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The above actions have addressed the non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to regulation 8 and will be reviewed on next 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,*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(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

Following a discussion with the manager and reviewing the staff roster it was confirmed that six adults are employed in the service. The registered provider was not included on the roster but covers in the service when required. There were two new adults employed in the service since the last inspection, their files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.

(b)

The manager 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 in the service. All adults had their identified roles.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of seven adults.

(c)

Completed three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for seven adults.

(d)

International police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Seven adults 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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the Montessori service.

(2)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were five adults working directly with 37 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 registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The manager ensured that there were appropriate and suitable care practices in place within the Montessori. Children's emergent interests were encouraged, observed, recorded and discussed by the adults and included, where possible. The classroom layouts reflected specific areas of interests for the children.

Children were given the opportunity for free play during the morning, and children's participation was encouraged in all activities throughout the day. All the children have to opportunity to access the outdoor area during their day.

The children have suitable outdoor clothes, so they can use the outdoor facilities during all types of weather. The transition between one activity and the next was smooth and unhurried, aided by the language used by the adults to the children. Positive reinforcement of children's behaviour contributed to a pleasant environment for the children in the service. Snack time was a well organised and happy event.

Hand washing by the children was observed before the children started eating their snack. There was fresh drinking water available to the children throughout the morning. The snack time was relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience for children as adults engaged with them helping when required.

Children were supported to be independent with looking after their belongings, in the tidy up process and with using the toilet. All with adequate supervision.

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

Infection Control:

1. Hand washing by both adults and children was observed before snack time.
2. Cleaning of tables and the Montessori rooms was observed on inspection.
3. A cleaning schedule was available and completed.
4. All bins in the care rooms were foot pedal operated, for the safe disposal of waste.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

5. While a nappy change was not observed on the day of inspection, a copy of a correct nappy changing procedure was available on the wall of the nappy changing area.

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.

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 relates.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 were two adults 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 each 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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(1)(a)

There was a record of fire drills having taken place in the Montessori service. The last recorded fire drill was 3 March 2026.

(b)

There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke detectors on the premises dated September 2025 for both.

(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 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 manager was able to demonstrate that all children attending the Montessori were adequately supervised during their time in the service.

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

(a)

The new Montessori premises appeared to be of a sound a stable structure.

(b)

The new Montessori premises appeared to be safe and was secure.

(c)

The new Montessori premises was adequately lit, was warm and well ventilated.

(d)

The new Montessori premises was visibly clean, appeared well maintained and did not appear to be in need of any repairs.

(e)

The new Montessori premises had adequate sanitary facilities to meet the needs of the children attending the service.