

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

9TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017FL504		
Name of Service:	Room To Bloom Montessori		
Address of Service:	7 Limetree Avenue, Portmarnock, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D13 RC95		
Name of Registered Provider:	Niamh Darcy		
Service type:	Part Time		
Date of Inspection:	04/11/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM 7
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.		
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Coyle		
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

Room to Bloom Montessori was established by the registered provider in 2017 providing part-time care to pre-school children aged between 3 year and 6 years. The service operates from 9.00am to 1.15pm each weekday, accommodating a maximum of 11 pre-school children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.00am to 12. 00pm. The service is conducted from a purpose-built premises located to the rear of the registered providers family home with a separate gated entrance. An enclosed outdoor area is available to the children.

Staffing

The registered provider works directly with the children on a daily basis and is supported by a second member of staff.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15,19,23,25 and 26; These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations 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, 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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection.

The files for 2 staff members including the registered provider were reviewed.

(2)(a) and (b) Two written references were available for the registered provider and two written, validated references were available for the staff member employed in the service.

(a) Two written references were from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 2 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as following a review of the staff files it was confirmed that neither of the staff members had resided outside the state for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) Two staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with children in the service, and each held appropriate childcare qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be 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.

(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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service at all times.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

There were 9 pre-school children aged 3 years 2 months to 4 years 9 months being cared for by 2 staff members.

(8)(a) A second adult is on the premises at all times when the service is in operation.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) Eleven children's records were reviewed. The registration forms were completed with the required information as specified in subsections (a) to (i) of this regulation.

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) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- There was a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the service. On the Inspectors arrival, the children were engaged in play-based activities in the care room. The staff members joined in with the children's play, providing encouraging and nurturing interactions to the children and supporting them to locate and set up materials to extend their play.
- The children brought their own packed lunch with them from home with sufficient food provided for the children to have both a morning snack and lunch. The children were free to have their first snack at a time of their own choosing. The children took their snack from the fridge and were reminded to wash their hands before eating. All the children had their lunch together with a relaxed and social atmosphere evident in the service. The children's independence was encouraged in opening their lunch boxes and peeling fruit with staff on hand to provide assistance as necessary with praise and affirmation given once the children had succeeded. The children's water bottles were freely available to them to take if thirsty throughout the session.
- The personal care needs of the children were attended to promptly with children facilitated to use the bathroom as needed with support and supervision provided as required with children gently reminded to wash their hands afterwards. Aprons were available for messy play activities and children were supported in putting their coats and rubber boots on independently before they went outside.
- Transitions were well supported in the service. The children were provided with regular updates and reminders as to when one activity was coming to an end and what was happening next.
- The children had access to a well-resourced enclosed outdoor space to the rear of the service All of the children in attendance enjoyed time outside on the day of inspection.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members were observed to be caring, attentive and responsive to the needs of the children. The interactions between the adults and the children were positive and encouraging with staff regularly praising children for their efforts and achievements.
- The children were observed to be very comfortable in their environment; they confidently navigated the indoor and outdoor play environment and sought out staff for support and guidance as needed. In turn staff were observed to be willing play partners with the children and supported the children as needed.
- The staff members demonstrated positive regard for the children and their families through the use of language and the availability of a family photographs in the service. Individual photograph albums of each child were available on a friendship tree for the children to access as they chose. Additionally, the children's artwork was displayed on the walls of the service all of which encouraged the children's sense of belonging in the service.
- The children were observed to be engaged in activities that were planned based on the children's interests or which the children had chosen themselves with the staff members paying close attention to the children's emerging interests. The staff members were observed to build the children's confidence by praising and encouraging their involvement in activities and on completion of tasks.
- Exchange of information on children's care and well-being was observed taking place between parents and staff members in a friendly manner at collection times in the service.

Physical and material environment:

- The care room was bright and welcoming with play materials and equipment positioned on low level shelving to enable the children to take and return materials as they chose, and the children demonstrated familiarity with navigating their environment to access the materials and play resources they wanted to play with.
- The care room was well resourced with a wide range of interest areas in addition to play and learning materials to support the children's play experiences. Interest areas included a home corner which supported the children's imaginary play and included a well-resourced kitchen with crockery and cooking utensils for the children to extend their play. A selection of transport toys and construction resources were provided for the children to use. A broad range of Montessori materials including literacy, numeracy and practical life resources were situated on low level shelves for the children to take as they chose along with a wide choice of tabletop materials and jigsaws.

- The registered provider informed the inspector that the room was arranged based on the children’s emergent interests and preferences. A large table display was set up focusing on ‘We’re going on a bear hunt’ with a forested area containing grass and bears and pictures located behind the display to enhance the children’s learning and interest. During story time the children chose to have the same titled book read to them.
- A wide selection of books was provided throughout the care room and alongside the rest area in the care room which supported the children’s communication and language development, and this was further enhanced through conversation and storytelling.
- A fully enclosed outdoor play area is accessed directly from the pre-school room, the children had rainwear and rubber boots available to allow them to access the outdoor area regardless of the weather. The area was predominantly surfaced with artificial grass with sections of decking also in place. A two-storey playhouse was provided with a home area and shop located on the ground floor with internal stairs leading to an upper floor which allowed the children to access a slide. A well-resourced play kitchen and art easel were available along with a wooden frame for pouring activities, construction materials and traffic toys.

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 external gate and internal door of the service was appropriately service were appropriately secured to prevent an unauthorised person from gaining access to the children and prevent children from exiting the premises unsupervised.
- The water temperature in the wash hand basins did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children in attendance.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available at all the sinks throughout the service. The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet, after nappy changing and following messy play and outdoor play.
- The premises, play equipment and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Up to date documented cleaning schedules were available in the service.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

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) A person who held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service. This was evidenced in the FAR training records maintained for the registered provider.

(2)(a)(b) The first aid box was available in the service and was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous location on the premises and this was available for the children in attendance, in the event of an emergency.

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.*
- (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 record was maintained of fire drills which had been completed in the service. Based on the records maintained and as reported by staff members, fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 18/10/2025.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The firefighting equipment was certified as having been serviced most recently on 20/08/2025 and the smoke alarms on 20/08/2025.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedure was displayed in the care rooms in the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire.