

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018WW507
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Name of Service:	Belmont Montessori
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Address of Service:	235 Belmont, Bray, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A98 F254
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Name of Registered Provider:	Susan Walsh
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Level 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	R Phillips
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).

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Description of service

Belmont Montessori is a privately owned Early years' service, registered to provide education and care on a sessional basis to children from 3-6 years of age, Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from a purpose-built extension adjacent to the registered providers home, in a residential area on the outskirts of Bray Co. Wicklow.

Staffing

The registered provider works directly with the children and operates the service singlehandedly.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

9 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(c) – Management and recruitment,

11 (1) (3) (8)(b) – Staffing levels,

15 Record of a preschool child,

19 (1)(b) – Health, welfare and development of child,

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23 Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child,

24 Checking in and out and record of attendance,

25 First Aid,

26 (1) (2) (c) (4) Fire safety measures.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation number 15 Records of a preschool child.

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 and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider was in charge when the inspector arrived unannounced for the inspection and remained throughout the inspection.

(2) Through discussion with the registered provider, it was established that no new staff commenced employment since the last inspection when full staff files were inspected for the registered provider and the emergency contact.

(2)(c) The registered provider was compliant with the early years inspectorate's regulatory notice to renew garda vetting every three years.

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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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. There were ten children being cared for by the registered provider.
- (3) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection.
- (8)(c) The registered provider operates the service alone. A second person familiar with the operation of the service is available to provide assistance to the registered provider in the event of an emergency.

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;*

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- (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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a)-(i) A sample of ten children's records was reviewed and contained the required information to inform their care.*
- (3)(c) The records were made available to the inspector.*

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-*
- (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

The registered provider engaged with the children in a warm respectful manner throughout the inspection and was familiar with the individual children's needs.

Children drank from their own water bottles, which were available at all times to them

The service had a healthy eating policy, and the children brought a variety of healthy foods for lunch, prepared by their parents. The inspector observed the children eating their lunch in a relaxed manner. The registered provider sat with them while they ate and engaged in conversation about healthy eating.

The children acted as helpers in getting the lunches from the fridge and were praised for their efforts.

Transitions were well supported with the registered provider informing the children what to expect to prepare for upcoming activities.

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Child led play was facilitated with the registered provider who engaged the children by following their lead in imaginary play and games chosen by them.

The children had the opportunity to play outdoors. There was ample play equipment, in good working order and suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present.

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

The following are examples of the measures undertaken by the registered provider to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service.

General Safety:

The entrance doors and outdoor area were appropriately secured preventing children from exiting the premises unsupervised and prevented unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.

Cleaning agents were stored appropriately up on high shelving out of reach of children.

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.

Lunches were stored in the fridge to prevent spoiling of perishable foods.

Infection Control:

The children had access to a warm water and hand soap and were observed to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before eating.

Tables were observed to be cleaned before and following meals.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were signposted and unobstructed in the service.

There were fire action signs near the exits. The registered provider and children identified the assembly point for the inspector.

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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 each child attending the service was signed in when the inspector arrived unannounced for the inspection. There was a record maintained evidencing that each child was signed in and out each day.

(3)(a)(i)-(iv) The registered provider ensured no person other than the above listed people can enter the premises.

(b) A record in writing was kept of all persons who entered the premises.

(4) The registered provider demonstrated that the record in writing referred to above was kept for a period of one year from the date in which it relates.

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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 held in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certification and was immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)

(a) A fully stocked first aid kit was stored in a conspicuous place within the service, out of reach of the children.

(b) The first aid kit was available to the children attending the service.

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.

(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.

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Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed the last fire drill had taken place on 06 March 2026.
- (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on 13 January 2026, and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system was last carried out on the same date.
- (2) (c) The records were made available for inspection.
- (4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.