

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019MH003		
Name of Service:	Jumping Joe's Crèche and Montessori		
Address of Service:	5A Millway, Glaseen, Stamullen, Co. Meath		
Eircode:	K32 YR80		
Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Brangan		
Service type:	Full Day, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	20/02/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM 17
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath C15 CP23		
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Taaffe		
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

Jumping Joe's Crèche and Montessori is one of two early years services owned and operated by the registered provider, both of which are located in Stamullen village. This full day care service is registered to accommodate a maximum of 40 pre-school children aged 0 – 6 years from 7.15am to 6.00pm. Eligible children are facilitated to participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.00am to 12.00midday each weekday for 38 weeks each year. School aged children are also accommodated in the service. Jumping Joe's Crèche and Montessori is conducted on the ground floor of a 2-storey premises located in a residential setting. There are 5 care rooms provided, namely the Baby Cubs Room, the Busy Bees Room, the Cheeky Chimps Room, the Happy Hedgehogs Room and the Tiny Giants Room. Ancillary accommodation includes a sleep room, sanitary facilities, a kitchen, staff room and office. Outdoor play is facilitated in the enclosed space to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 7 core staff members who work directly with the pre-school children and who are based in in this service. One of these named staff members deputises as the designated person in charge when required in the absence of the registered provider. A further 2 staff members are employed to care directly for the pre-school children in both services, working in this service when required in a relief capacity. A further 2 staff members work directly with school aged children in this service and also engage in cleaning and household duties. The registered provider works between both early years services on a daily basis.

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. 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 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,*

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge of the service. A named staff member was appointed to deputise in the role of person in charge when required.

(b) The designated deputy person in charge was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the day of inspection. The registered provider arrived on the premises shortly thereafter and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

A total of 12 staff files were reviewed, maintained in respect of the registered provider and all 11 staff members who either routinely or occasionally work in this service.

(2)(a)(b) There were 2 written, validated references available for the 12 adults whose files were reviewed.

(a) Sixteen written references were from past employers.

(b) Eight written references were from sources other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the registered provider and for the 11 staff members. Each of these records demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) The registered provider, the 7 core staff members who work directly with the pre-school children and who are based in in this service, and the 2 staff members who provide relief cover in both services all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) In relation to the 12 files reviewed, international police vetting was not available as required for a staff member who had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been undertaken:

Corrective Action

The staff member applied on the day of inspection for her international police vetting and has since received the document which has been placed in her staff file.

Preventive Action

The registered provider will ensure to check each and every new employee's work history and if they are in need of an international police vetting it will be obtained before the commencement of employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

- A copy of the relevant international police vetting, translated into English, was submitted to the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered provider demonstrated that the non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(2)(d) has been adequately addressed.

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 were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service during the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed:

- In the Baby Cubs Room there were 4 children aged 1 year 5 months to 1 year 8 months being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In the Busy Bees Room there were 4 children aged 2 years 3 months to 2 years 6 months being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In the Cheeky Chimps Room there were 10 children aged 3 years 3 months to 4 years 10 months being cared for by 2 staff members.
- The Happy Hedgehogs Room was vacant on the day of inspection which took place during the ECCE mid-term break.
- School aged children were accommodated in the Tiny Giants Room on the day of inspection

Throughout the inspection the registered provider and designated deputy person in charge provided support and assistance in the care rooms when required.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times, as evidenced in staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained in the service.

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 are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs of the Children:

- The registered provider and staff members spoke positively and kindly to and about the children during the inspection.
- A 3-week menu was on display which detailed a range of nutritious meals and snacks served to children at regular intervals throughout the day, prepared by the registered provider or staff members on site. Slices of water melon and banana were served with crackers for morning snack on the day of inspection and shepherd's pie was served for dinner. The children's water bottles were available to the children throughout the day, stored on low level shelving and these were placed on the children's tables to drink with their meals and snacks. Staff members sat with the children at mealtimes, chatting and providing assistance as required which created a relaxed atmosphere.
- The children had their nappies changed regularly and in a timely manner with the staff members heard chatting and singing to the children during these procedures.
- Staff members in the Baby Cubs Room confirmed that each child's need for sleep was generally met according to their home routine with children placed to sleep in cots in the sleep room when they showed signs of tiredness. The children in this care room were observed sleeping in their cots after dinner as they did not display signs of tiredness before then on the day of inspection. The children aged over 2 years who still availed of a daytime nap were observed sleeping on stackable beds set up on the floor of the Happy Hedgehogs Room after dinner.
- Once the heavy rainy conditions which prevailed on the morning of the inspection cleared, all children were facilitated to play outdoors, dressed appropriately in advance of going outside and having their outdoor clothing removed promptly on their return inside.

Supporting Relationships around Children

- The registered provider and staff members were observed engaging warmly and respectfully with the children during the inspection, speaking to the children at their level using soft tones of voice, and listening and responding to what the children were asking or telling them.
- The children appeared to be comfortable and familiar with their caregivers and within their environment. For example, the children were observed using the staff members' names when seeking comfort and assistance which was promptly provided by the adults.
- The children were prepared for transitions by verbal signposting, tidy-up themed songs and the adults describing what was happening next.
- Family photographs were on display in each care room which enabled the children to maintain links and bridge the gap between the service and home.
- Parents and guardians were provided with the opportunity to exchange information with the staff members about their children at drop-off and collection. In addition to verbal communication, the service used other means including telephone calls, a mobile messaging application, notices posted in the entrance hallway and emails to communicate with parents.

Physical and material environment:

- The play resources available to the children in each care room were accessible and stored on low level shelving which allowed the children to select and replace items and materials of interest.
- The care rooms were laid out in a variety of interest areas including home corners, shop areas, construction areas, arts and crafts stations and library areas, each of which was equipped with a suitable range of supportive play resources and books to invite children's interest and support play experiences.
- Sensorial play was facilitated in the service. For example, textured balls, liquid floor tiles, fidget toys and age-appropriate wooden play equipment were provided in the care rooms and playdough and painting activities were facilitated during the inspection.
- The outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises was surfaced in impact-absorbent material. Fencing was in place separating the area used by the children attending the Baby Cubs Room from the remaining space used by the remaining children. A range of play equipment was provided in both sections to support active play which included sit-in self-propel cars, low-level slides, a plastic climbing frame with slides attached, a water well and a plastic playhouse. Rigid plastic sheeting covered a section

of the outdoor space, facilitating play under shelter. There was evidence available in the service showing that a broad range of further outdoor play equipment had been ordered by the registered provider and were awaiting delivery.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) Adequate facilities for rest were provided in the service for the number and age range of children attending. A sufficient number of cots were provided, with 4 standard cots provided in the service's sleep room for the 4 children under the age of 2 years of age that were in attendance at the time of the inspection. All 4 cots were observed to be in good condition with appropriately fitting supportive safety mattresses. Children aged 2 years and older who still availed of a daytime nap slept on stackable beds set up in the Happy Hedgehogs Room after dinner. Within care rooms there were suitable rest areas for children to take a break from activities and rest if required.

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 providers and staff members to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service:

General Safety:

- The entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.

- The outdoor play area was enclosed by boundary walls and a latched gate to prevent unauthorised persons from gaining entry or a child from gaining unsupervised access to a roadway or other source of danger.
- The warm water temperature in the sanitary accommodation did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C and the inspector was informed that the warm water supply in the service was thermostatically controlled. This reduced the risk of injury from scalding for the children in attendance.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children during the inspection.

Infection Control:

- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after nappy changing, and following outdoor and messy play. Children who were toilet trained were gently reminded, and assisted, when necessary, to wash their hands after using the toilet. There was running warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand hygiene at the wash hand basins in the service.
- The service's nappy changing policy was observed to be implemented when staff members changed children's nappies during the inspection. A pedal operated lidded nappy bin was provided for the disposal of nappies. This reduced odour emissions and the risk of cross-infection.
- The premises, play equipment and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition and documented cleaning schedules were on display in the service.
- The outdoor sand pit was fitted with a secure lid to prevent contamination by animals and birds.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection. Staff members demonstrated awareness of the service's medication administration policy and described appropriate procedures to ensure safe practice in the event that a child required medication to be administered during their attendance in the service.

Safe Sleep:

- The inspector observed that 10-minute sleep check observations noting each child's colour, position and breathing pattern were being performed and documented on all sleeping children during the inspection. In discussion with the inspector, staff members described safe sleep practices.
- Adequate space of at least 50cm was maintained between the cots in the sleep rooms and between the stackable beds set up in the Happy Hedgehogs Room on the day of inspection.

Outings:

- The inspector was informed that children were not taken on outings from the service.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

- The nappy changing mat was torn at the lower edge leaving foam exposed which was an infection control hazard as the mat could not be thoroughly cleaned. It is acknowledged that the service had ordered a replacement mat in advance of the inspection, as evidenced in documentation reviewed, but this mat had yet to be delivered to the service.
- A child was observed using a soother attached to a cloth comforter during the inspection which at times was placed by the child on the floor and on other surfaces, posing a risk of cross contamination. This soother was not sterilised using the sterilising solution provided in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been undertaken:

Corrective Action

- The registered provider had purchased a new changing mat a few weeks prior to the inspection and were waiting on delivery. It has been delivered and is now in use.
- The registered provider purchased a microwave steam steriliser which has been in use since the inspection.

Preventive Action

- The registered provider has since put in a second order for the same changing mat as they are extremely good quality and very durable and a fresh replacement will be available at all times.
- There is a plastic container outside each room and any soothers that touch the ground or get contaminated in any way will be put in it and washed with soapy water and straight into the steriliser.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographs of a new sturdy nappy changing mat and a new steam steriliser in place in the service were submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the corrective actions and photographs submitted by the registered provider after the inspection. The registered provider demonstrated that the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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

(3)(a)(b) The service ensured that no person other than the children and their parents or guardians, employees, approved students or authorised visitors could enter the premises. A visitor's book was maintained and the inspector was requested to record her attendance in the service and the purpose of her visit.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) One child who was present in the Busy Bees Room on the day of inspection was not documented as being present in the service. Additionally, the 4 children in the Baby Cubs Room who arrived to the service from 7.40am to 8.40am on the day of inspection did not have their attendance recorded until after 2.00pm that day. These 4 children were also present in the service on the day preceding the inspection but their attendance in the roll book was not documented until the next day, on the afternoon of the inspection. This posed a risk of the children not being counted under the daily supervision routines or in the event of an evacuation emergency.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been undertaken:

Corrective Action

- (1) A staff meeting was held regarding the importance of attendance records, and all staff know that even when covering different rooms how important it is to make sure that all children are marked present according to their arrival.

Preventive Action

- (1) The registered provider will continue to bring this subject up at the service's monthly staff meetings and also the supervisor will do morning checks.

Summary Comment

Assurances given by the registered provider have been accepted in relation to accurately recording children's attendance in the service. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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 with in-date first aid response (FAR) training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service as evidenced in the staff files and the service's staff roster.
- (2)(a)(b) The first aid boxes provided in the service were suitably equipped and stored in conspicuous locations on the premises and these were 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, with the records indicating and the staff members reporting that these procedures were carried out on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill took place on 10/02/2025.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Fire extinguishers were certified as having been serviced on 09/07/2024 and the smoke detection system on 19/02/2025.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

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 insurance cover in place for 40 children attending the service on a full day care basis. The policy was valid from 28/03/2024 to 27/03/2025.