

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021CC006			
Name of Service:	Bright Beginnings Montessori			
Address of Service:	Rathbarry National School, Castlefreke, Clonakilty, Co. Cork			
Eircode:	P85 E542			
Name of Registered Provider:	Carmel O'Donovan			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	28/11/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	6	PM	n/a
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440			
Inspection undertaken by:	V. McCarthy			
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	N/A
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Description of service

Bright Beginnings Montessori operates as a sessional service that also caters for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE). The service caters for children aged between 2.5 and 6 years of age. The service's hours of operation are 9.00 to 12.30 hours. Bright Beginnings Montessori operates from a room situated in Rathbarry National School. The National School premises is a detached 1 storey building located in a rural setting outside the village of Rathbarry. There is 1 care room that has 2 toilet cubicles positioned beside it for use by the children. There is a secured designated outdoor play area situated on the grounds of the National School for use only by this service.

Staffing

On the day of the inspection there were 2 adults working directly with the children including the registered provider.

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 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 named person in charge and a named person that could be called upon if required.
 - (b) The registered provider and person in charge were both on duty when the inspector arrived at the premises and remained on duty for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)
- (a) There were 2 references and required validations available on file from past employers in respect of the 2 adults attached to the service.
 - (b) There were 2 references and required validations available on file from sources other than past employers.
 - (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of each of the 2 adults.
 - (d) Police vetting was available on file in respect of 1 of the adults that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months.
- (4)
- A copy of a childcare qualification as listed on the National Qualifications Framework was available on file in respect of each of the 2 adults.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children.

(3)
On the morning of the inspection there were 2 adults in attendance with 6 early years children. The adult child ratio exceeded the requirement of 1:11.

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)
During the inspection, it was noted that there was a record of a preschool child available on file in respect of each of the 8 early years children that were attached to the service. Each of the records was fully assessed by the inspector and it was noted that all details listed under(a),(b),(d),(e),(f),(g),(h),(i) were recorded on each child's record.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

Compliance Information

(1)(j)

The service used a designated book that detailed all the requirements for the recording of any medications administered on the premises. During the inspection, the inspector assessed that no medication was administered to any child during 2023.

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)

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The care room was situated along a corridor at the school premises and was noted to be bright, clean, comfortable, and maintained in good condition for the children's use.
- The room was furnished with child sized tables and chairs, low shelving, child sized armchairs and a variety of play materials that were all maintained in good working condition and met the needs of the children.
- The walls were decorated with a map of the world and some of the children's own art and craft works such as the Solar System planets, crafts regarding road safety and the life cycle of the spider.
- Varied areas of interest were set up in the care room such as an attractive rest area, a developed home area, a playhouse, arts and crafts areas, tabletop activities, games and a library section. The arts and crafts materials were set up on a table during the inspection and the children were busy cutting out paper squirrels and colouring them under the supervision of the adults. Other items such as the tray with the miniature Christmas trees and pretend snow were all laid out at child height to promote independent visibility and easy access by the children themselves to choose what they wanted to play with.
- The 2 toilet cubicles for children's use were positioned directly off the care room. There were 2 wash hand basins available in the toilet lobby to facilitate hygienic handwashing by the children. The registered provider informed the inspector that she had installed a wall mounted nappy changing unit in the toilet lobby and that it was only for use by any potential child with an additional need.
- The outdoor area was positioned on the school grounds across the corridor from the care room. It was provided with a high fence and a secured gate. It was set up with varied interest areas such as the wooden play kitchens, balancing beams, low slide and playhouse that promoted children to play with their peers. During the inspection, there was a water table furnished with push trucks in a corner of the outdoor area and it was noted that the children all played happily together with the trucks and water whilst they were outdoors.

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:

- A detailed cleaning programme was in place and the premises, equipment and play materials were kept in clean and good condition.
- Regular handwashing by the children was carried out at the premises, before eating, after toileting, messy play and after outdoor play.
- All wash hand basins were provided with thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper towels. The water temperature was recorded at 22.2°C during the inspection.
- A fridge was available in the care room for the storage and safe management of the children's perishable food.
- The children's bags, coats and personal belongings were all stored on wall hooks.
- Pedal operated bins were available throughout the premises for the safe disposal of used tissues and paper towels.
- A box of disposable tissues was available on a low shelf so that children could attend to their own nasal hygiene independently.
- Crockery was provided to the children as they sat together to eat their mid-morning snack.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)
Records were available to demonstrate that each child was checked in and out daily at the service by the adults. The inspector assessed the records over a 1-week period and the arrival and leaving times in respect of all the children were maintained. On the day of inspection there were 6 early years children on the premises and each child had been checked in on his/her arrival by the adults.

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)
(b) There were records on file to demonstrate that the wired smoke alarm was serviced on 12 February 2023.
(4)
The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on a wall in the care room.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) There were no records of monthly fire drills available on file for review since the service recommenced after the summer holidays.
- (b) The fire extinguishers last had an annual service during February 2022. There was no record available to demonstrate that they were serviced since.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (a) A fire drill was carried out at the premises on 13 December 2023.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on 15 December 2023.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1)
- (a) The registered provider furnished a copy of the fire drill record to the inspectorate on 21 December 2023.
- (b) A copy of the firefighting maintenance service was furnished to the inspectorate on 21 December 2023.

Summary Comment

The documentation submitted by the registered provider relating to the non-compliances was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.