

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2024WW005
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Bunnies Montessori
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Parochial Hall, Novara Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A98 EK71
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Aisling Walsh
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/10/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	35	PM	15
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Early O'Brien
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

This service is located in a parochial hall in Bray town, Co Wicklow. It is one of three services operated by the registered provider. The premises consists of two playrooms named The Burrow Room and The Hutch Room both with adjoining sanitary areas, a kitchen, staff room with adjacent staff sanitary area, an office and an entrance hallway. The outdoor play area for the service is located at the rear of the premises. The service is registered to provide part-time and sessional care for a maximum of 44 pre-school children aged two to six years, and the hours of operation are between 09:00 to 14:00 hours, Monday to Friday.

### Staffing

There are five adults employed in the service including the person in charge. The registered provider does not work directly in the service but did arrive following the inspector's arrival. On the day of inspection five adults were working directly with the children.

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

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

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4) - Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1)(2)(8) - Staffing levels

Regulation 15(1) – Record in relation to a pre-school child.

Regulation 16 (1)(h)(i)(j)(k) - Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 (1)(a) - Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 – First Aid

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures

Regulation 28 – Insurance

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1) – Record of a pre-school child and regulation 16(1) - Record in relation to pre-school service.

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*
- (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-*

- (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.*

*(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 manager is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.

(b) The manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived at 10:25 on the morning of the inspection and was present in the service for the duration of the inspection. The registered provider arrived at the service at 12:00 and remained in the service for the remainder of the inspection.

(2)

The inspection focused on the recruitment records of the registered provider and five adults employed in the service. There have been no new staff employed since the last inspection on 12 December 2024.

Regulation 9(2)(c) was reviewed in respect of all staff. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults as follows.

(c) The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years, in relation to six adults working in the service.

(4)

The registered provider has ensured that all staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed 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)

Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)

The correct adult to child ratio was maintained at all times as follows:

On the morning of inspection there were seventeen children being supervised by two adults in The Burrow Room and in The Hutch Room, there were eighteen children being supervised by three adults.

On the afternoon of inspection there were fifteen children being cared for by four adults; both rooms had joined together, and the children were playing in the outdoor area.

(8)(a)

The manager ensured that there were two adults on the premises at all times. This was confirmed by reviewing the staff roster.

### 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)(a)–(i)

A sample of eleven children’s records were reviewed. The records detailed the information as required by the regulation.

### 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:*

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

(h) Children's attendance was recorded in a hard copy register on the day of inspection. These records included details of each child's arrival and departure times from the service.

(i) A record of the staff roster was available and was reflective of the staff present on the day.

(k) Thirteen accident and incident records were reviewed and all were completed as required by the regulation.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(j) Eight files were reviewed and while it is acknowledged that three records had been completed as required by the regulation, the following information was missing on five of the records:

- In four records, there was no parent signature recorded confirming that they had been informed that anti-febrile medication had been administered.
- In one record, there was no information recorded in relation to the dose of medication administered.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has advised that a staff meeting was held and the outcomes of the inspection discussed. One to one support and supervision was engaged in with each member of staff to ensure they were familiar with the process.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted should adequately address the non-compliance and will inform the next 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-

(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

##### Basic Needs

Heathy eating is promoted in the service and children bring their own lunch from home for snack time in the ECCE session. Water was available to the children from their own bottles which they had access to.

On the day of inspection, children were observed to take their lunchbox from the fridge and were encouraged to open and close lunch boxes and bottles and be responsible for their own belongings. Snack time was a social experience during which time the staff members interacted with and engaged in social conversations with the children.

Children are encouraged to use the toilet and engage in handwashing independently with assistance provided where needed.

##### Supporting Relationships

The children appeared happy and content and were engaged and relaxed within the care rooms. The staff members ensured that the children were supported in all aspects of their physical, emotional and social wellbeing and demonstrated warmth and respect in all interactions with the children. Staff members were heard using gentle tones with the children and encouraged them to share their stories, ideas and opinions. Children's learning is documented and is shared with parents. Staff informed the inspector that children's daily experiences are shared between parents and educators daily at drop off and collection.

##### Physical and Material Environment

The indoor environment was bright and arranged into defined areas of interest, providing children with freedom to play and explore. Designated interest areas within the room included an arts and crafts and mark making station, a construction area, a dolls house, a dress-up area, a home corner, a play kitchen, and a library area. Photos of each child's family were displayed on a family wall. Birthday charts and children's artwork were also on display, and this demonstrated a sense of identity and belonging for the children.

On the day of inspection, the children spent time in the outdoor play area. This area was adequately resourced with age-appropriate play materials and resources.

### **Programme of Activities**

During the inspection children's individual choice was respected in the daily routine in which they are encouraged to participate. Children were observed to make choices on their own play materials within the environment with freedom to access resources from low level shelving. Children are familiar with the routine and handled transitions between activities very well supported by the educators.

## 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 entrance door leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- Visitors to the premises were required to sign in on arrival to the premises.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor play environments were safe and free from hazards.
- Medication was stored safely and out of the reach of children.
- Storage facilities for hazardous cleaning materials were inaccessible to children.

#### **Infection Control:**

- The children in the Hutch room and Burrow room were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and before lunch. Staff in this room were observed to carry out consistent hand washing as appropriate.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal-operated, lidded bins throughout the service.
- Liquid soap and warm water were available to facilitate hand washing in the adjoining sanitary accommodation for both care rooms.

#### **Administration of Medication:**

- Staff detailed the procedures for administering medication if required during discussions with the inspector and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.
- Care plans were in place for one child attending the service with additional medical needs.

### Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, all emergency exits were observed to be clearly identifiable and were not obstructed

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. While it is acknowledged that a care plan was available for a child in the service, this plan requires greater detail. The care plan for this child evidenced the fact that vital information relating to the child's medical care needs was not documented and located centrally within the care room. This poses a risk to the health and safety of the child concerned.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

The registered provider has advised that the service has updated the care plan template and only this will be used in the future. Staff have been advised of this.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

The registered provider has submitted a copy of the most current care plan to be used by the service for children who require emergency medication.

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted should adequately address the non-compliance and will inform 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)

A person trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. Two staff members and the registered provider hold current, in date FAR certification.

(2)

(a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available and safely stored on the premises.

### 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) There was evidence of regular fire drills taking place within the service. The last fire drill took place on the 29 September 2025.

(b) There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the premises dated April 2025 and September 2025 respectively.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the pre-school rooms.

### 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 a valid certificate of insurance which expires on 26 March 2026 for a part-time day care service which covers a maximum of fifty-nine preschool children and forty school-aged children.