

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

|                          |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015CC079 |
|--------------------------|-------------|

|                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Busy Bees Montessori School |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Ring, Ballymacoda, Co Cork |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | P25 HY22 |
|-----------------|----------|

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Colette Cronin |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Sessional |
|----------------------|-----------|

|                            |            |
|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 20/05/2026 |
|----------------------------|------------|

|                                   |    |    |    |     |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 20 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

|                                                 |                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440 |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | D Prendergast                                                                                          |
| <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).

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### Description of service

Busy Bees Montessori School is a privately owned sessional service. It is registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years, however, it currently accommodates children from the age of 2 years and 8 months. Daily hours of operation are from 9.30am to 12.30pm, in conjunction with the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.

The service is located in a rural area of Ballymacoda in Co Cork and is provided from a room within the registered provider's private residence. Adjoining sanitary facilities are available and there is a designated outdoor play space accessible at the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

There are four adults currently attached to the early years service. All four adults work directly with the children, including the registered provider. Each adult has achieved a major award in early childhood care and education.

### 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

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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.

### Additional Information

A referral to the Fire Officer was made on 21 May 2026, in relation to a key locked fire exit door within the premises.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Statutory Notices

| Notice                       | Date Served                                                                                                                                    | Detail                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Improvement Notice<br>IN1886 | 20/05/2026                                                                                                                                     | On review of the staff training records, it was noted that a member of staff with accredited First Aid Response (FAR) training was not available to the children at all times. |
| <b>Status</b>                | The registered provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted by the Inspectorate. |                                                                                                                                                                                |

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### 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 registered provider was the person in charge and a deputy had also been assigned to the setting.
  - (b) The registered provider and the deputy were present for the duration of the unannounced inspection. A review of the staff attendance records indicated that the service was consistently operated with the registered provider on duty.
- (2) Recruitment records in respect of the four adults employed at the service were assessed for compliance.
- (a) A total of eight written and validated references were required. Five were on file from past employers.
  - (b) Three of the written and validated references were from sources other than previous employers.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the four adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

years.

(d) Review of the adults' curricula vitae indicated that police vetting from outside of the jurisdiction was not required.

(4) The four adults had each attained a recognised award in early childhood care and education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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) Throughout the period of inspection, it was noted that an adequate number of adults worked with the children in attendance.

(3) At the time of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of the regulation.

- During the morning, 4 adults were observed to work directly with the 20 children present, who were aged 3 to 4 years.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### 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:*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
  - (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
  - (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
  - (e) the facilities available;*
  - (f) the opening hours and fees;*
  - (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) Written information in relation to the following was clearly outlined in writing:
- (b) The type of service offered and the age range of children accommodated.
  - (c) The adult:child ratio at the setting.
  - (d) Details in relation to the service's programme of care.
  - (e) The facilities provided.
  - (f) The hours of operation. The service catered for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.
  - (h) Attendance records dated between 20 April and 20 May 2026, were assessed and were found to meet the requirements.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### 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)

##### Basic needs:

- During the mid-morning snack, the adults sat with the children, who were afforded adequate time to eat and chat, in an unhurried environment.
- A jug of water and a supply of cups were available to the children during the morning, should they be in need of additional fluids.
- Easily accessible, adjoining sanitary facilities were provided and the children were encouraged to wash their hands and use the toilet independently.
- In the main care room, boxes of tissues were within easy reach for the children, which supported them to develop their personal hygiene and self-care skills.
- A quiet corner was provided for rest and relaxation, should any child wish to avail of this area.
- The layout of the care room ensured that children had sufficient space to carry out their chosen activities. The children also had the opportunity to engage in active play, in the outdoor area.

##### Supporting relationships:

- Staff members were observed to be warm, patient and reassuring when interacting with the children in their care. For example, positive, affirming language was used and there was a focus on encouraging children to be kind and respectful toward one another.
- A visit from the Coast Guard was accommodated on the morning of the inspection. During the visit, the children appeared interested and engaged, as they listened, asked questions and took turns to try on the life jackets.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- The service consisted of one care room, which was bright, airy and spacious. Waist height tables and child sized chairs were available for the children to engage in tabletop activities and to sit comfortably at mealtimes.
- Wall displays reflected the children who attended and created a welcoming environment. These included examples of the children's artwork and family photographs.
- Low set, open shelving allowed the children to freely access a variety of developmentally appropriate materials. For example:
  - a range of Montessori equipment, such as dressing frames, shape insets and number-based activities.
  - jigsaws, magnet tiles, connectable shapes and peg boards.
  - threading materials.
  - a play kitchen with utensils.
  - an art easel and mark making materials.
- The children had the use of a secure outdoor play environment, which was located at the rear of the premises. The available equipment in this space included ride on toys, a covered sand tray, a mud kitchen, a low-level climbing frame and a playhouse, with a slide and a climbing wall.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### 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:

- Upon arrival, the prevention of unauthorised access was observed to be ensured; the main entrance door was secured.
- The outdoor play environment was enclosed by a combination of walls, fencing and gates.
- Rubber matting was available underneath large outdoor equipment, while a low-level climbing frame and a balance beam were located in the grass covered section. These surfaces provided soft fall areas for the children.
- Good supervision practices by staff members were observed, as the children took turns to go outdoors and see the Coast Guard emergency response vehicle.
- Low level glass panels on the care room doors were fitted with visibility strips, which reduced the risk of a collision injury.
- Safe storage was provided for cleaning agents.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Display units in the care room were securely anchored.

##### Infection control:

- Warm running water, dispensers of liquid soap and paper towels were easily accessible at the wash hand basins, along with a foot pedal operated bin. The children were observed to wash their hands before snack time and after using the toilet.
- Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator prior to snack time. This reduced the risk of food spoilage.
- The children's coats and bags were suitably stored on labelled wall hooks.
- The tables used to accommodate the mid-morning snack were sanitised before and after use.
- The care room was provided with a supply of natural ventilation.

##### Administration of medication:

- Suitable storage was ensured for temperature reducing medication. This was maintained in a high-level cupboard and was noted to be in-date.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### Fire safety:

- Fire extinguishers were safely wall mounted.
- Fire exits were clearly visible.

### 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.*

### Non-Compliance Information

(1) See statutory notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IN1886 served.