

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR030
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Name of Service:	HandPrints Montessori PreSchool
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Address of Service:	Queen of Angels N/S, Sandyford, Dublin 16, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D16 AX05
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rachel Faro
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	06/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	30	PM	8
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Carysfort House, Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock, Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	L Magee
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Handprints Montessori is located in the grounds of the Queen of Angels primary school, in an urban, residential area of Sandyford, South County Dublin. The early years service offers sessional and part time care and education to preschool children aged 2 to 6 years from 9am-2pm, Monday to Friday. The sessional service runs from 9am – 12 midday. Handprints Montessori operates from two purposely adapted prefabricated buildings and the service utilises part of the main school yard as their outdoor area on the premises which has a concrete surface.

Staffing

The service currently employs five staff members, including the registered provider. On 6 May 2026, all five staff members were present and 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. 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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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-

- (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.*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present at all times on the day of inspection.

(c) There is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability for each employee.

Following a discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that three adults had commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 7 June 2023. Documentation required under Regulation 9 (2), (3), (4) was reviewed in respect of these three adults.

(2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a) Six written validated references were provided from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for these three adults who had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection and for a further three adults whose Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years. This includes one adult who does not currently work in the service but is available to provide relief cover if required.

(d) A police vetting disclosure was available for one adult who lived outside Ireland for a period of longer than six months as adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had been carried out prior to these three adults commencing employment in the service.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to show that three staff members held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children in Handprints 1 and Handprints 2 on the day of inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in both Handprints 1 and Handprints 2 on the day of 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

(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

1 (a) & (b)

Staff informed the inspector that all children bring their lunch in from home. If the children are attending the parttime service, they bring a second lunch in. These were stored in the fridge in each care room. Water was available within easy reach for the children, this included at mealtimes and throughout the day. Staff supported

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

the children when using the toilet and washing their hands with an appropriate balance of independence and supervision. Staff demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. On the day of inspection, the children had tadpoles in the service. They chatted excitedly on how to care for the tadpoles and took turns discussing what they would name the tadpoles and why.

A large variety of toys and materials were available to the children. These were stored and displayed at the children's eye level on low shelving that facilitated easy access by the children. Rooms were separated into different interest areas which included a cosy area, a book corner and a selection of dress up clothing. Staff described how they communicate with parents on a daily basis at drop off and collection times. The children did not use the outdoor area on the day of inspection.

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 external doors into each prefabricated building were secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school. Heavy equipment was secured to prevent tipping and injury. Emergency exits were kept clear at all times during the inspection. All cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

The premises were observed to be maintained in a clean condition. Completed cleaning schedules were in place which demonstrated the daily and weekly procedures taken by the service. Steps were taken to prevent the spread of infection through the use of good hygiene practices such as the supervision of children's hand washing and respiratory hygiene. The sanitary facility was equipped with warm water, liquid soap and disposable paper towels.

Administration of Medication:

On the day of inspection, the registered provider reported that no children were on medication and no medication had been given since the term began last September 2025. Staff discussed how they were familiar with the procedure of administering medication in line with the administration of medication policy of the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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) There was evidence to show that two adults hold certification in First Aid Responder training, and both adults were available for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was provided. It was positioned in an easily accessible and conspicuous position, in each preschool room.

(b) The first aid box is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on 20 April 2026.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises were up to date. Fire extinguishers were serviced in July 2025 and smoke alarms were serviced in May 2026.
- (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in the care rooms and the hallway in the service.