

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY034
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Name of Service:	Bumblebee Montessori and Childcare
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Address of Service:	16-17 Churchwell Mews, Belmayne, Dublin 13.
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Eircode:	D13 A060
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Name of Registered Provider:	Emma Crowe, Nichola Higgins
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	29/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	30
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin
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).

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Description of service

Bumblebee Montessori and Childcare is one of two services operated by the two registered providers. The service operates from a two-story building located in a residential estate in North Dublin. The service is registered to provide a full day childcare service to up to fifty-two preschool children aged from 0 to 6 years old between the hours of 8:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday. The service is currently operating between the hours of 8:00am to 5:30pm and at the time of the inspection, the service did not have children under 1 years of age present. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme during term time.

There are four care rooms in the service. On the ground floor there is the Wobbler Room for children aged 1 to 2 years, the Toddler room for children aged 2 to 3 years. There is also a kitchen, an office, a cot room and sanitary accommodation for children and staff. On the first floor there is the Junior Montessori room which caters for children aged 3 to 4 years and the Senior Montessori room which caters for children aged 4 to 5 years. On the day of the inspection the Junior Montessori room was not in operation. There is also sanitary accommodation for children on the first floor. There is an outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises on the ground floor.

Staffing

The two registered providers employ 15 staff including a deputy person in charge, supervisor, assistant supervisor, ten childcare staff, a cook and a cleaner who is contracted to work outside the operational hours of the service. One of the registered providers works in the service in a management capacity overseeing the daily operations of the service.

On the day of the inspection there were seven staff members present. Six of whom were working directly with the children and the cook. The registered providers were not present on the day of the inspection and the person in charge helped to facilitate the inspection process.

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

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following:

- Regulation 9 (1), (2), (3) and (4)
- Regulation 16 (1)(j), (k) and (3)- Record in Relation to Pre-School Service
- Regulation 19 (1)(b)-Health, Welfare and Development of Child
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler room, the Toddler room, the Senior Montessori room and the outdoor play area. Regulation 11 staffing levels was inspected across all rooms.

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.

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Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the deputy person in charge, 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.*

(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.

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Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The deputy person in charge was present in the service when the inspector arrived and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.
- (2) Through discussion with the deputy person in charge there has been three new adults employed to work in the service since the last inspection in May 2025. This does not include a fit for purpose inspection which took place in November 2025 in which staff files are not reviewed. The staff files of the three new adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. The following checks were completed.
- (a) There were six written and validated references available from a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the three adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) There was documentary evidence of police vetting available for one of the three adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (4) The three new adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

Non-Compliance Information

- (3) The registered provider did not ensure the checks required under (2) were completed prior to the start date of two staff having access to children in the service. Evidenced showed that both staff had commenced employment between 1 week and 2 months before vetting checks were completed. This posed a potential safeguarding risk and may allow unsuitable persons to have access to the children.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(3) Management have reviewed and strengthened the recruitment process to ensure that all safeguarding checks, including Garda vetting, are completed and verified before any staff member commences employment or has access to children in our service. Management will monitor compliance with this procedure through regular audits of recruitment records. No new staff member will be permitted to begin work until Garda/Police vetting is secured.

Supporting documentation submitted

- No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider through the corrective and preventive action plan have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children throughout the inspection. There were six adults caring for 31 children during the morning and six adults caring for 30 children during the afternoon of inspection.

(2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (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;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered providers ensured the following information was maintained in relation to the early years' service:
- (a) The name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff members was available on file. In addition, the parent's notice board at the door of the service had photos and names of all staff members.
 - (b) (c)(d)(e) A notice board on the wall of the corridor contained all the information required including details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services, details of the adult: child ratios in the service, the type of care or programme provided in the service and the facilities available.
 - (f) The opening hours and fees were displayed on the noticeboard on the wall of the corridor of the service.

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- (g) The service showed evidence that they had the required policies, procedures and statements in accordance with Regulation 10.
 - (h) Daily attendance records were kept in each care room in relation to every preschool child.
 - (i) A staff roster was available for review.
 - (j) The service ensured there was an electronic record maintained of any medication administered by staff in the service.
 - (k) A record was maintained of accidents and incidents which had occurred in the service. A sample of ten records were reviewed. These records were completed in full and contained all the necessary information.
- (3) All records and documentation requested by the inspector were available for review.

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-
- (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) (b) Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed, as evidenced by the following:
- A review of documentation, discussion with staff and observation on the day showed children were provided with varied food prepared onsite by the inhouse cook on a regular basis. Children are offered breakfast on arrival, a snack of crackers and fruit was served between 9.30am to 10.00am, a chicken and pasta dish was served between 11.30am and 12.00pm. This was followed by a fruit snack at 2pm and pancakes and berries at 3.30pm. There was a weekly menu plan available.
 - There was sufficient food provided, with additional portions available on request. Alternative meals were available for those children with alternative dietary requirements.
 - Drinks of water were available to the children in the care rooms and staff were observed to encourage children to drink water at various times throughout the day.
 - The staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. For example, nappy changing and toileting were observed to be timely and pleasant experiences for the children. Staff were

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observed to be familiar with the children in their care room which enabled them to provide for their individual care needs, such as food and play preferences.

- Children were encouraged to move around the room and choose activities and tidy away toys after use. This promoted independence, self-confidence, and physical development.
- The experiences and activities provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children. For example, in the senior Montessori room children were provided with open ended materials such as a sensory flour activity and modelling dough with supporting props. This type of hands-on learning builds confidence and supports fine motor skills and language development.
- Children's language development was observed to be supported through storytelling, singing songs and staff engaging in conversations with the children throughout the inspection.
- Staff were observed to give children advanced notice when moving from one activity to the next. As a result, these transitions were prompt and smooth.
- Children had access to outdoor play on the day of inspection. Suitable clothing and suncreams were available, allowing for outdoor play in diverse weather. The outdoor space allowed children to move freely, explore, and engage in appropriate risk taking.

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 main entrance door which leads into the service was appropriately secured to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the service. This door was monitored by staff, and the inspector was asked to show identification and sign in the visitor book.
- Blind cords were secured and there were window restrictors in place.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- There were window restrictors in place on windows that were positioned at a height inaccessible to children.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach to the children.

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- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap and single use hand towels were used to effectively support hygienic hand-washing practice.
- Foot pedal operated bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas to allow hygienic disposal of waste materials.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Individual cots/beds and bed linen were used for the sleeping children. Staff were familiar with the washing schedule of the bed linen.
- Windows in the care rooms were observed to be open which allowed for circulation of air and reduced the risk of cross infection.

Administration of Medication:

- Anti-febrile medication was stored safely out of the reach to the children.

Safe Sleep:

- Outer clothing was removed from the children before sleep time.
- Children under two years of age were provided with suitable sleep equipment. For example, cots and floor beds with a mattress depth of between 6 to 15 cm were used for sleeping children in line with Tusla's "Guidance for the Early Learning and Care sector on sleep provision for children under 24 months".
- Staff were observed to complete physical checks on the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children every ten minutes, and a log was maintained of these checks.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed.
- A review of the attendance log showed all children present had been accurately accounted for on the day.
- Notices detailing the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency were displayed on the wall in the care rooms and on the wall of the corridors outside the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The slide lock located at the top of an exit gate in the outdoor play area was not working properly and could not be secured. There was a second lock on this exit gate which was at a level accessible to children and could be easily opened. This posed a potential significant risk if a child were to exit the service unsupervised. It is acknowledged that management took immediate action and secured the gate once the inspector had brought the identified risk to their attention.
2. The flooring leading from the Wobbler room to the Toddler room and the outdoor area had a small gap at the dividing part in front of the door. This posed a potential trip hazard to the children and staff. It is acknowledged that management discussed how this had been included in a risk assessment and floor repairs were scheduled to be completed.
3. There was a nail sticking out of the back of a piece of wood which was being used to block off access to an area where a new toilet is being installed in the sanitary accommodation of the senior Montessori room. This posed a potential risk of injury. It is acknowledged that staff discussed how they always stand at the door and appropriately supervise children accessing the sanitary accommodation.

Infection Control:

4. The wash hand basins used by the children in the three sanitary accommodations did not have thermostatically controlled water; the temperature was recorded between 44.2°C and 44.8°C across the three areas, exceeding the allowable maximum temperature of 43°C. This posed a potential risk to safety. It is acknowledged that staff took immediate action and guided the children to use the cold-water taps once the identified risk was brought to their attention.

Administration of Medication:

5. A sample of ten administration of medication electronic records were reviewed as part of the inspection. There was no place for the name or/and signature of the person witnessing the administration of medication on any of these records. This is at variance with best practice and the service administration of medication policy. This posed a potential risk of medication not being administered correctly as having two people present and signing off on it reduces this risk. It is acknowledged that management discussed how there is always a second person present and the omission of the witness's name or/and signature was due to a technical error of the electronic recording system used.

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Safe Sleep:

- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was not maintained in the cot room while children over one years old were sleeping. The cot room temperature was recorded at 22.9°C at 12:33pm. This posed a potential safe sleep risk. It is acknowledged that management took immediate action to reduce the cot room temperatures once the identified risk was brought to their attention by the inspector. The cot room temperature was recorded at 20.5°C at 1:57pm.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The side gate was secured on the day by a staff member. The faulty slide lock was repaired by a handyman the same day to ensure it functions correctly. Daily checks of all gates and locks will be carried out before children use the outdoor play area to ensure they are safe and secure. Any issues found will be fixed immediately, and records of the checks and any repairs will be kept.
- While waiting to have the floor replaced, the area was carefully monitored to ensure the safety and welfare of children and staff. The floor was replaced on 4 July. Any safety risks will be reported and fixed in a timely manner.
- The children were supervised at every toilet visit. Our plumber arrived that evening to continue works on the toilet and removed the piece of wood with the nail in it. Any safety risks will be reported and fixed in a timely manner.

Infection Control:

- The plumber arrived the evening of the inspection and reduced the temperature of the water. The taps are being maintained at temperature under 41 degrees. Closer monitoring of tap water temperatures will be done.

Administration of Medication:

- The medication record on the services electronic app has been updated to include a section for the name and signature of the witness. Until the update was completed, staff ensured that a second person witnessed all medication administration and that this was recorded appropriately. Management will regularly review medication records to ensure they are completed in line with the service's medication policy.

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Safe Sleep:

- The service has purchased a new efficient fan for the cot room and along with keeping windows and doors open, the service has been able to maintain a temperature below 22 degrees for children over 1 years of age sleeping. Management and staff will monitor temperatures on a regular basis to ensure compliance with our safe sleep policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- No supporting documentation submitted.
- Photographic evidence of the floor replaced.
- No supporting documentation submitted.

Infection Control:

- Photographic evidence of water temperatures.

Administration of Medication:

- Photographic evidence of updated administration of medication form including witness signature.

Safe Sleep:

- No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider through the corrective and preventive action plan have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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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 service provided evidence that a person trained in First Aid Responder training was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.

(2) The registered provider ensured that:

(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored throughout the premises and there were signs displayed indicating this.

(b) The first aid boxes were easily accessible and readily available.