

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC007
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Name of Service:	Tigers Childcare
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Address of Service:	Fort Hill, Moneygourney, Douglas, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	T12 HR67
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Name of Registered Provider:	Therese Noonan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/02/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	105	PM	81
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	S O'Brien and B Fraher
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

Tigers Childcare is a purpose-built childcare service located in a residential area on the outskirts of Cork City. The service is registered to offer sessional, part time and full day care to children aged 1 to 6 years of age. The service also offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service operates from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year. The service has eight care rooms and a large outdoor play area to rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service employs 33 staff, including a person in charge, childcare educators, chefs, cleaners and administration staff. The registered provider is not service based. On the day of inspection, there were 24 staff members present.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 records in relation to pre-school service, Regulation 19 health, welfare and development of child and Regulation 23 safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms named Discovers, Discovers 1, Explorers, Junior Active Cubs 1, Active cubs 1 and Active cubs.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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.

(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 has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise in the service.
- (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection and were on the premises at all times while the service was in operation. This was outlined clearly on a staff roster that was available and reviewed.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service and all staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities

(2) Of the 24 staff members present on the day of inspection, 16 staff files were subject to review as the other employment records were reviewed at the previous inspection which took place on 08 February 2024.

(a) Twenty-three of the 32 references were from a past employer and were validated.

(b) Nine of the 32 references were from a reputable source and were validated.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 16 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was required for five of the 16 staff as they had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) Fourteen of the 16 staff who worked directly with the children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 on the national qualifications framework or a qualification deemed equivalent by the minister.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies were reviewed on inspection:

- Accidents and Incidents policy.
- Infection Control policy.
- Administration of Medication policy.

The policies contained the information required to guide staff in their care practices for children.

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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at all times.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were observed to meet the minimum requirements in the care rooms over the duration of the inspection:

Morning:

Room name and age range of the children	Number of children present	Number of adults present
Discovers	5	2
Discovers 1	12	3
Explorers	16	3
Explorers 1	6	1
Junior Active Cubs	18	3
Junior Active Cubs 1	21	3
Active Cubs (cabin)	19	4
Active Cubs 1	8	1

Afternoon:

Rooms and age range of the children	Number of children present	Number of adults present
Discovers	4	2
Discovers 1	12	3
Explorers	15	3
Explorers 1	6	1
Junior Active Cubs	13	2
Junior active Cubs 1	16	3
Active Cubs (cabin)	15	2
Active Cubs 1	0	

- (8)
- (a) The service operated with at least two adults present at all times. This was observed on the day of inspection and was evidenced through examination of the staff roster.

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:

- (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

The following records in writing were reviewed on inspection:

- (i) The staff roster was available and clearly outlined the hours of work for each staff member.
- (j) A sample of 10 administration of medication records from July 2024 to February 2025 were reviewed and contained all relevant information for children who attend the service.

(k) A sample of 12 accident and incident reports for children who attended the service were reviewed and contained all relevant information in relation to the accident or incident that had occurred between March 2024 to February 2025.

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:

- All meals and snacks were prepared on the premises for children attending the service by the chef. A four-week menu plan was presented to the inspector which evidenced that a wide variety of healthy and nutritious food was being served throughout the month. Refrigerators were available in each care room of the service for storing perishable items. Bacon, carrots and potatoes were eaten by the children at dinnertime and seconds were offered if they wished. Children were also seen to have a variety of food for breakfast and snack times. A child was observed to be offered an alternative food choice in the Active Cubs room.
- Children using the sanitary facilities were observed to do so independently with the supervision of staff.
- Staff were heard by the inspector praising and encouraging children during play in the Active Cubs 1 and in the Active Cubs where children bathed dolls, completed puzzles and played with animals. Staff were noted by the inspector to sit at the children's level.
- Ages and stages appropriate cutlery and crockery were used with the children in the younger room having access to bowls and spoons while the older children had access to plates and cutlery.
- Drinking water was readily available throughout the day in the care room and both milk and water was offered at mealtimes.
- Appropriate seating was used in the form of low-level tables and chairs.
- Outdoor games and activities were promoted, with each room scheduled to access the outdoor area three times a day. The inspector observed children playing outdoors in climbing frames, slides and in the timber train. The Discovers room had access to their own outdoor area containing age-appropriate equipment.

- The younger children were observed to sleep at various intervals and older children were facilitated with a scheduled rest period. Cosy areas in the care rooms were observed to be used for rest and reading as seen in Active Cubs 1.
- A child was observed to blow their nose, and staff encouraged the disposal of the tissue correctly and handwashing afterwards as seen in Active cubs 1.

Supporting relationships:

- During mealtimes, the adults remained with the children and assisted as required. The children were given adequate time to enjoy their food, and the staff were observed chatting with the children during mealtime.
- Younger children had the opportunity to feed themselves appropriate to their ages and stages of development and children's independence was encouraged by allowing, self-serving, pouring of drinks and cleaning off plates.
- The layout of the care rooms supported the children to move freely within their environments and to actively engage in their chosen tasks.
- Children dressed appropriately outdoors, wearing coats and hats. Independence was encouraged with children observed putting on and taking off their coats and hats.
- Staff members were observed to be warm and caring in their interactions with the children. For example, staff were observed comforting children who were upset by speaking to them in a gentle tone while offering reassurance in Junior Active Cubs 1.
- Adults were observed to encourage positive behaviour, encouraging children to take turns as seen in the Active Cubs.
- The use of creative artwork was evident throughout the service with Chinese New Year, the art circle and Valentine's artwork evident on the walls.
- A staff member was observed by the inspector's playing music on a guitar with the children activity engaging in singing along with them.
- Parents and guardians were welcome to enter the premises and drop and collect children from the care room. It was noted that this opportunity was used for informal discussion between staff members and parents and guardians as seen in the explorer room.
- The person in charge informed the inspector that the service used a book between parents and children, where the parent's placed photos or documented about events in their child's life. This was discussed in circle time in the care rooms.

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:

- Entrance and exit to and from the premises for staff, parents and guardians was via a fob which was located alongside the main entrance door, with a bell for visitors. These safety mechanisms ensured that the risk of unauthorised access and the risk of a child exiting the premises while unsupervised were minimised.
- The outdoor play areas were secured by walls and gates.
- Visibility stickers were placed on glass panel doors at the child's height which reduced the risk of sustaining a collision injury.
- Rooms which contained blind cords had safety clips in use on the day of inspection.
- The first aid box was stored out of reach of the children.
- There was no cables or trailing flexes accessible to children on the day of inspection.
- The toys seen in use on the day of inspection were maintained in good condition.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children on the day of inspection.

Infection Control:

- The children's nappies, wipes and barrier creams were maintained in clearly labelled storage areas.
- Soothers and bottles in use were labelled appropriately.
- Wall mounted hand gel was available at the entrance door to each care room.

Administration of Medication:

- The inspector observed the administration of prescribed medication to a child with two staff members checking and signing records and the consent form being forwarded to parents via digital application.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff members used a digital device to record children's breathing, colour and position while they slept. The inspector was advised that these checks were undertaken at ten-minute intervals, and this was confirmed through a review of recent sleep logs.

- The air temperature in the sleep rooms in Discovers and Discovers 1 was recorded between 18.1°C and 20.0°C while children were sleeping. Children in the Explorers room were observed sleeping on stackable beds with a room temperature of 19.3°C. The temperatures recorded were within the acceptable range for children aged over 12 months.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- Firefighting equipment was securely wall mounted.

Outing:

- The person in charge informed the inspector that no outings were currently planned from the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The water temperature in the three sinks in the sanitary facilities and one in the care room which were accessible to the children from the Junior Active Cubs room were recorded between 45°C and 45.6°C. The children were observed by the inspector to use the cold water tap to wash their hands on the day of inspection. For effective handwashing and to reduce the risk of scalding, children are required to wash their hands in warm water maintained at a temperature of below 43°C. The use of cold water can impede effective handwashing.

Infection Control:

2. During observing nappy changing in the Explorers room, the inspector observed a staff member open the lidded bin with gloved hands and continuing to use these gloves during the nappy change. It was also noted that two children's hand were not washed after nappy change, or the unit was not cleaned between use. This was at variance with the nappy changing policy. This posed an infection risk to the children.
3. Seven pedal operated bins in the service were noted to have lids missing or the pedals not working. This posed an infection control risk to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was made by the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The temperature of the water was adjusted by the maintenance personnel and is set to remain below 43°C. Water temperatures are recorded by the room leader twice daily. Staff ensure the children have an awareness of good hygiene practices and encourage the use of warm water for handwashing. Policies were discussed at the last quarterly meeting.

Infection control:

2. A review of the nappy changing policy was completed with all room leaders and discussed with the staff at the quarterly meeting. A poster of nappy changing task analysis was displayed in each nappy changing room and the staff were encouraged to follow it.

3. Bins were ordered for the service and faulty bins were disposed of. All the bins in the service were checked and further bins will be ordered when needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. The infection control policy, Handwashing policy and minutes of annual quarterly team meeting were submitted to the office of the inspectorate.

Infection Control:

2. The nappy changing policy and a copy of the poster was submitted to the office of the inspectorate.

3. Photographic evident of new bins, a receipt for purchase and infection control policy were received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The person in charge informed the inspector that the building was of sound and stable structure.
- (d) The premises was noted to be maintained in a clean condition and cleaning schedules were furnished to the inspector in the Discovers and Discovers 1 rooms. The person in charge informed the inspector that the service was painted since last inspection and plans were in place for further painting to be completed.
- (e) The service was adequately equipped with sanitary accommodations with 13 toilets, 3 of which were for staff and 5 nappy changing units.