

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015CC305 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Tus an Bhothair, Togher Family Centre |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Grounds of Togher Boys School, Togher Road, Cork, Co Cork |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | T12 Y710 |
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|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Niamh Sheridan |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|

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

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| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 06/05/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 14 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

|                                                 |                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | 13 Market Square<br>Mallow<br>Cork<br>P51DD5Y |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | B Fraher                                      |
| <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).

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### Description of service

Tus an Bothair, Togher Family Centre is a sessional service which operates from a prefabricated single storey building located on the grounds of Togher Boys School. The service is registered to accommodate children aged from 2 to 6 years of age and is open Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is facilitated between the hours of 9:00 and 12:00 and 13:00 to 16:00.

It consists of a kitchen / office area, a large classroom, an adult toilet with a nappy changing unit and two children's toilets. Children have access to an outdoor play area.

### Staffing

There is a total of six adults employed by the service which includes the register provider. The registered provider is not service based. On the day of inspection, four adults were present in the service 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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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 children, person in charge and staff 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*

*(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.*

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*(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 had a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named deputy, who could deputise as required.
  - (b) The person in charge and the deputy were on duty at the service when the inspectors arrived. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy were on duty at all times, during the hours of operation.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to six adults attached to the service were the subject of the inspection.
- (a) Of the 12 required references, 3 were from previous employers, with required records of validation on file.
  - (b) Of the 12 required references, 9 were from sources other than previous employers, with records of validation on file.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained and were on file for each of the six adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) Police vetting records, with certified translations, were available on file for three of the six adults, who had lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer, as adults.
- (4) Records demonstrated that five adults had achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, at level 5 to 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent. One adult who was not working directly with the children did not require evidence of a qualification.

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### 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:

- Policy on administration of medication
- Policy on authorisation to collect children

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

*(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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care of the children in attendance at all times.

(3) The service exceeded the minimum ratio required as per regulation in the care room. The 14 children attending the service were supervised directly by 4 adults.

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### 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) The service has 41 early years children registered and a sample of 10 records were inspected. They were found to contain the required information as listed (a) through to (i).

### 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*

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### Compliance Information

#### Basic needs:

- Children snacks were provided by the service and were observed to be healthy and nutritious. Examples included filled tuna, sweetcorn and bagels.
  - Staff sat at the tables during snack time, interacting with the children and provided assistance when needed. Children self-served their own food, encouraging independence.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children throughout the morning.
- The location of the sanitary facilities allowed children independent access, as needed. Staff were observed to assist if needed.
- Outdoor play was promoted and observed at the time of inspection where children went outdoors in groups with a staff member observing and assisting children during play. The inspector observed children playing with a ball, a kitchen, with sand and pedalling trikes.
- While outdoors, the children were noted to be dressed appropriately in coats and were encouraged to independently put these on.

#### Supporting relationships:

- All children were observed to be actively encouraged by staff to participate in activities. Materials and resources were available which accommodated each child's individual needs such as puzzle, bricks, toy kitchens, artwork, dress up costumes, water play and books and the adults sat at the table at the children's level engaging with the children.
- Staff engaged with the children in both group and individual activities by getting down to their level while discussing topics with the children and helping them with their chosen tasks. Group activities such as singing and guessing what animal is missing were observed on the day of inspection.
- The adults were observed to be kind and caring towards the needs of the children in their care. An example of this was when a child was upset outdoors and an adult immediately comforted the child.
- The staff promoted positive behaviour among children encouraging them to use appropriate language in the care room.
- Family photos and a birthday calendar were displayed on the wall in the care room which promoted a sense of belonging for the children.

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- The registered provider stated that they communicated with the parents verbally at drop off or collection and through text messages. Policies were emailed to the parents prior to enrolment. Parents are also given the opportunity to have an individual meeting about their child bi-annually or outside of this time if required.

### 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 was secured appropriately. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and helped to prevent the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care room were out of reach of the children and were secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed in the indoor and outdoor area were in good condition.
- The outdoor area was enclosed in metal fencing. It was observed to be a safe and secure space for the children with a metal gate to exit.
- There were no cables or trailing flexes observed to be accessible to the children on the day of inspection.

##### Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before snack and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste in the care room.
- Children's coats were stored on hooks off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available for the storage of perishable foods.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- Fire extinguishers were secured to the walls.

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### Outing:

- On discussion with the person in charge, the service has an outing yearly with a risk assessment completed prior to this occurring. On discussing the risk assessment, a number of strategies were in place to mitigate identified risks to the children.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Records confirmed that each child was checked in on arrival at the service and checked out on departure by the registered provider.

(3)

(b) A visitors record book was used to record all persons entering the premises. The inspector signed in on arrival and out on departure of the service.

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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) Up to date records of First Aid Response (FAR) certification were in place for two of the five adults, who worked at the service.

(2)

(a) There was one sufficiently stocked first aid box available, which were safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) The first aid supplies were always accessible, should they be required.