

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015CC403 |
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| Name of Service: | Teeny Bops Playschool |
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| Address of Service: | Glasha, Newberry, Mallow, Co Cork |
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| Eircode: | P51 VK4N |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Michele O'Callaghan |
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| Service type: | Sessional |
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| Date of Inspection: | 07/01/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 10 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | 13 Market Square Mallow Co Cork P51DD5Y |
| Inspection undertaken by: | B Fraher |
| Title: | Early Years Inspector |

| Authority to Inspect | |
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| 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 |

Description of service

Teeny Bops Playschool is a private sessional service operating from 9:30 until 12:30, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. The service is registered to accommodate children aged from 2 to 6 years of age, currently children attending are aged from 3 years to 4 years 11 months.

The service is located in the registered providers private home on the outskirts of Mallow in North Cork. It operates on the ground floor with its own separate entrance at the front of the building. The rooms consist of the main room, a reception area and a children's toilet. There is a dedicated outdoor play area situated at the rear of the service and a carpark is available at the front and side of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider operates the service single handedly and an emergency person is available, if needed.

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 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 and the registered provider 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.*

(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 there was a named emergency contact if required.
 - (b) The registered provider was on duty at the service when the inspector arrived and was on duty at all times during the hours of operation.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to the registered provider and the emergency contact were the subject of inspection.
- (a) Of the four required references, one was from a previous employer with required record of validation on file.
 - (b) Of the four required references, one was from a source other than a previous employer with the required record of validation on file.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were obtained and were on file for the two adults. The registered provider was aware of the re-vetting timeframes outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was required and available for one of the two adults as they lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) The registered provider who worked directly with the early years children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) Two references were unavailable for review for one adult. It is acknowledged that the validations for these two references from past employers were on file.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

Two past employers were contacted and written references were received. The registered provider will ensure that references and validations are completed for all employees.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of two references received.

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(2).

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) At the time of inspection, there were the adequate number of adults required, responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at all times.

(3) The 10 children attending the service were supervised directly by 1 adult.

(8)

(c) The registered provider ensured that as a single-handed operator, a person who was familiar with the operation of the service was available nearby in the event of an emergency.

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:

- (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

(j) No child in the service was currently being administered medication. The service had a process in place to record medication administration if needed.

(k) The inspector reviewed the accident and incident record book. The registered provider informed the inspector that no accident or incident had occurred in the service. An accident and incident record sheet was available in the service to use if needed.

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:

- Snack provided by the parents/guardians were observed to be healthy and nutritious. Children were observed eating filled sandwiches, cheese, crackers, yogurt and a variety of fruits.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children throughout the morning.
- The inspector noted that children were given sufficient time to eat without being rushed when one child remained sitting at the snack table for longer than others, who had finished snack.
- The children were observed to access the sanitary area independently with the staff available to assist if required.

Supporting relationships:

- The registered provider was observed to show positive regard for the children on the day of inspection. The children were encouraged and praised during tasks in a warm and caring manner for example when children completed puzzles, coloured pictures, treaded beads and built items.
- Family photos and birthday calendars were displayed on the walls which promoted a sense of belonging for the children.
- The registered provider engaged with the children in both group and individual activities, through reading books and helping children with their chosen task such as playing with toys and building towers.
- In conversation, the registered provider stated that the service communicated with parents and guardians face to face at drop off or collection, via phone and email.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The care room and the outdoor play area was furnished with resources and equipment which were suitable for the children attending the service. They provided opportunities to enhance the learning needs of all children across all areas of development.
- (b) The children had the opportunity to rest and relax on a couch in the quiet area.

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:

- On the day of inspection, the door was appropriately secured on arrival to the premises and entry was gained by the use of a doorbell. This restricted unauthorised access into the building and helped to prevent the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- During the inspection, toys and play equipment assessed were observed to be in good condition.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children on inspection.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- The first aid box was stored out of reach of the children.
- There were no cables or trailing flexes 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 meals and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Lidded, foot pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste during the inspection.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground on wall hooks.
- Perishable foods were stored in the refrigerator to prevent food spoilage.
- The registered provider was observed sanitising the tables before and after the serving of food.

Fire safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- The fire extinguisher was secured to the walls.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Three Gas cylinders, one which was connected up to the private dwelling for use were located in the outdoor play area. On discussion with the registered provider, the gas cylinders were in the children's outdoor play space and were accessible to the children at the time of outdoor play. This posed a safety risk to the children.
2. An electric fan heater was in use at floor level in the reception area under the fridge and drinks table and was accessible to the children. It is acknowledged that the registered provider turned off the heater when asked. This heater posed a risk of burns to a child should they inadvertently stand in front of or touch the heater.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General safety:

1. Gas bottles will be removed during playschool opening hours and the service will ensure that no gas cylinders are in the outdoor play area during playtime.
2. The heater has been removed and any future heaters will be wall mounted.

Supporting documentation submitted

General safety:

1. Photograph of area with gas cylinders removed.
2. The statement from the registered provider is accepted.

Summary Comment

The corrective actions submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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) The attendance record was available and the inspector observed that all the children present on the day had their check in and out times completed.

(3)

(b) A daily record of visitors to the premises was maintained. The inspector was signed in and out on a record sheet.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(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

(1)

(a) Written records of the fire drills that took place in the service were furnished to the inspector. The last date recorded was noted as 19 December 2025.

(b) Written records were available of the servicing of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms. The firefighting certificate and the smoke alarm certificate were both dated 7 August 2025.

(2)

(c) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were available on the premises for review by the inspector.

(4) The fire procedure notice was displayed on the wall.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required,

Compliance Information

(d) A cleaning schedule was in place at the service for the main room and sanitary facility, which appeared clean.

All examined materials were maintained in good working order. The outdoor toys and area were currently being power hosed and cleaned and were not available for use on the day of inspection.