

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC429
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tiny Tots Creche & Pre-School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Killeagh Gardens, Killeagh, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P36 EV56
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Hazel O'Mahony
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/05/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	47	PM	33
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurranabraher Cork.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D Prendergast
<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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

Tiny Tots Creche & Pre-School is a privately run childcare facility, which has been in operation since 2008. It provides full day, part time and sessional care to children aged 0 to 6 years. This includes the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, which is facilitated from 9.30 to 12.30pm, each Monday to Friday, over 38 weeks annually. The service operates 50 weeks of the year, with daily opening hours from 7.00am to 6.00pm. A registered school age service is also available.

The purpose-built, single storey premises is situated in a residential area of Killeagh in Co. Cork. It consists of four operational care rooms, with adjoining child sanitary facilities, a designated sleep room, a kitchen, an office, a laundry room and staff sanitary facilities. Three of the four care rooms provide direct access to the enclosed outdoor play space, beside the building.

### Staffing

The childcare service employs 10 adults, including 2 relief staff members and 1 adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. All 10 adults work directly with the children and each has attained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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 the child, safety, premises and facilities. The inspections 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 registered provider, 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

(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 in charge of operating the service and a named deputy had also been allocated in the event of her absence.
- (b) The deputy person in charge was present at the childcare facility upon the inspector's unannounced arrival and the registered provider arrived within 15 minutes, to facilitate the remainder of the inspection process.

(2) & (4)

The registered provider confirmed that none of the 10 adults who currently worked at the service had commenced their roles in the period since the previous inspection was undertaken on 27 July 2022. Therefore, parts (2) and (4) were not assessed, as the recruitment records in relation to said adults were reviewed previously.

### 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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults available to the children.

(2) The adult child ratio met the regulatory requirements, as overall, there was an adequate number of adults available to the children, as outlined in the following tables:

Morning:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Baby Room (1 – 1 ½ years)	8	2
Toddler Room (2 – 3 years)	11	1
Pre-school 1 (3 – 4 ½ years)	20	2
Pre-school 2 (3 – 4 ½ years)	8	1

The registered provider was also available at this time.

Afternoon:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Baby Room (1 – 1 ½ years)	8	2
Toddler Room (2 – 3 years)	8	1
Pre-school 1 (3 – 4 ½ years)	12	2
Pre-school 2 (3 – 4 ½ years)	5	1

(8)

(a) Review of the staff roster indicated that the service was operated with at least two adults present at all times.

### 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;

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(i) Weekly staff rosters were on file and available for review.

(j) The registered provider advised that none of the children were in receipt of medication at the time of inspection, therefore, a sample review of previous records were assessed. From said review, it was noted that written parental consent had been obtained for staff to administer specific medication and the administration of medication had been appropriately documented and completed in full.

## 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,*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

##### Basic needs:

- The facilitation of meals and snacks was appropriately timed, with no gaps longer than two hours in between; the registered provider advised that breakfast was typically accommodated between 8.00am and 8.30am, followed by the mid-morning snack from 10.30am to 11.00am, lunch between 12.30pm and 1.00pm and an afternoon snack at approximately 3.00pm. This corresponded with the observed timings of the morning snack break and the lunch meal in Preschool 1 and the Toddler room.
- Age and stage appropriate assistance was provided during mealtimes. For example, the adults supported the children to open food packaging and lunch boxes.
- Drinking water was available to the older children both during and outside of the allocated meal breaks. In the Baby room, the children's sippy cups were readily accessible by the adults and one of the staff members was noted to offer a child a drink of water during free play activities.
- The adults were observed to demonstrate sensitivity towards children during nappy changing, as they calmly chatted to and reassured the children. Older children were encouraged to access and utilise the sanitary facilities independently, with verbal reminders provided as needed.
- An adult sized chair was available in the Baby room, which enabled staff members to soothe, feed and comfort the children, as required.
- The layout of the care rooms supported the children's need for mobility during play and exploration. Time in the outdoor area was also facilitated, which allowed for participation in more active pursuits.

### 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-

(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)(b)

- For children aged under two years, there was a designated sleep room adjoining the Baby room, which was furnished with seven cots and safety mattresses. Black film was in place on the skylight window and on the glass panels of the fire door, in order to reduce the amount of sunlight entering the sleep room. Calming soundscapes were also played while the room was occupied by the children, which helped to create a restful environment.
- Stackable beds and linen were provided for children aged over two years, who attended the Toddler room.
- Rest areas, which consisted of vinyl sofas next to book areas were available in most of the care rooms.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

A rest area was unavailable for the children's use in Preschool 1. The inspector was advised that the sofa, which was usually located alongside the bookshelf, had been removed for repair, however, no interim provision was in place to meet the children's need for rest and relaxation.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

Soft matting was placed in Preschool 1 as a rest area, until the chair was repaired. The chair is now repaired, it has been covered in a washable material with a zip, so that it can easily be removed for washing. Going forward, if the soft seat is being removed for any reason, soft mats or another chair will be placed in the rest area.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was forwarded.

#### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was accepted in meeting the requirements of the regulation.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- Suitable furniture was provided for the children’s use during free play, table top activities and mealtimes; the older care rooms were equipped with an adequate supply of child sized table and chairs, while high chairs and soft floor mats were available in the Baby room. The inspector was also advised that a low-level table and chairs were available and were brought into the Baby room for seated activities.
- Since the previous inspection on 27 July 2022, the layout and presentation of materials in some of the care rooms had been altered, with a view to improving the ways in which the children’s needs and interests were accommodated. For example, in the Baby room, the addition of a second soft floor mat and a colourful play kitchen created an inviting new area for the children to play and explore and a low-level climbing frame had also been introduced. Changes had been made to facilitate more clear floor space for the children in the Toddler room and in Preschool 1, a new shelving unit had been incorporated and was stocked with easily accessible interest items.
- Age and stage appropriate play materials were provided across the care rooms. For example, in the Baby room, there were colourful mirrors and activity boards wall mounted at the children’s eye level, bouncers, push toys, dolls and soft toys, along with containers of books and sound making toys and in Preschool 1, readily available play resources included a tool bench and play tools, hand-held vehicles, train sets, building blocks, a play kitchen, action figures, dolls, jig saws, musical instruments, connectable shapes, threading materials and sensory toys.
- The outdoor play space consisted of a combination of artificial grass, concrete and natural grass surfaces. The fence enclosed area of long grass was not in use for free play on the day of inspection, as the service was participating in ‘No Mow May’, an initiative to support biodiversity. The inspector was advised that a bug hotel had been created in this area for children to discover and learn about insects. New fence mounted blackboards had been included since the previous inspection and the children also had the use of free-standing slides, a selection of ride on and push toys, seesaws and large connectable waffle shapes.

## 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 to the service was key locked from the exterior, with a bell entry system in place. From within the building, the same door was secured with a low-level thumb turn lock and a latch lock at adult height. These safety mechanisms reduced the risk of unauthorised entry and the risk of a child exiting, while unsupervised.
- Concrete block walls and secured gates enclosed the outdoor play environment.
- A storage shed within the outdoor play space was secure and inaccessible to children.
- Low lying glass panels were fitted with visibility strips.
- There were no blind cords accessible to children.

##### Infection Control:

- Handwashing by children and adults was noted to take place after nappy changing procedures and the children were reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet. Warm running water and liquid soap were available at each of the wash hand basins.
- The single use of disposable aprons and gloves was observed to be ensured by the adult who undertook nappy changing in the Toddler room.
- Following the mid-morning snack, table tops were sanitised and care room floors were swept.
- In Preschool 1, refrigerated storage was observed to be provided for the children's perishable meals and snacks.
- Suitable storage, in the form of wall hooks and cubby shelving was available for the children's coats and bags.
- In the nappy changing area adjoining the Baby room, the children's toiletries such as barrier creams, wipes and nappies were maintained in a labelled drawer unit.
- Open windows in the care rooms and in some of the sanitary facilities ensured an adequate supply of natural ventilation.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed to be administered at the time of inspection.

### Safe Sleep:

- The air temperature of the sleep room fell within the recommended range of 16°C to 20°C, while in use to accommodate sleeping children. A temperature reading of 19.9°C was recorded.
- A sample review of the handwritten sleep logs maintained in the Baby room, demonstrated frequent monitoring of children's breathing, colour and position as well as the sleep room temperature.

### Fire Safety:

- There were no fire safety concerns noted.

### Outings:

- The inspector was advised by the registered provider that outings were occasionally undertaken. A suitable Outings policy had been developed and was presented for review.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. The lid of one of the large storage containers in the outdoor area was broken and damaged, which posed a risk of injury to a child, should they attempt to sit or stand on top of the easily accessible container.

### Infection Control:

2. The practice of hygienic hand drying was not ensured. It was noted that, in the sanitary facilities, loose rolls of paper towelling were provided for hand drying, which required each person to handle the roll of towelling after they had washed their hands, while their hands remained wet. This increased the risk of cross infection. Two of the towelling rolls were stored on the side of the wash hand basins and had become damp.
3. In Preschool 1, some of the children were observed to eat their snacks directly from the table, which posed a risk of cross infection.
4. The vinyl sofa in Preschool 2 was torn and could not be adequately cleaned.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. The broken container in the garden has been removed. Any broken toys or containers will be removed immediately.

#### Infection Control:

2. The hand paper roll is for cleaning off the sink area, it has been removed and the paper towels from the dispenser will now be used. Extra paper towels are in place. Paper towels will be kept off the sink.

3. Staff have spoken to children about keeping their lunch in their containers, or putting their lunch on a plate or bowl, which are stored in the cupboard. Children will be observed in relation to this, while eating their lunch.
4. The torn sofa has been removed and covered with washable material. Going forward, any torn chairs will be removed immediately.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **General Safety:**

1. Photographic evidence of the replacement plastic storage container.

#### **Infection Control:**

2. Photographic evidence of paper towel dispensers stocked with paper towels.
3. A photograph of the available plates and bowls.
4. A photograph of the newly covered sofa in Preschool 2.

### **Summary Comment**

The non-compliances identified under this regulation have been adequately addressed.

## 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) Four adults held current First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and the staff roster demonstrated that at least one of these adults was available to the children at all times, during the hours of operation.

(2)

(a) The first aid supplies consisted of a sufficiently stocked wall mounted cabinet and a separate first aid kit for outdoor use, which were both easily accessible to adults in the office.

(b) The first aid supplies were consistently available in the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

*A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider was adequately insured to provide a full day care service, with cover valid until 27 March 2024.

### 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,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*

#### Compliance Information

(a) From a visual assessment, the premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(c) The mechanical vent in the adult sanitary facility was not functioning correctly. There was no audible sound from the vent and a musty odour was evident.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

An electrician called to the service and cleaned around the vent in the attic. A new motor has been ordered for the vent and will be installed as soon as it arrives. The sky light in the lobby will be open at all times while the service is operating. The vents will be checked regularly to ensure they are working.

##### **Supporting documentation submitted**

A copy of the invoice from an electrical services company, for the supply and fitting of the new vent fan and a letter confirming that same had been completed.

#### Summary Comment

The corrective action implemented by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under regulation 29.