

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC442		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Togher Pre-School and Family Centre		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	6 Maglin Grove, Deanrock Estate, Togher, Co. Cork		
<b>Eircode:</b>	T12 C8VW		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Niamh Sheridan		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	29/05/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	31	PM Not Assessed
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C Stokes		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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>	N/A		

### Description of service

Togher Preschool & Family Centre is a community sessional service registered to operate both morning and afternoon sessions for children aged 1-6 years of age. The setting is based in two playrooms in Togher Family Centre and has an enclosed outdoor play area, kitchenette, and sleep room, in addition to the playrooms.

### Staffing

The registered provider is service based, but does not work directly with the preschool children. All staff working directly with the children in the service had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, except for the student and adults employed under the Community Employment Scheme, Receptionist & Safety Officer.

### 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 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 registered provider ensured there was a named person in charge (PIC) of operating the service.
- (b) In addition to the person in charge (PIC), there was a deputy person in charge. The PIC or a deputy were always on the premises.
- (c) There was a clear management structure, which was on display in the service.
- (2) (a) The staff recruitment files for all 13 adults were examined as part of this inspection. When the recruitment files were reviewed two written and appropriately validated references were available from 16 past employers.
- (b) Two validated, written references were available from 10 sources other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 13 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Two adults required out of jurisdiction police vetting which was available for inspection.
- (4) A certificate of qualification in Early Childhood care and Education at a minimum of QQI level 5 on the National Qualification framework was on file for 8 adults. The following adults did not have or require an early years qualification; the Receptionist, the Health & Safety Officer, 1 student and 2 adults participating in a Community Employment Scheme.

### 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 all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(3) The ratio of adults to children was adequate with 4 adults (including 1 student) working with 12 children in Tiny Learners room. This room operated a 1:5 adult/child ratio for the 2 children under 2 years attending and 1:6 ratio for the 2- to 3-year-old children. There were 4 adults (including 1 CE worker) working directly with 19 children in the Little Learners room with children aged 2 years & 8 months to 3 years. This room operated a 1:11 ratio of adults to children.

### 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

- The service provided the morning snack. In the Little Learners room, this comprised of rice cakes, strawberries, and banana. In Tiny Learners Room, snack comprised of rice cakes, orange, and pineapple. Water was served as a drink.
- Some children in both rooms were trained using the toilet and were supported appropriately by the adults to use the toilet and handwash afterwards. The majority of children were in nappies and were changed regularly and sensitively.
- There was a cosy corner to provide for the children's need for relaxation during the session and a sleep room was available off the Tiny Learners Room with 1 cot to facilitate the rest needs of children under 2 years in attendance.
- The outdoor area was observed to be in use on the day of inspection to facilitate and promote children's mobility.

##### Programme of Activities

- There was a daily routine on display in both playrooms, this was accompanied with planning sheets for each day to plot the activities to be undertaken by the children.
- There was an emphasis on a play-based pedagogical approach, influenced by the High Scope model.

- Children’s observations were conducted in a written format monthly and more regularly photographic observation were shared with parents/guardians by social media.
- Parent/Staff meetings were conducted twice a year to support the children’s learning and development.

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

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- There was a rolling four-week menu plan in the service for snacks which were provided by the setting. Such snacks included rice cakes, crackers, bread, cereals, cheese, yoghurt, and various fruits and vegetables.
- Milk or water were available at snack time.
- Outside of snack times, water was available to children.
- The snacks observed were balanced, varied and nutritious.
- The service had a healthy eating policy and managed special diets and food allergies by noting these in each room and having this information readily on display for the adults.

### 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:

- External doors and internal doors were secured.
- Cleaning agents and equipment were inaccessible and stored in the locked cupboards.
- No blind cords, cables or trailing flexes/leads were observed.
- The outdoor area was fully fenced, and no hazards were observed.

### Infection Control:

- A lidded, foot operated pedal bin was available in the toilets and playrooms for the disposal of paper towels.
- A fridge was in place for the storage of lunches.
- The setting was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition throughout.

### Administration of Medication:

- The staff advised that no child required medication on the day of inspection.
- Staff were competent at describing the use of an auto-injector pen and the individualised medical plan for the child with an allergy, equally staff were competent in describing the individualised medical plan for a child using insulin.

### Safe Sleep:

- No child slept in this sessional service on the day of inspection, however a sleep room with 1 cot was available.
- Historical records of 10-minute sleep checks were in place.
- Individual linen supplies were in place.

### Fire Safety:

- The fire exits were not obstructed. No fire hazards were observed.

### Outing:

- No outings were observed on the day of inspection. The service had an outings policy.

## 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 8 adults had up to date training in first aid response (FAR) and that at least 1 of these adults was always on the premises during the hours of operation.
- (2)  
(a) There was an equipped first aid box (x2) available on the premises. The first aid boxes were out of children's reach in each playroom.  
(b) The first aid boxes were always available on the premises.

### 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.*  
*(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) The registered provider ensured that a record was kept of the fire drills, the most recent drill was dated 27 May 2024.  
(b) The registered provider ensured that a record was kept of the firefighting equipment. The service record indicated the fire extinguishers were maintained in September 2023 and the fire alarm was most recently serviced in April 2024.  
(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was on display at the fire point in the rooms.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-  
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (e) The service was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.
- There were 2 children's toilets and sinks for the 12 children in attendance with a ratio of 1:11 for Tiny Learners Room.
  - There were 2 children's toilets and sinks for the 19 children in attendance with a ratio of 1:11 for Tiny Learners Room.
  - There was a nappy changing facility in each of the Tiny Learners and Little Learners rooms.
  - In addition, there were 3 staff toilet and sink for the adults, with a ratio of 1:8.