

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE148
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Name of Service:	Toddle Inn
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Address of Service:	Bru na Sionna, Shannon, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V14 D718
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Name of Registered Provider:	Cora Devaney
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	27/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	80	PM	80
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Offices, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Ennis Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan, E Browne
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

Toddle Inn is a private full day care service located in an urban area in Shannon in Co. Clare. It provides care for pre-school children on a sessional, part time and full day care basis. The service is open from 7.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. It is registered to cater for up to 99 pre-school children in the morning and 86 in the afternoon.

There are six preschool rooms in the service, a kitchen, sanitary accommodation/nappy change areas and three dedicated sleep rooms. The outdoor play areas are divided into sections and are located to the front and rear of the premises. These areas are directly accessible from each individual preschool room.

Staffing

The registered provider is the owner of the service. A designated manager is appointed to oversee the operations of the facility. There were 17 staff members including the registered provider and the deputy manager working across the 6 preschool rooms on the day of the inspection.

All staff hold an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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, and 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 designated person on charge and was responsible for the management of the service on the day of the inspection. There was a named deputy manager available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider and their deputy were present, and the staff roster indicated one or both were always available on the premises.

(c) There was a clear management structure that identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.

(2) The staff files of 20 adults were reviewed on the day of the inspection.

(a) Two written and validated references were available for the all staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources such as schools or colleges.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed to work at the service. All vetting disclosures were dated within the last 3 years.

(d) Police vetting was available for the 3 staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of the inspection there were 80 pre-school children and 17 staff on the premises. The adult/child ratio was correct.
- (2) The staff roster showed that the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service. An additional staff member was available to prepare and cook meals each day at the service.

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:*
- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
 - (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
 - (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
 - (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
 - (e) the facilities available;*
 - (f) the opening hours and fees;*
 - (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
 - (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

- (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

- (1) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service:
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and each staff working at the facility.
 - (b) Details of the type of service in operation and the age profile of children for which the facility is registered to provide services.
 - (c) Details of the adult: child ratios in the service.
 - (d) The type of care or programme provided in the service.
 - (e) The facilities available.
 - (f) The opening hours and fees.
 - (g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10.
 - (h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child daily.
 - (j) The service had a record of all medication administered to a pre-school child with signed parental consent recorded.
 - (k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service was recorded.

Non-Compliance Information

- (i) The staff roster detailed just the first name of each staff member. To identify who is working at the service each staff members full name is required. The roster did not detail the name of the person who covered breaks in each room when staff left the room for meal breaks. Relief staff did not sign in or out in the rooms when covering break times.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff rosters were amended to include all details required.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the revised staff rosters was submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non compliances identified has been adequately addressed.

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:

There was a healthy eating policy in place at the service with fresh snacks and meals prepared on site and served each day to all children. Lots of healthy snacks of fruit, breads and yogurts were provided at regular intervals between meals. On the day of the inspection Shepards pie was served for the main meal. For younger children the food was pureed, and food of thicker consistency was prepared for the older age groups. Low level feeding chairs were used by the Babies and Toddlers. Drinks were easily accessible to the children throughout the day and each child's bottle/beaker was topped up with fresh water as needed. Drinks were taken outside when children were playing outdoors.

Nappy changing facilities were located close to the Baby and the Wobblers rooms. Waist high nappy changing units were accessible. Childrens toiletries were located within easy reach of staff adjacent to the units. Foot pedal operated, lidded bins were accessible for the safe disposal of all soiled nappies. Nappy changing policies were clearly displayed in each area.

Childrens need for sleep and rest was facilitated each day at the service. There were 2 separate sleep rooms with standard cots available for children under 2 years who required a sleep. All cots were in good condition. Separate bed linen was available for all children. Room temperatures were controlled within safe limits. Lighting was dimmed to ensure a restful space. Low level beds were accessible for the older children in a third sleep room if required. A staff member stayed in each sleep room with the children while they slept. All sleep checks were documented, and these notes were shared with parents. A sensory room was recently added to the service. Here

low-level lighting and soft furnishings created a relaxed space for children to regulate and rest if needed. One to one time with children was facilitated in this room if required.

Children had access to outdoor play facilities located directly next to each playroom. Appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear was available to all children. A change of clothes was available for children if needed. The atmosphere in each room was calm and relaxed with staff observed engaging well with all children. Staff responded quickly to children's cues both verbal and non-verbal. Parents got regular updates throughout the day from the staff using a digital communication app. This facilitated staff operating in close partnership with parents on all aspects of their children's care.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The indoor environment and the outdoor environment in the service provided a range of developmentally appropriate, challenging and creative experiences for all children. There were 6 pre-school rooms operational in the service on the day of the inspection. The Baby and Wobbler rooms had lots of uncluttered clear areas providing opportunities for safe floor play. Soft seating was accessible to facilitate staff sitting and holding the younger children when needed. Lots of sensory play materials were accessible in easy to reach treasure baskets. A designated outdoor area is available for the children who are not yet walking.

In the Toddler room a low-level trampoline and climbing frame were located in the centre of the room to help children develop their gross motor skills. Low level tables and chairs were used to complete many tabletop activities and to dine at mealtimes. Childrens artwork and posters of interest were located along the walls for children to view. Childrens personal belongings were placed on clearly labelled hooks with each child's photograph displayed to identify individual spaces. In each Preschool room there were lots of interest areas created with open shelving displaying lots of play equipment. Dress up clothes were available to encourage imaginative play. Lots of tuff trays were stocked with sand, water and rice to facilitate sensorial play.

Outdoor play areas were located to the front and rear of the premises and were accessible from all the playrooms. A good variety of sturdy outdoor play equipment was observed in the outdoor play areas. This included two wooden climbing houses, a large wooden boat, a wooden play bus and a large wooden play car with a trailer. Ride on equipment, trikes and balance bikes were available. Gardening areas and planting spaces were also created with lots of raised beds accessible, filled with flowers and plants.

The layout in all rooms was altered and toys and equipment were rotated depending on children's emergent interests and abilities and the various learning themes associated with the changing times and seasons throughout the year.

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

Throughout each room at the service there was a variety of suitable equipment and materials to support various forms of play. All items were well maintained, durable and easy to clean. The furniture was suitable to the age and stage of development of the children. The quantity of popular toys was adequate.

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 building was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and preventing people gaining unauthorised access to the premises.

All emergency exits and fire doors were unobstructed.

All feeding chairs were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.

All toys, furniture and play equipment were in good condition and free from sharp edges or corners.

No flexes or cables were located within reach of children.

Staff were observed regularly washing hands throughout the day. Warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were accessible in all rooms to facilitate hygienic hand washing and reduce the risk of cross infection.

Administration of Medication:

Consent forms were available for parents and staff to sign if children at the service required the administration of medication. All medicine administered was checked by 2 staff members and details were documented.

Safe Sleep:

There was evidence of the policy on safe sleep being implemented. Staff knew the requirements of the policy and had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on monitoring all children who slept at the service. Documented evidence was available of all sleep checks.

Non-Compliance Information

Administration of Medication:

To ensure the safety of all children, management need to have clear records of all medicines both prescription and over the counter that are on the premises at all times. Numerous bottles of antifebrile medication supplied by each child's parents were stored in all rooms within the service. There were no records kept on the quantity of these medicines stored in the premises at any one time. The policy on the administration of medication stated that all unused medicines were returned to parents when not required.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Administration of Medication:

All medicines are now stored in a locked press. An accurate account of what medicines are stored on the premises at all times is maintained in writing.

Supporting documentation submitted

Administration of Medication:

A copy of the register with details of all medicines in storage at the service, was forwarded to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified has been adequately addressed.

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,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally.
- (b) The building appeared safe and secured. A buzzer system on the entrance door ensured all who entered the building were checked in by an authorised person in the manager's office. All visitor access was managed appropriately with a visitor book available to record details of all who entered the building.
- (c) All areas were well lit by natural light and by artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation. Air conditioning units were used to control room temperatures in all sleep rooms.
- (d) The areas outside were all well maintained and routine cleaning schedules were in place for all internal and external areas.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing areas available in the service. All waste was managed appropriately with lots of foot pedal operated, lidded bins in all areas. Handwashing and drying facilities were suitable and adequate.