

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015DL143

**Name of Service:** Tiny Tots 2 Teens

**Address of Service:** Castlegardens, Drumboe, Stranorlar, Co. Donegal

**Eircode:** F93 YF80

**Name of Registered Provider:** Deirdre O'Neill

**Service type:** Full Day Care, Sessional.

**Date of Inspection:** 15/04/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	12	PM	5
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L Costello and S Killeen
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

This privately owned preschool service is in the town of Stranorlar, Co. Donegal. The preschool caters for children aged between 2 to 6 years, from Monday to Friday between 07:30 and 18:30. This preschool service offers the option of Full day care, an (ECCE) Early Childhood Care and Education and sessional care programme from 9 am to 12 pm. This preschool service operates from converted retail units in small enterprise centre. The service has 3 childcare playrooms and a school aged playroom. The pre-school children have an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises for play activities, exploration, and fresh air. On the day of inspection, the service was offering an Easter Camp.

### Staffing

A total of ten adults are employed in the service and work directly with the preschool children. The Registered Provider works in the service and is the person in charge. The ten adults working directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or equivalent.

### 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 facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15 16(i) (j) (k), 21 23 27 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 27 as an Easter camp was on in the service and preschool children were operating out of one room.

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

(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 service had a named person in charge and a named persons to deputise as required.

(1) (b)

Both the named person in charge and the deputy person in charge were on the premises when the inspectors arrived and remained on the premises throughout the period of the inspection.

(2) (a)(b)

Ten adults are employed in the service and all ten adult files were reviewed.

Sixteen written and verified references from a past employer and four written and verified references from an other source in the absence of a past employer were available for inspection.

(c)

Garda vetting had been obtained for all ten adults employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was not required as none of the adults employed had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months.

(4)

The ten adults employed in the service had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

### 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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service. There were two adults working directly with 12 children on the morning of the unannounced inspection and one adult working directly with 5 children in the afternoon. There was two additional staff members available to cover breaks throughout the day.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children ratio were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.

(8) (a)

The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises when pre-school children were present in the service as evidenced in a sample of attendance records reviewed.

### 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.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (c) an authorised person.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.*

### Compliance Information

(1) (a-i)

A random sample of 12 records of the children attending the service were reviewed. The required information including the authorisation to collect the child, details of illness or special needs of the child, emergency contact and record of immunisations if received were fully completed for each child.

(3) (c)

The records in writing were available for inspection by the early year's inspector.

(4)

The person in charge confirmed that the records are retained for the required period as set out in the regulations.

### 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;*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

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

*(a) all documents and records relating to references and Garda and police vetting obtained under Regulation 9(2) are retained for a period of 5 years from the date on which the person to whom the document or record relates commences working in the service, and*

*(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) (i)

The service had a roster in place to include the start and finish times of the adults employed to work directly with the preschool children. Additional floating staff members were rostered to ensure all staff received their breaks throughout the day.

(j)

Medication administration records were available for the preschool children with the necessary information in place including parental consent.

(k)

Details of accidents and incidents were reviewed in the service. It was evidenced that risk assessments had been completed after incidents and parent had been informed.

(2) (a)

The service demonstrated that all records relating to references and Garda and police vetting obtained under Regulation 9(2) are retained for a period of 5 years.

(b)

The service demonstrated that records referred to in subparagraph, (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) are retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

(3)

These records were made available to the authorised person on the day.

## 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

The registered provider ensured that there was adequate and suitable furniture and play equipment as required in all three preschool rooms in the service.

- Opportunities for sensorial play were available in all three rooms in the form of tuff trays, sensory boxes and arts and crafts.
- Libraries in all three rooms were equipped with a variety of books for story telling facilitated language development.
- Gross motor skills were promoted with the availability of bikes, trikes, climbing frames, slides and footballs,
- Imaginative and role play was facilitated with dress up areas, home corners, kitchen and mud kitchens outdoors.
- Fine motor skill development was encouraged with tabletop activities, jigsaws and puzzles.
- The rooms were brightly decorated with evidence of the children’s learning displayed which added colour to the preschool rooms.
- Age-appropriate tables and chairs were provided for mealtimes and tabletop activities.
- Rooms were laid out to encourage movement and low-level shelving equipped with resources facilitated choice for the preschool children.
- In the sanitary units, stable secure steps were provided to ensure that children could use the facilities independently.

### 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 main entrance into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Leads and flexes were inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Windows had the appropriate safety precautions in place.
- Waste was inaccessible to the preschool child.
- Headcounts were completed when transitioning from one area to another to ensure all children were present.
- All perishable items were stored in the fridge.
- Radiators in care rooms had secure covers to ensure safety from surface burns.

##### Infection Control:

- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior and post mealtimes and after messy play.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean, with cleaning schedules in place and up to date in each care room.
- Children were observed to wash their hands regularly including before snacks and after using the toilet.
- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available for safe hand hygiene practises. Child friendly hand wash posters with picture instructions were placed above the wash basins.

##### Administration of Medication:

- The service had a medication administration policy in place and on discussion with staff they were knowledgeable of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication.
- A detailed support plan was in place for one child who had an allergy and staff were aware of their responsibilities regarding same.

### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. A gate in the outdoor area leading to the main road was unlocked at 10.35am on the morning of the inspection. When brought to the attention of the Registered Provider the inspectors were informed that the lock had been misplaced the evening before. The Registered Provider purchased a new lock immediately and the gate was made secure at 11.20. During the time the gate was unsecure staff members placed themselves strategically to ensure children were supervised at all times while playing outdoors.
2. An area in the outdoor space was used to store broken toys and materials was cordoned off with metal barriers. This area was not secure resulting in some children playing hide and seek in the area with broken equipment, sharp edges and exposed screws which could pose a risk of injury to the preschool child.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

In a written response the registered provider stated:

1. A new lock was purchased on the morning of the inspection, but we have now purchased a smart Biometric lock. All staff has been instructed to make sure that the lock is in the locked position at all times when not in use to prevent the lock from being misplaced.
2. All materials have been removed to the waste disposal. Any material for waste disposal will be stored in a locked shed.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence submitted.
2. Photographic evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

Supervision on the day was observed to be mainly by sight. While outdoors the preschool children shared this space with older children attending the easter camp. The adults positioned themselves throughout the area ensuring all areas were in view and children were supervised.

A baking activity was observed with the preschool children, where the adults positioned themselves around the table, ensuring each child got their turn and that children were mindful and aware of hygiene practices when baking.

The older children who were toilet trained were encouraged to use the bathroom independently and the adults supervised from a distance ensuring dignity was maintained and gave prompts as required.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service had a certificate evidencing that the service was insured for 88 children in a full day care service up until the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2026.