

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR122		
Name of Service:	Star Tots Creche		
Address of Service:	81 Lower Kilmacud Road, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	A94 W6W8		
Name of Registered Provider:	Nathalie Roberts		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	14/05/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	87	PM 55
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, 7 th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8.		
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern & M. Redmond		
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		

Description of service

Star Tots Creche offers a sessional, part-time and full day care service to children aged between 0 and 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 8am and 5:30pm. The premises consist of a two-storey, purposely adapted building beside a retail centre in Stillorgan, County Dublin. An outdoor area is available at the rear of the building. Children are allocated to one of eight rooms according to their age and stage of development. A separate sleep room is available for children attending the Baby and Wobbler rooms.

Staffing

There are 23 staff employed to work with the pre-school children, including the registered provider and persons in charge. Twenty staff were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The persons in charge were available to help as 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 areas of governance and safety. 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, persons 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 person in charge and a named person to deputise.
- (b) The persons in charge were always on the premises during the inspection. The staff roster provided for a person in charge or a named deputy to be present at all times of opening.
- (2)
- (a) & (b) Appropriate consideration had been given to references. Past employer references were available with a record of verification. References from other sources were available for adults who had only one or no past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults and were dated within the last three years.
- (d) International police vetting was available for all adults whom this was required.
- (4) All adults working directly with children held 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.

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) Twenty staff were working directly with 87 children. The persons in charge were available to help as needed.
- (2) The minimum adult to children ratio requirement was maintained. The staff roster provided for the minimum ratio requirements to be maintained at all times.

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.*

Compliance Information

- A sample of 10 records for children were reviewed. The required information was available as outlined below.
- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
 - (b) The date when each child first attended the service.
 - (c) A section was available for recording the date when the child ceases attending.
 - (d) The name, address and telephone number of parents and information where parents can be contacted.
 - (e) Names and contact details of other adults authorised to collect the child.

- (f) Medical information, allergies, dietary preferences, additional needs, and other information specific to the child.
- (g) The name and telephone number of the child's medical practitioner.
- (h) Immunisation details.
- (i) Signed parental consent for medical treatment 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:

- (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)
- (h) Details of children's attendance was available including the time they arrived at and left the service.
 - (i) A staff roster was available detailing the start and finish times of all adults.
 - (j) Records were available of medicines given to children. These included signed parental consent.
 - (k) Records were available detailing accidents, injuries and incidents involving children.

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:

Appropriate measures had been taken to safeguard the children. The entrances and exits were secured to prevent unauthorised access or children leaving unsupervised. Equipment was appropriately maintained and items that could cause harm to children including cleaning products and medicines were kept out of their reach. Heavy furniture was secured to prevent tipping. High chairs were fitted with harnesses.

Emergency exits were kept clear to allow for timely evacuation in the event of a fire. There was a signed assembly point in the outdoor area. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of measures to keep children safe in the event of a fire; this included practicing regular fire drills and maintaining an attendance record of each child on the premises.

Infection Control:

Appropriate measures were taken to reduce the risk of infection spreading. The premises and equipment were clean and well maintained; waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal operated lidded bins; beakers were individually labelled; soothers were kept in individual containers; sterilizing equipment was available for use as needed; individual bed linen was provided; cleaning schedules were in place which included the weekly laundering of bed linen.

Sanitary facilities were appropriately equipped to support handwashing including step-by-step pictures for children to follow. Children washed their hands after outdoor play, after using the toilet and before eating; staff washed their own and children's hands after nappy changing; they took appropriate measures to prevent cross contamination during nappy changes including using gloves and cleaning the changing mat between children.

Administration of Medication:

Staff demonstrated an understanding of procedures to follow to safeguard children when giving medicine. This included obtaining written parent/guardian consent; having a second staff member present as a witness; making a record and sharing the record with the child's parent/guardian on collection.

Safe Sleep:

Measures were taken to safeguard children when sleeping. The children slept in cots and low beds appropriate to their age and stage of development; an adult was always present in the room where children slept on low beds; procedures to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) were displayed in the cot room; staff demonstrated a good understanding of these including maintaining the room temperature between 16 and 20°C; using appropriate bed linen to prevent overheating; checking children at ten-minute intervals and making a record of the checks.

Outings:

The registered provider and staff stated that the children are not taken on outings from the service.

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) A person trained in first aid for children was always available. The staff roster provided for a person with training in first aid for children to be available at all times of opening.

(2)

(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored in conspicuous positions easily accessible to staff.

(b) The first aid boxes were always available to children.

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) Records were available of fire drills carried out in the service. The most recent drill recorded was dated 17 April 2024.
- (b) A record was available detailing the maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment dated October 2023 and the smoke alarm system dated April 2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous position.

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

The children were appropriately supervised. This included indoors, outdoors, and when moving between different parts of the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available dated until 27 March 2025.