

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS208
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Name of Service:	MGW Childcare Ltd. T\A Tickles Childcare
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Address of Service:	38 Oldcourt Avenue, Firhouse, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24 NH74
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Name of Registered Provider:	Maria Ward, Mark Gibbons
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	54	PM	45
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Early O'Brien & H. Bourke
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	N/A
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Description of service

MGW Childcare Ltd. T/A Tickles Childcare is an early years' service located in Firhouse, Dublin 24 which offers full time, part time and sessional care and education. The service is located in a purposely adapted dwelling for the provision of a pre-school service. The service operates from 7:30 to 18:30, Monday to Friday and offers a sessional service for 38 weeks of the year from 9:00 to 12:00 and 9:30 to 12:30. The service consists of four care rooms, a kitchen and sanitary accommodation. There is a secure outdoor area to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There are 15 staff members employed to work in the service including the centre manager and a chef. On the day of inspection, 13 adults were present, 12 of whom worked directly with the children. The registered providers were not present on the day of inspection and do not work directly with the children in the service.

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 records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(4) - Management and recruitment,

Regulation 11 (1)(2)(8)(a) - Staffing levels,

Regulation 15(1) – Record in Relation to a Pre-School Child,

Regulation 19 (1)(a)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child,
Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,
Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures,
Regulation 28 – Insurance,

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 – Record of a Pre-School Child.

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 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 centre manager is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.

(b) The centre manager was present and in charge of the service throughout the inspection.

(2)

Upon review of the staff roster and staff files, it was identified that there were four new staff members employed to work in the service since the last inspection on 20 March 2024.

All staff files were reviewed in relation to regulation 9(2)(c).

Documentation was reviewed in respect of four adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

- (a) Of the eight validated, written references that were required, six were available from a past employer.
- (b) Of the eight validated, written references that were required, two were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were on file and had been obtained for 15 staff members, demonstrating that the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as there was no documentary evidence that any staff member had lived outside of the State for a period of more than six months as an adult.

(4)
Records were available demonstrating that all adults employed since the last inspection held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. On the day of inspection there were 54 children attending the service being supervised by 12 adults on the morning of inspection and 45 children being supervised by 9 adults in the afternoon.
- 8(a)
There was a minimum of two adults on the premises at all times during the inspection. This was confirmed on review of the staff roster.

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

(1)

Ten children's records were sampled and reviewed. The records detailed the information as required by the regulation.

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Basic Needs

Healthy eating was promoted in the service and staff reported that all main meals of breakfast, dinner and tea are provided by the service for children attending on a full-time basis. Parents provide snacks for all children. These snacks comprised of fruit, sandwiches, yogurt and crackers. On the day of inspection, the children were observed to be eating a dinner of roast chicken, vegetables, mash and gravy. Staff advised that alternatives were available. Additional helpings were available on request by children. Drinking water was offered to the children at snack time in the pre-school room and naíonra room. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported children who needed assistance. Children appeared happy and content within the care rooms.

Children's care needs were observed to be met with nappies changed and faces, noses and hands cleaned. Staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care.

Supporting Relationships

In the care rooms, staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff were observed to support children in their play and were down at their level, nurturing children's imagination and curiosity. Staff were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise

when promoting positive behaviour. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes.

Staff described how they record information about each child's learning and development and how this is shared with parents.

Physical and Material Environment

Each of the care rooms were arranged to provide equipment and materials supporting children with the freedom to play and explore. Areas of interest included sensory play available in a large tray on a stand, a rest area, soft mats, books, a home corner and resources for creative and imaginative play. The care rooms provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials.

The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms. A fully enclosed outdoor play area was located to the rear of the service which children from the pre-school room and naíonra room were observed to play in on the day of inspection.

Programme of Activities

Children were observed to make choices on their own play materials within the environment. After snack time, some children accessed toys from the shelf while others rested on the soft mats and chose to explore books, supported by an adult.

Positive language was observed to be used across the staff team and with the children. Language development was supported between the adults and the children, observed both in play, story time and at snack time.

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 leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children in the indoor and outdoor areas on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor and outdoor play environments were safe and free from hazards.
- Medication, which is only administered in an emergency, was stored safely and out of the reach of children.
- Storage facilities for hazardous cleaning materials were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate handwashing for staff and children in the sanitary areas adjacent of the care rooms.
- Foot pedal bins were available throughout the service for the safe disposal of used hand towels and other waste products.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned before and after snack time.

Administration of Medication:

- An adequate administration of medication record was available to document medication given should this be required in an emergency. All staff were familiar with the procedures outlined in the services administration of medication policy.

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep needs of the children in the baby room and nursery room were child led but there was also a designated time for sleep after dinner. The service had an adequate number of cots to accommodate the age profile of the children who required cots for safe sleep. All shoes and heavy clothing were removed before children who required sleep were placed in their cots and on floor beds. Each care room had a cosy

area for children to use who did not sleep during their day. Sleeping children's breathing, position and colour was recorded in addition to the temperature of the designated cot room in the Nursery Room.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, all emergency exits were clearly identifiable and were not obstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

Safe Sleep:

1. On the day of inspection, the sleep records for one child under the age of one year had not been documented in the Baby Room. In discussion with the inspector at 11:35, staff advised that the child had been sleeping for 90 minutes. Upon review of the child's sleep chart, it was noted that the last documented sleep checks for this child were completed on 27 February 2026. This practice poses a risk to the safety of children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Safe Sleep:

Management held a meeting with staff where they were each re issued a copy of the services safe sleep policies with a reminder of practice. It was an oversight on the day that the records were not completed for that child.

Supporting documentation submitted

Safe Sleep:

Photographic evidence of staff signatures confirming that they have been re-issued and have read the service policies and procedures in relation to safe sleep.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance and will inform the next inspection.

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)

There was evidence of regular fire drills having taken place within the service. The last fire drill took place on 10 February 2026.

(b)

There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the premises dated 06 January 2026 and 10 December 2025 respectively.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the care rooms and the main hallway of 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 had a valid certificate of insurance which expires on 27 March 2026 for a full day care service which covers a maximum of 65 children.