

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY002			
Name of Service:	Abbey Tots			
Address of Service:	2 Riverston Gardens, Riverston Abbey, Navan Road, Dublin 7, Co. Dublin			
Eircode:	D07 YH48			
Name of Registered Provider:	Sean Lee, Veronica Lee			
Service type:	Full Day			
Date(s) of Inspection:	23/07/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	32

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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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<p>Description of service</p> <p>Abbey Tots provides a full day care service and is located in Dublin 7. It is open from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday providing care to children aged 0-6 years old. The premises is located in a two-storey semi-detached house and has four care rooms. On the ground floor the Baby/Wobbler room, a dedicated cot room, and a kitchen for preparation of food are situated. The Toddler room and the Preschool room are situated upstairs. To the rear of the property there is a Log cabin where the Montessori room is situated. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) programme for 38 weeks of the year. There is an enclosed outdoor area at the rear of the property.</p>
<p>Staffing</p> <p>The registered providers employ eleven adults to work in the service. On the day of Inspection, there were eight adults present, the deputy person in charge and seven adults working directly with children. The registered providers were not present on the day of inspection.</p>
<p>Methodology</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous inspection history • Any information received in relation to the service <p>The findings on inspection are based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained through examination of documentation • Direct observation • Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2)(4)-Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2)(8)-Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15- Record of a Pre-School Child.

Regulation 19(1)(a)-Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

Regulation 23-Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of child.

Regulation 25-First Aid.

Regulation 26-Fire Safety Measures.

Regulation 28-Insurance.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included each care room with a focus on the Baby/Wobbler room. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under: Regulation 15, Regulation 19 and Regulation 23.

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 deputy 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 service had a designated person in charge and two named adults to deputise as needed.

(b) One of the two named adults to deputise was present when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.

(c) The service had a clear management structure in the service and staff were aware of their own role and responsibility.

(2) A review of the staff roster and conversation with management showed that there are currently thirteen adults employed to work in the service including the two registered providers.

(a) Thirteen written and verified references were available from recent past employers.

(b) Thirteen written and verified references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures had been obtained for all thirteen adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was available in respect of five staff members from five different countries who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than six months as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that eleven adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Evidence was not available to show that one adult who works directly with children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Evidence of the staff member's QQI record of Awards.

Preventive Action

A transcript of the staff members award was in her file, but not the final award. All prospective staff will be required to produce an official cert of qualifications.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of the staff member's QQI record of Awards.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance outlined above under Regulation 9 have been addressed.

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) The registered providers ensured there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children. There were six adults working with 33 children in the morning, and six adults working with 32 children in the afternoon. In addition, there was one staff member who provided break cover and the acting person in charge was available to provide support to the care rooms when required during the inspection.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection at all times. Evidenced by the following:

During the morning:

The Baby / Wobbler room – 3 adults caring for 12 children aged between 1 year to 2 years and 6 months.

The Toddler Room- 1 adult caring for 5 children aged between 2 years and eight months to 3 years.

The Preschool room - 1 adult caring for 8 children aged between 3 to 5 years.

Montessori room – 1 adult caring for 8 children aged between 3 to 5 years.

During the afternoon:

The Baby/ Wobbler room – 3 adults caring for 12 children aged between 1 year to 2 years and six months.

The Toddler Room- 1 adult caring for 5 children aged between 2 years and eight months to 3 years.

The Preschool room - 1 adult caring for 8 children aged between 3 to 5 years.

Montessori room - 1 adult caring for 7 children aged between 3 to 5 years.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that two adults were always present on the premises at all times, evidenced by the staff roster presented on the day of inspection.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of ten children's files were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a)-(i) was maintained for each child.

(3)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

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

(1)(a) Basic Needs:

- The service provided a breakfast option, one hot meal and two snacks which were prepared onsite. At dinner time different dietary requirements were catered for and additional food was observed to be available. For example, dinnertime was served at 12pm, a vegetarian option of homemade vegetable soup was available for the children and staff were observed to check with children to see if extra portions were required. Water was available in each care room for the children to drink.
- Children were given sufficient time to enjoy their snacks and dinner. This facilitated mealtimes to be a social occasion for children to engage with peers.
- There were cosy areas observed in each care room for the children to relax in as required. In addition, each cosy area had cushions and age-appropriate books for reading.
- All children were observed to enjoy outdoor play during the inspection. This supports their social, cognitive, gross and fine motor development.

Physical and Materials Environment:

- The care rooms in the service were designed with the age and stage of development having been taken into consideration. Children were observed to take part in free play and group work. The layout of the rooms facilitated these choices as the toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and were visible and accessible to the children. There was a sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in each care room.
- Toys and materials were observed to be in good condition, well equipped and grouped thematically throughout the care rooms which encouraged independent spontaneous play experiences. For example, all battery-operated toys were working, and role play areas such as the home corner area in each care room were equipped with supporting props.

- The presence of Family Wall displays, Birthday Time displays and the children's artwork, this demonstrated a sense of identity and belonging for the children.
- The outdoor play area of the service was designed with the age and stage of development having been taken into consideration. It was divided into three sections; each section was divided off with a fence and was equipped with age and stage appropriate equipment. For example, the outdoor play area for older children had two swings, climbing frame, sand tray, sports equipment and ride on toys such as tractors and cars providing learning opportunities for children. In addition, this area had a partially covered section with seating and staff spoke about how this provided the children protection from the sun and take shelter during inclement weather.

Supporting relationships with Children:

- Staff were able to discuss how they support children with the transition from home to the service and from care room to care room by offering a settling in period where the child visited the new care room every day for short periods to ensure the child who was transitioning was familiar with the staff, children and the care room before the transition from home to the service or the transition from one room to another room commenced.
- The service used an electronic communication application to update parents/guardians about their child's day this included activities, mealtimes, toileting, and sleep updates. The inspector observed staff greeting parents at collection time and updating parents verbally on their child's day in the service.
- Language used by staff was observed to be kind, considerate and supportive. For example, during nappy changing procedures children were observed to be spoken to by the staff member in a reassuring and friendly manner throughout the nappy changing procedure.

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:

- On the inspectors unannounced arrival at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- All cleaning agents and medication were stored safely and out of reach of children.
- Documented attendance records demonstrated the children present in each care room.
- The outdoor area was secured with a surrounding wall which reduced the risk of unauthorised access.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with liquid soap, warm water, and hand drying facilities. The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and playing outdoors.
- Foot pedal operated bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas to allow hygienic disposal of contaminated materials.
- Individual bed linen was used for the sleeping children. Cots and soft floor mats were positioned 50 centimetres apart, as per best practice guidelines to reduce the potential risk of cross infection.
- Soothers were stored safely, and staff in the baby/wobbler room were knowledgeable on how to wash and sterilise soothers between use.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition and the windows in the care room and sanitary areas were open to allow for circulation of air.

Safe Sleep:

- Shoes and heavy clothing were removed from children while they slept.
- The temperature of the cot room was recorded at 21.7 °C at 1.55pm while six children over 1 years old were sleeping meeting the acceptable temperature of 18-22 °C.
- The temperature of the care room was recorded at 22.2 °C at 1.51pm while seven children over two years old were sleeping meeting the acceptable temperature of 18-22 °C.

- Physical sleep checks were observed to be carried out at 10 minutes intervals and staff documented each child's breathing, position and colour.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of the inspection, it was observed that all emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This ensured the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for thirteen adults. However, three of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Safe Sleep:

- Four of the six cots were observed to have toys in them whilst children under two years old slept. The service safe sleep policy states toys will be removed. This posed a safety hazard.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

General Safety:

Corrective Action

- All employees now have Garda Vetting within the three-year time.

Preventive Action

- A log of all Garda vetting expiry dates will be kept and monitored, and re-vetting will be applied for prior to the expiry date.

Safe Sleep:

Corrective Action

- All staff have been advised to remove soft toys from the cots once the child falls asleep.

Preventive Action

- Management will ensure that the sleep policy is adhered to.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Evidence of up-to-date Garda vetting for the three staff members.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances outlined above under Regulation 23 have been addressed.

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

(2) (a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises and was available to the adults caring for the children at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) While it is acknowledged that the service provided evidence that one adult was trained as a First Aid Responder, the roster demonstrated that they are not available at all times to the children attending the service, for example on the day of inspection the roster demonstrated there was no person trained in first aid response between 7.30am and 10am. This non-compliance was observed on the previous inspection in August 2023 and the preventive action had not been maintained.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

The staff member, trained as a First Aid Responder, was rostered on for 7.30 but had to attend an appointment so was delayed till 10am. Another staff member is enrolled in a 3 day FAR certificate course.

Preventive Action

Expiry dates of FAR certificates will be noted in the diary and refresher course arranged before the expiry date.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of FAR training booking in August for staff member.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance outlined above under Regulation 25 has been addressed.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drill took place on 17 June 2024.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced in March 2024. Smoke alarms were serviced on 29 January 2024.
- (2)(c) Records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were provided.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were displayed in prominent positions at the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for 50 children and an expiry date of 27 March 2025.