

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY002				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Abbey Tots				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	2 Riverston Gardens, Riverston Abbey, Navan Road, Dublin 7, Co. Dublin				
<b>Eircode:</b>	D07 YH48				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Veronica Lee, Sean Lee				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	09/08/2023				
<b>Regulatory Compliance Meeting:</b>	23/11/2023				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>21</td> <td>PM</td> <td>19</td> </tr> </table>	AM	21	PM	19
AM	21	PM	19		

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Á Dunne
<b>Title:</b>	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).	
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.

### Description of service

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 in the semi-detached house. To the rear of the property there is a Log cabin where the Montessori room is situated. There is an enclosed outdoor area at the rear of the property. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) programme for 38 weeks of the year.

### Staffing

On the day of Inspection, there were six adults present - the deputy person in charge, five staff members working directly with children. The registered providers were present during the morning of the day of inspection.

### 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/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment – (1), (2)(a), (b), (c), (d), (3), (4)

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

Regulation 21 Environment and Materials

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,

Regulation 25 First Aid - (1), (2)

Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures

however, on inspection additional non-compliance which was identified under Regulation 22 Food and Drink.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations: 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment and Regulation 11 Staffing Levels were assessed across the three rooms inspected.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby / Wobbler room, the Preschool room and the Montessori room but did not include the Toddler room as it was closed on the day of inspection.

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 registered providers, 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 named person to deputise as required.

(b) The deputy person in charge was present when the inspector arrived at the service and was present for the duration of the inspection.

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

(2) The files of 13 staff members were reviewed.

- (a) Two written and validated references were available for one staff member from a past employer.  
One written and validated reference was available for eight staff members from a past employer.

(b) Two written and validated references were available for four staff members from a source other than a past employer.

One written and validated reference was available for five staff members from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting was available for 13 staff members.

(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) The twelve staff 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

(2) (a)

- One written reference available for two staff members were not validated.
- One written reference available for one staff member was not translated and not validated.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) All staff now have 2 validated references, and the reference in a language other than English has been translated and validated. The system of employing new staff has been somewhat disjointed with different personnel responsible for different aspects of the employment process. From now on the Manager will take on the sole responsibility of the employment process, thereby reducing the risk of incomplete staff files.

### Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a) Photographic Evidence submitted.

## Summary Comment

The non compliances 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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there were six adults working with 21 children in the morning, and five adults working with 19 children in the afternoon.

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

The adult child ratios during the morning session were maintained as follows;

**The Baby / Wobbler room** - 3 adults to 7 children aged between 1-2 years 6 months.

**The Preschool room** - 1 adult to 7 children aged between 2years 6 months to 3years 6 months.

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

The adult child ratios during the afternoon were maintained as follows;

**The Baby/ Wobbler room** – 2 adults to 7 children aged between 1-2 years 6 months.

**The Preschool room** - 1 adult to 7 children aged between 2years 6 months to 3years 6 months.

**Montessori room** - 1 adult to 5 children aged between 3 -5 years.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(8)(a) The registered provider did not ensure that two adults were always present on the premises at all times, the roster presented on the day of inspection demonstrated that only one adult was rostered to be present on the premises from 5.30pm to 6pm.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

(8)(a) The issue arose due to 3 staff being absent on the day of inspection due to holidays. Staff ratios were maintained throughout the day, but the lack of staff on that day prevented management from rostering 2 staff for the last half hour. Two staff are always rostered until 6 pm. It was the circumstances of that particular week that caused the issue. If the issue occurs again, staff will be required to work overtime to ensure that at least 2 staff are always present on the premises.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

(8)(a) Staff Rosters submitted.

### **Summary Comment**

Under Regulation 11, the non-compliance outlined above has been addressed.

## 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 care rooms in the service were designed with the age and stage of development of the children having been taken into consideration. Children were observed to take part in free play and group work on the day of inspection. 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 equipment to reflect the children’s interests and their emergent curriculum.
- There was a variety of play materials and equipment available to the children according to their age and stage of development, to include: Art easels with arts and crafts materials directly accessible to the children on art shelves, home areas with play kitchens, cash register, phones, large and small dolls ; range of construction toys to include jigsaws and wooden puzzles, wooden building blocks, plastic building bricks,, dominos , connects , connecting cubes , tessellations, magnetics , sorting and stacking toys,, toys for transporting such as cars, trucks, a garage a fire station, trains with train tracks and small world play toys of small characters and animals, peg and peg boards for imaginary play dress up clothes and puppets,

Montessori materials supporting the areas of practical life, sensorial, language, maths and culture were present.

- Each care room had a cosy area of soft floor mats with cushions and books for rest and relaxation.
- There was a sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in each care room.
- An outdoor play area was available for the children with soft artificial surface. The equipment and toys available included a swing set, balance bikes, ride in cars, tractor, see saw, slides, a climbing frame, a swing a slide set, a sheltered gazebo with couch and outdoor bean bags for relaxation.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. Some battery-operated toys in the Baby/Wobbler room were not working, for example an activity walker, an activity table, a standing monkey, an activity treehouse, a ride on horse and a train, these cause-and-effect toys when not working, limit the learning opportunity and enjoyment of the toys to the children.
2. There was no supporting play equipment present for the play kitchen in the Baby / Wobbler room, limiting the play opportunities for the children.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. There is a supply of batteries maintained on the premises for replacement.
2. There is supporting play equipment for the play kitchen in the Baby/Wobbler room. It is stored in a wicker basket but unfortunately on the day of inspection it had been placed just out of reach of the children, and it went un-noticed. The basket will be placed within the Childrens' reach from now on.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

1. No evidence submitted.
2. Photographic Evidence submitted

### Summary Comment

The non compliances outlined above under Regulation 21 have been addressed.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- The service followed a two-week menu plan which was on display in the hallway and visible to parents. Food provided within the service was prepared in the onsite kitchen including breakfast, snacks and lunch.
- On the day of the inspection the children were served a breakfast of cereal with milk, a mid-morning snack of brown bread with cheese, a hot lunch of beef stew with potatoes and vegetables.
- Staff were aware of the different dietary requirements of the children in their care room and suitable meals and alternatives were provided.
- Meals were prepared to suit the stages of development of the children in each care room.
- The children were given support and supervision when self-feeding.
- Drinks of Water were available throughout the day.

### 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 sharp implements 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:

- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels.
- Handwashing was observed after outdoor play, after nappy changing, after bathroom visits, after nose cleaning and before mealtimes.
- Nappy changing facilities were available for the children.

### Safe Sleep:

- The sleep needs for children under 2 years of age, were facilitated with access to cots for sleep.
- All cots had washable / wipeable covers on the mattresses.
- The sleep needs of children over two years of age were met through the provision of low beds.
- Children were provided with cellular blankets for sleep.
- Sleep checks were completed every 10 minutes by staff members during sleep time of children.
- Shoes and clothing such as sweatshirts were removed from children while they slept.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Infection Control:

1. Two nappy changing procedures for children in the Baby/Wobbler room were observed and were not completed as per service nappy changing policy for example:
  - The staff member wore the apron into the care room to return the first child and collect the 2<sup>nd</sup> child to be changed and the apron was not changed between the two concurrent nappy changes, this was at variance to the service policy which stated - Dispose of gloves and apron and wash hands thoroughly. Wash the child's hands before leaving the changing bay unit.
  - Used gloves and aprons were not removed in a timely manner after the dirty nappy was removed, they were worn for the duration of the nappy changing procedure.
2. Bins for disposal of tissues in the four sanitary facilities of the service had broken or no lids, this leads to poor infection control.

#### Safe Sleep:

3. While it was acknowledged it was a warm summers day, the temperature of the cot room and the Baby / Wobbler room while children slept exceeded acceptable range of 16 – 20 °C. The temperature of the rooms while children slept were recorded as follows:

Sleep Room	Times and temperatures recorded
Cot room (Children aged 1 - 2 years.)	13.17pm = 21.4°C while four children slept
Baby / Wobbler room (Children aged 2 - 3 years)	13.03pm = 22.3 °C while four children slept

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Infection Control:

All staff have reviewed the nappy changing policy and are fully acquainted with proper nappy changing procedures. Management will monitor and remind staff of the proper nappy changing procedures.

1. All bins with missing/broken lids have been replaced. Staff have been requested to report any breakages immediately to management.

#### Safe Sleep:

2. While every effort is made to keep the temperature of the sleep rooms to within guidelines, by opening windows and doors and the use of fans. A revision of the sleep and rest provision is imminent, with increased room temperatures. It is hoped that maintaining temperature levels will be more achievable. In addition to our usual practices to maintain the correct temperature in the sleep room, an additional fan will be introduced during the summer months.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Infection Control:

1. Evidence of training with staff submitted.
2. Photographic Evidence submitted.

#### Safe Sleep:

3. No evidence submitted.

## Summary Comment

Under Regulation 23, the non-compliances outlined above 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)(b) Well-equipped first aid box was available to the children attending the service and was stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the kitchen on the premises.

### 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 5.30pm and 6pm.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) All staff have a valid Paediatric First Aid Course Cert.

The registered provider stated at the regulatory compliance meeting that an additional staff member had been employed who has first aid training to the First Aid Responder (FAR) standard.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Submission of FAR certification for a second staff member.

Emergency First Aid for Adults and Children Certificates for 2 staff members.

Risk assessment titled "Ensuring children in the care of the service are always being cared for by staff members trained in First Aid".

### Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met as a second staff member has certification in and is trained to the First Aid response (FAR) level. The registered provider must ensure that a staff member with FAR training is on the premises at all times during the operational hours of the service.

### 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) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2023.
  - (b) A record was available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment demonstrating it was last serviced in March 2023 and for the number, type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms in the premises, which were last serviced on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed on the premises.