

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DY077

Name of Service: Tippy Toes Early Years Service, Aylward Green

Address of Service: Focus Ireland - Aylward Green, Cappagh Road, Finglas, Dublin 11

Eircode: D11 WP46

Name of Registered Provider: Elaine Fleming

Service type: Drop-In

Date of Inspection: 28/07/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	2	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:
Early Years Inspectorate
2nd Floor, Unit 4/5
The Nexus Building
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Inspection undertaken by: C Kerrigan

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

Description of service

Tippy Toes Early Years Service Aylward Green is a not-for-profit Drop-In service for children age from 0-6 years of age. The service runs from Monday to Friday between the hours of 10am to 12pm.

The service operates from a large care room in a multipurpose complex operated by Focus Ireland.

An enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the property.

Staffing

The service employs seven staff, to include the registered provider, five early years workers who provide direct care and one adult who works in a support capacity.

On the day of inspection there was four adults available in the drop-in centre. The registered provider oversees the running of the service and provides support when 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 area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 (j)(k) Record in relation to pre-school service.

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 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*
- (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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 registered provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The registered provider ensured that the person in charge was present at all times during the inspection.
- (2) The files of six adults working within the service and the registered provider were reviewed in full on the day of inspection, including a review of police vetting records for one adult which remained outstanding from the previous inspection in June 2024.
- (a) The registered provider ensured that ten written and validated references were available from a previous employer for the adults working within the service.
 - (b) The registered provider ensured that four written and validated references were available from a person other than a previous employer for the adults working within the service.
 - (c) The registered provider ensured that Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the seven 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) The registered provider ensured that police vetting was available for one adult who had resided in a state other than the state of Ireland for a period longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that references and Garda vetting procedures were completed prior to any adult being allowed access or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

- (4) The registered provider ensured that six adults employed within the service to provide direct care to the children whose records were reviewed, held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Ireland 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.*
- (6) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 3 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number 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 provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children during the inspection, as there were three staff working with two early years children.
- (6) On the day of inspection, it was observed that the correct adult to child ratio was maintained, as there were three staff members working directly with two children aged between 0-6 years.
- (8) (a) A review of the staff rosters available demonstrated that two adults were on the premises during the operational hours of the service.

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:

(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.

(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)
- (j) Medications are not routinely given within the service however the registered provider ensured that there was a medication administration record available when needed.
 - (k) A review of one accident and incident record was found to be fully completed with all necessary details included.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the relevant records were available within the premises for the Inspector on the day of inspection.

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) The registered provider ensured the children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service, for example.

Basic Needs:

- Water was observed to be freely available to children throughout their time within the service.

- Children were provided with appropriate sun protection during outdoor play, staff ensured children were hydrated and regular sunscreen was applied. This provides comfort during outdoor play.
- A cot was available to children who required sleep during their time within the service.
- Nappy changing was not observed on the day of inspection, staff stated that nappy changing was undertaken as needed around the schedule of the child.
- There was a rest area available in the care room if the children needed to engage in more restful activities.

Supporting Relationships.

- The adults in the service were observed to interact with the children in a warm, attentive and affectionate manner, sitting with children involving themselves in the children's play experiences. This provides opportunities to support children's learning and emotional development.
- Adults within the service were observed to speak to each other in a professional and respectful manner.
- The service operates an open-door policy with parents, with pick up and drop offs being utilised to share information about the child's day, this is further supported through the use of a mobile which is used to share details of the child's day.

Physical and material environment

- The furniture provided in the room was low level and appropriate for the children attending with toys, equipment and play materials easily accessible and visible to the children on low level units which nurtured independent and facilitated choice.
- There was a range of equipment available including a home corner with associated props to facilitate imaginative play experience, costumes, stacking, building, connecting and threading toys to facilitate creative play. Cars, garages and trucks for transporting and books to facilitate language and early literacy development.
- The children had access to the outdoor play environment which was an extension of the care room. Children were observed to move freely between the indoor and outdoor spaces. The outdoor space had absorbent flooring. An assortment of equipment to include a playhouse, a slide, see saws, steps to give an array of options to develop gross motor skills. Sensory water tables provide an alternative for children who chose more restful activities.

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 to the service was secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival at the service. Access was granted via a doorbell system in which a staff member answered. Therefore, preventing access to the children from unauthorised persons.
- The care room door remained closed with a low-level gate in use, therefore preventing children from exiting the service into the adjoining corridors unsupervised.
- Hazardous materials such as cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- The ambient room temperatures within the service were kept between the recommended 18 and 22°C.
- There were no trailing flexes accessible to children within the service.
- The outdoor area was fully secured with high walls and fencing. This was accessed via the care room.

Infection Control:

- The service was clean and well maintained throughout. Cleaning schedules were on display throughout the service outlining the frequency of cleaning.
- Thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap and single use paper towels were in use throughout the service for hand washing purposes, ensuring good hand washing practises.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication is not routinely given to children within the service however staff demonstrated knowledge on the procedure for medication administration if required.
- Temperature reducing medication was safely stored within the service and available for use if required.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were observed to be clearly lit and unobstructed during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for one staff member; however, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice (EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider has stated that they have taken all necessary actions to ensure Garda vetting was submitted, a submission has been made by HR. The registered provider has stated that the forms will be submitted more promptly, staff have been reminded of their responsibility to monitor their Garda vetting status and reminded them to contact HR or their manager if they do not receive a reminder within the timeframe.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Evidence of application submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

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) Persons trained in first aid to include First Aid Response (FAR) were available to children during the operational hours of the service.

(2)

(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position within the premises.

(b) The first aid box was readily available to the adults caring for the children attending the pre-school 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.
- (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) The registered provider ensured that a record was kept in writing of fire drills within the service. the last recorded fire drill was dated the 9 July 2025.
 - (b) The registered provider ensured that a record was available indicating the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment with records demonstrating it was last serviced on the 2 Feb 2025, and the number type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms throughout the service, these were last serviced on the 2 February 2025.
- (2) (c) The registered provider ensured that the fire drill and maintenance records were available for review by the Inspector, these were displayed in the hallway.
- (4) A notice of procedures was clearly displayed throughout the service indicating the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.