

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY223		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Theresa's Playgroup		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	1 Thorndale Crescent, Artane, Dublin 5, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	D05 Y7C5		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Theresa Gallagher		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	17/10/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	9	PM
<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>	E Hosford		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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

Theresa's Playgroup is a private service which provides sessional care and education to children aged between 2.5 to 5 years of age and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme which operates from 9am to 12pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from two care rooms on the ground floor of the registered providers residential home on the northside of Dublin city. An enclosed outdoor area is available to the rear of the service.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs two staff to include the designated person in charge and a staff member employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). There were two staff members present on the day of inspection working directly with the children.

### 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

The unannounced inspection focused on an examination of compliance under The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

- Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) (6A),
- Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(2),
- Regulation 19 Health Welfare and Development of Child,
- Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,

- Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,
- Regulation 25 First Aid,
- Regulation 26 Fire Safety measures and
- Regulation 28 Insurance.

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 person in charge, staff member and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

*(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.*

*(6A) is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT)*

*REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early*

*Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “)*

*(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”*

#### Compliance Information

(2) The staff files of three staff members employed in the service were reviewed.

(a)(b) Two validated written references were available for the three staff employed and working in the service from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for three staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International police vetting was not required as documentary evidence available demonstrated that no staff member had resided outside of the jurisdiction for more than 6 months as an adult.
- (4) On review of documentation available two staff members working with the children had evidence to demonstrate that they held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- (6)(A) One staff member was employed under the scheme Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

## 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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection. There were two adults caring for nine children aged 2.5 – 5 years.

### 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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

##### Basic Needs:

- The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place during the inspection. The children moved freely – exploring their environment, playing and engaging with staff and each other. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care such hand washing for warm individual engagement with the children.
- The children ate their snack from home in a calm and relaxed atmosphere. The food eaten consisted of sandwiches, crackers, fruits and drinks of water. Staff sat with the children and engaged in informal conversation.
- A rest area was available in the care room to enable the children to take time away from the group as desired.

##### Supporting Relationships:

- Staff were observed using gentle tones whilst speaking to the children when giving them clear directions and guidance when transitioning from activities.
- Staff supported children to be independent in their environment including using the toilet independently, tidying up following activities, and washing hands.
- Staff engaged with parents and guardians daily at drop off and collection with time given to each family to discuss each child's day and activities completed. Additional information regarding the service and upcoming events were communicated by phone text messages and emails.

### 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 were bright and laid out with varying areas of interest to include home area, construction space, arts and crafts materials and tabletop games and puzzles. Materials available were accessible on open shelving which were clearly displayed. Tables and chairs were positioned beside the equipment to encourage the children to participate in tabletop activities.
- Rest areas were available and consisted of soft matting, cushions, and a selection of books.
- The outdoor area was colourful and inviting. Areas of interest were clearly displayed with suitable and appropriate materials. Playhouses gave the children the opportunity to play with well stocked kitchens and construction areas. Space for activities such as running and games, and a sand tray with scoops, spades, pouring cups and rakes along with a large climb tunnel, slides, moveable see saws, balls, child size benches and chairs were also accessible.

### 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 care rooms was closely monitored by staff who granted access by a key which was stored out of the children's reach.
- The care rooms were observed to be suitable and safe with all cleaning agents and sharp implements out of children's reach.
- Low level windows and all blind cords in the care rooms were secured.

##### Infection Control:

- The care rooms and the sanitary facilities were maintained in a clean condition with handwashing facilities to include warm water, liquid soap and paper towels available to the staff and children.

- A fridge was available for the storage of children’s perishable food items from home.

**Fire Safety:**

- Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were completed in the service and all fire equipment to include fire extinguishers and smoke detectors were serviced yearly.
- The designated fire exit was illuminated and clear of any obstructions throughout the inspection.

**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) The registered provider ensured that a staff member was trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) certification with an expiry date of the 6 August 2026.

(2)(a) and (b) A first aid box was available in the service and suitably equipped and accessible to the adults responsible for caring for the children attending 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 fire drills completed in the service. The last documented fire drill was the 2 October 2024.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was present in the service. Fire extinguishers were serviced on the 27 September 2024 and the wired smoke alarms present in the service were serviced on the 23 July 2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

### 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 for inspection for a maximum of 11 children on a sessional basis with an expiry date of 27 March 2025.