

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY226		
Name of Service:	Tiny Toes Community Creche		
Address of Service:	The Basement, 42 Manor Street, Dublin 7, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D07 FYP7		
Name of Registered Provider:	Carmel Brien		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time		
Date of Inspection:	15/08/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM 9
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15		
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne and C Harte		
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 Not applicable.

Description of service

Tiny Toes Community Crèche provides full-day, part-time and sessional childcare to children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. It operates from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service operates from the basement rooms of a three-storey building in an urban area of Dublin 7. The Crèche consists of three care rooms: the Cubs Room, the Tigers Room and the Lions room, a kitchen and an office on the basement floor. There is a sensory room located on the ground floor for therapeutic services and a large well equipped outdoor play area at the rear of the building.

Staffing

On the day of Inspection, there were nine adults present - the registered provider, six staff members working directly with children, a cook and one office administrator.

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 regulations:

Regulation 9 (2)(a), (b), (c), (d), (4)

Regulation 11 (1), (2)

Regulation 16 (h), (i), (j), (k)

Regulation 21

Regulation 22

Regulation 23

Regulation 25 - (1), (2)

Regulation 26 (1), (4)

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under: Regulation 23 – Safety Welfare.

The scope of the inspection included the Cubs room, the Tiger room and the Lions room.

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 registered provider, staff 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.

Compliance Information

(2) During the Inspection, the files of eight staff members were reviewed.

(a) One written and validated reference was available for three staff members from a past employer.

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

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

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

(4) The qualifications of seven staff members were reviewed:

Evidence was available from seven files reviewed demonstrated that seven staff members 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 (DCEDIY).

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) Two written and validated references were not available for one staff member, from a past employer.
One written and validated reference was not available for one staff member, from a past employer.
One written reference available for one staff member from a past employer was not validated.
- (b) One written reference available for one staff member from a source other than a past employer was not validated.
- (d) International police vetting's were not available from two countries in respect of one staff member who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than six months as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) The registered provider has reviewed and identified the written and validated references required. A written reference was requested from one staff member. Upon receipt the reference was validated by the registered provider.

The registered provider has reviewed and identified the written reference for one staff member from a past employer not validated. The reference has since been validated by the registered provider.

Staff files have been updated. Staff file checklists have been included in each file to improve organisation.

Management will review and update them regularly to ensure all details are kept valid and up to date.

(b) The registered provider has reviewed and validated the identified written reference for one staff member from a source other than a past employer. Staff files have been updated. Staff file checklists have been included in each file to improve organisation. Management will review and update them regularly to ensure all details are kept valid and up to date.

(d) The registered provider requested one staff member contact the National Embassy and apply for National Police vetting for the staff member. This was followed up by the staff member who attended the embassy and vetting was issued. On receipt of vetting, the registered provider requested that the document be translated into English by a certified translation service. This was followed up by the staff member and original and translated documents are now on staff file.

The registered provider will ensure that any staff member in the future employed by our service will have national police vetting if they have resided outside the country since turning 18 years old.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic Evidence submitted

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 9 , the non-compliances outlined above 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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there were six adults working with 15 children in the morning and three adults working with nine children in the afternoon of the inspection day.

(2) The required adult/child ratio were maintained in the service throughout the inspection,

In the morning from 9am to 1pm

Cubs room - 2 adults to 3 children aged between 2 to 3 years.

Tigers room - 2 adults to 5 children aged between 3 to 5 years.

Lions room - 2 adults to 7 children aged between 3 to 5 years.

In the afternoon from 1pm to 4.30pm

Tigers room - 2 adults to 4 children aged between 3 to 5 years.

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

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Records of attendance by each preschool child on a daily basis were present.
- (j) One record of medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent was present and complete.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (i) No roster was available for review during the inspection to determine the hours each staff worked, when they took their breaks and what staff covered these breaks if required.
- (k) Twenty-three accident / incident record forms were reviewed.

The following details were not recorded on individual forms as per the service accident and incident policy

- 4 forms did not have the parent signature or date present.
- 1 form did not have the staff signature or date present.
- 7 Forms did not have the manager signature or date present.
- 11 forms did not have date of signature of parent.
- 3 forms did not have date of signature of staff member.
- 13 forms did not have date of signature or manager.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(i) The registered provider purchased an Early Years staff roster template from an external company. This roster has been implemented and updated weekly to reflect staffing hours, breaks and staff who cover breaks.

Staff roster is on display in our hallway and checked weekly by management.

(k) Twenty-three accident and incident reports have been reviewed. Forms that could be updated with staff, manager and parent signatures with children still in attendance of service have been. Forms that could not be updated and signed by parents and guardians due to children no longer attending our service have been marked. Accident and Incident books will be reviewed weekly by the registered provider to ensure that all documentation is fully completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

(i) Photographic Evidence submitted.

(k) No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances outlined above, under Regulation 16 have 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. For example, in the Tigers room, building plastic blocks and in the Lions room threading and playing with dolls houses and garages with supporting equipment. The layout of the rooms facilitated these choices as the toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and were 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 home areas with play kitchens, cash register, large and small dolls with clothes ; range of construction toys to include jigsaws and wooden puzzles, wooden building blocks, plastic building bricks, magnetics, connecting cubes, stickle bricks, links, clicks, peg and peg boards, large nuts and bolts, toys for transporting such as cars, trucks, trains and tracks, a garage and small world play toys of small characters, dinosaurs and animals; dress up, puppets and musical instruments for imaginary play and sand for sensory play.
- There was a sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in each care room.

Non-Compliance Information

1. In the Lions room, there was no cosy area present for rest or relaxation for the children.
2. In the Cubs and Tiger rooms, the play kitchens had limited supporting equipment to support role play for the children.
3. In the Cubs room, the books present were stored on a high shelf, and not accessible to the children.
4. While it is acknowledged arts and crafts materials were present in the care rooms, the art and craft materials were not accessible to the children for child led art activities.
5. The outdoor play area, was poorly equipped and maintained, limiting play opportunities, for example:
 - No supporting equipment for the three play kitchens.
 - No supporting equipment for the blackboard.
 - The permanent role play shop structure was inaccessible to the children.
 - Storage units of toys were inaccessible to the children.
 - Climbing wall of climbing frame was inaccessible for the children with an outdoor swing stored against it.
 - Two storage units were present under the climbing frame minimising access to this area of the climbing frame.
 - Log shape steps covered in overgrown grass and not accessible to children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. In the Lions room the cosy corner had previously been removed due to recent painting and decorating and all equipment had not yet been returned and set up, this cosy corner has since been returned to the room. During future renovations, management will ensure that all toys and equipment are returned to playrooms ahead of reopening.
2. New play kitchen equipment has been ordered for each of the three playrooms to support role play for the children in each room. New equipment will be ordered as soon as possible when older equipment needs to be replaced.
3. New book storage equipment has been ordered for each of the three care rooms. The new storage units will be fitted to a wall at an appropriate height in each room to support accessibility of books to all children. New book storage equipment will be maintained by staff and books will be rotated weekly to further support accessibility for children.
4. Art supplies have been moved and made accessible to children in all three care rooms. Art supplies will be maintained by staff and supplies will be rotated weekly to further support accessibility for children to a range of art led activities.
5. In the outdoor play area, the old play kitchens and wooden play shop has been removed due to wear and tear of equipment. The following outdoor equipment has been purchased to better equip our outdoor play area and further play opportunities for all children attending our service.
 - Two new outdoor mud kitchens with outdoor kitchen playset with Water Pan, garden sink, and kitchen accessories.
 - New supporting outdoor kitchen equipment in the form of pots and pans, utensils, play food, shopping trolleys and shopping baskets.
 - A new outdoor a playhouse with table and chairs for role play.
 - New balance bikes.
 - New toy lawn mowers.
 - New toy ride in cars and rocking horse for our pre ecce group (2–3-year-olds).
 - Play and create waterfall structure.
 - Preschool specific non-toxic chalks have been purchased as supporting equipment for the blackboard.
 - Football goal set and balls.
 - Adjustable basketball stand.

Three large storage units in our outdoor area are used to protect some equipment from the elements when they are not in use and to store additional supplies for our care rooms. Staff remove the outdoor equipment from these storage units for the children when they enter the outdoor area.

The outdoor swing has been removed from near the climbing frame wall and will be fitted to another Area of the outdoor play area where it will not block accessibility to another play area.

The two storage units that were stored under the climbing frame have been moved to prevent minimising access to the area of the climbing frame.

A landscape gardener was hired to come to the outdoor play area and the back hedges and grass have been cut and the overgrown grass on log shape steps to the slide area removed.

An inventory of all outdoor equipment will be taken upon receipt and will be checked monthly to ensure that the outdoor area is adequately equipped at all times. All staff have been advised to notify management of any damage to equipment so equipment can be replaced promptly.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographic evidence submitted.
2. Evidence of Purchase receipts submitted.
3. Photographic evidence submitted.
4. Photographic evidence submitted.
5. Photographic Evidence and evidence of purchase receipts submitted

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 21, the non-compliances outlined above 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 three -week menu plan which was available for review by inspectors. Food provided within the service was prepared in the onsite kitchen including breakfast, dinner and snacks.
- On the day of the inspection the children were served breakfast between 9.30am and 10.15am of cereal with milk, toast with jam and fruit of strawberries, raspberries and bananas, a dinner of chicken curry with rice and snack was served at 2.30pm .
- Staff were aware of the different dietary requirements of the children in their care rooms 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.
- All cleaning agents and sharp implements were stored safely and out of reach of children.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- 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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The gate on the care room door of the Cubs room was not secure,
 - At 11.48am a child was observed to run towards the gate which opened and the child gained access into a hallway of the service, a staff member followed quickly behind the child. This posed a risk of safety.
 - At 12.41pm, the gate was left unlocked when a staff member left the Cubs room to bring a child to the main door of the service for collection. This posed a risk of safety.
2. The attendance books did not accurately reflect the children or staff present in the care rooms. This posed a risk to the safe evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency. For example.
 - No attendance record was completed for one child who was present in the Cubs room from 9am to 11.55am and then moved to the Tigers room from 11.55am to 1pm.
 - In the Tiger room, two children who left the service at 1pm and one child who left the service at 12.41pm where not signed out on the attendance books or on the electronic application when reviewed by the inspector at 14.10pm.
 - In the Lion room, two children who left the service at 1pm where not signed out on the attendance books or on the electronic application when reviewed by the inspector at 14.10pm.
 - No attendance records were completed for four staff members who were present in the service during the inspection.
 - One staff member who had left the service at 1pm, was not signed out at 14.10pm.
3. In the Tiger room, the inspector observed at 11.22am staff handbags stored on low hooks and at 12.45pm handbags placed on the floor, therefore were accessible to children, and posed a risk of safety.
4. Pedal bins in the Cubs room, the Tiger room and the sanitary facility of the service, had broken pedals exposing sharp prongs and sharp edges, this posed a risk of injury to the children.
5. While it is acknowledged that the care rooms had air conditioning units on and windows open, the temperature of two care rooms exceeded the recommended care room temperature of 18 to 22 °C .
The temperatures were recorded as follows:

Care Room	Times and temperatures recorded	
Tiger room (Children aged 3 to 5 years.)	12.10 pm	23.4°C
Lion room (Children aged 3 to 5 years)	11.14 am	22.8°C

6. In the Cub room, trailing flex from the air conditioning unit was observed, this posed a risk of injury.

Infection Control:

7. In the Tiger room, childrens hands were not washed before dinner was served at 12pm, this was at variance of the service infection control policy which stated handwashing to be completed before eating.

Outing:

8. When the children left the service at 9.50am to 11am, to go on an outing to the local playground, the attendance book for the Tiger care room was not taken by staff, as stated in the health and safety risk assessment completed and posed a risk of safety.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The gate on the care room which opened allowing a child to gain access to the hallway has since been replaced with new gate. All staff have been reminded of the importance of locking gates at care rooms at all times to ensure each child's safety. Gates will always be locked after opening at all times.
2. The attendance books have been updated and they now accurately reflect all children and staff in attendance. The registered provider has emphasised to all staff the importance of keeping accurate attendance records for children and staff in attendance. Early Years staff have been instructed that attendance must be taken in a timely fashion upon the children's arrival and has requested that all staff check attendance records before the children leave to ensure that all (including children arriving late) have been correctly documented. Attendance records will now be reviewed weekly by management to ensure compliance.
3. Staff have been advised that they must store all their personal belongings, coats, bags and other personal items in the storage press adjacent to the office and bags are not permitted in the care rooms. All staff

have been advised that all personal items of clothing and bags must be stored in the allocated storage press and failure to do so, may result in a written warning from management.

4. The service has purchased five new pedal bins and replaced the bins in all three care rooms and the bathrooms. The registered provider has advised staff that any damage to equipment in the care rooms that may pose any risk of injury must be removed and reported to management
5. Room Temperature Monitors have been purchased for each of the three care rooms. The old window frames at the back of the crèche are extremely difficult to open and close. The service hope to have these windows replaced and have new windows fitted in the coming weeks. Room temperature records will be updated daily by Early years staff in each of the care rooms to ensure room temperature does not exceed the recommended care room temperature of 18 to 22 °C.
6. In the cub's room the air conditioning unit was moved to the electrical socket to avoid trailing flex and any risk of injury. All air conditioning units in all three care rooms have been checked to ensure there is no trailing flex. All staff have been advised that after cleaning, all air conditioning units must be returned to their allocated spaces.

Infection Control:

7. Staff have been advised of the breach in our service infection control policy as children did not wash their hands before eating. All staff have been given a copy of policies to review and will be undertaking an online refresher course in infection control through a Safety Training company in the coming weeks. The registered provider has reiterated the importance of maintaining all service policies, including infection control.

Outing:

8. All staff have been reminded of the service policy regarding any outings and instructed that all staff must complete a risk assessment before leaving the service and attendance books must be taken on all outings. The registered provider/Manager will review risk assessments weekly.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Evidence of New Gate purchase submitted.
2. Evidence of Staff meeting held 8th September 2023 – Agenda and Minutes submitted.
3. Evidence of Staff meeting held 8th September 2023 – Agenda and Minutes submitted.
4. Photographic Evidence submitted.
5. Evidence of Room temperature Monitors purchase submitted.
6. Photographic Evidence submitted.

Infection Control:

7. Evidence of online training in infection control certificates submitted

Outing:

8. Evidence of Staff meeting held 8th September 2023 – Agenda and Minutes 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) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available in the care rooms, safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position, and

(b) available to the children attending the preschool service at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) While it is acknowledged that the service provided evidence that three staff members were trained in Paediatric First Aid with an expiry date of 5th July 2025, no staff member had First Aid Responder training.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) Two full time staff members attended FAR training on the 13th, 14th and 15th September 2023. The registered provider will review all staff training.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) Certificates of First Aid responder training completed submitted

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 25, the non-compliance outlined above 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 firefighting 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)
- (b) A record was available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment demonstrating it was last serviced 16th September 2022 and for the number, type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms in the premises, which were last serviced on the 9th August 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed on the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) (a) No record of fire drills completed in the service were available, however, it is acknowledged that the registered provider explained that due to painting of the service, the fire drill records were mislaid.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) New fire drill records have been implemented to replace mislaid records of 2023 year. New fire drill records will be maintained in a soft copy on display in the hallway and also a hard copy on the office PC to ensure that records cannot be mislaid in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) Photographic evidence submitted demonstrating fire drills completed

Summary Comment

The non-compliance outlined above under Regulation 26, has been addressed