

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY226		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tiny Toes Community Creche		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Basement, 42 Manor Street, Dublin 7, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	D07 FYP7		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Carmel Brien		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	04/09/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM 12
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive Airside Business Park Swords, Co Dublin		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. McDonnell		
<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.
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### Description of service

Tiny Toes Community Creche is community service based in a commercial area of Dublin City. The service is registered to provide sessional and full-day care to children aged 2-6 years old. The service provides Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). The creche is in the basement of a converted community building with three care rooms, The Lion, Tiger and Cubs rooms available for the children. There is also a kitchen and sanitary facilities available. There is an outdoor area to the rear of the service.

### Staffing

The registered provider and a member of the board is available in the community building and provides support to the staff members. The registered provider employs ten staff members, of these, eight staff members work directly with the children; one is a cook and one is a cleaner. The service currently provides opportunities for three students.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 16 Record in relation to pre-school service, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 25 First aid 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 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.

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b) The service had a person in charge and a named deputy. A review of the set roster demonstrated that designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge was always in the service during operational hours.

(c) On discussion with staff members and the registered provider, there was a clear management structure in place and staff were familiar with it.

(2) On the day of inspection, the recruitment files of the registered provider, a board member, 10 staff members and 3 students were reviewed.

(a) (b) There were two written references available for the registered provider. Twenty-six written and validated references were available for the staff members and students.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the registered provider and all staff members. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for those who were working at the previous inspection.

(d) A review of the documentation concerning the staff members' employment history demonstrated that police vetting was not required for 12 staff members. The police vetting required for two staff members was available for review.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that eight staff members employed to work directly with children held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(7) The staff members spoke of team meetings and ongoing support from management to facilitate the effective care of the children in the service. Staff members spoke of being able to request training which directly supported individuals in their care, and this was reflected in the training certificates available. A member of staff had obtained the LINC qualification and staff spoke of meetings with this staff member to develop programmes and strategies to help individual children. This was reflective of the most recent staff meeting minutes, of July 2025, in which staff were encouraged to ask for support when required.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2) (d) A review of employment histories demonstrated that police vetting required for one staff member was not available.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) The registered provider submitted a detailed response outlining the actions taken and how the error had occurred. The placement was immediately suspended, and an investigation was completed. As a result, the preventive measures included a new recruitment checklist and improved communication with partners in relation to student placements.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted copies of letters regarding the suspension of placement, letters to the board and the revised vetting procedures.

### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection.

## 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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) On the inspector's unannounced arrival, the adult child ratio was observed to be correct and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult-to-child ratios were observed:

- In the Lion Room there were 2 staff members, and 7 children aged between 3 year 11 months old to 4 years 5 months old.
- In the Tigers room there were 2 staff members with 5 children aged between 2 years 9 months to 3 years 8 months old.
- In the Cubs room there was 1 staff member with 2 children aged between 2 years and 2 months old to 2 years and 5 months old.

The person in charge and the deputy person in charge were available to provide cover for breaks and support with care for the children.

### 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) The inspector observed that children were marked in an out of the service in a contemporaneous manner. This demonstrated that the preventive actions following the last inspection had been maintained.
- (i) A staff roster was available in the hallway as described in the corrective and preventive action plan (CAPA) following the last inspection. The roster showed the staff members who were working and the planned breaks. Staff members also signed in and out of the attendance books in their respective rooms.
- (j) The inspector reviewed a sample of medication records for the previous educational year. Each record reviewed included the name and date of birth of the child. The records were also signed by two staff members who had administered the medication and by the parent, which showed they had been informed.

(k) The inspector reviewed a sample of accident and incident records for the previous educational year. These demonstrated that the child's details had been recorded alongside details of the incident. The records were signed and dated by staff members and parents.

### 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

##### Supporting relationships around children

The inspector observed children settling in at the start of a new school year. The staff members were knowledgeable about the children and spoke of documentation and conversations with parents and previous staff members to support this knowledge. Staff spoke of learning about children to support them on an individualised basis. This included documentation on how room layouts and activities were stored to support children in their care. Children who were new to the service in the Cubs room were observed to be provided with care and patience whilst settling in, with comfort and reassurance being provided. The staff member discussed a graduated settling in process which was observed on inspection and in a review of attendance records. A partnership with parents was observed as parents were in the service and were invited into the room to help children settle. The staff member in the room responded to the needs of the children and allowed them to play outside with older peers. This appeared to effectively support the children as they were observed to be happy playing on scooters and trikes. Staff in all rooms were observed engaging with children's games in a kind and developmental way. The staff members had access to a sensory area within the community building and discussed how this was used to support various children. A key worker system was in place throughout the service, and this was supported by various long and short-term planning which were available for review.

##### Basic Needs

Water was accessible to the children within their rooms. Children were provided with a dinner of Bolognese, pasta and vegetables. The items were prepared individually, and children were offered a choice of what they ate. The children were provided with a morning and afternoon snack of toast, fruit and yogurt and pancakes. Children were observed to use the toilet independently with staff remaining close by for support if required.

### 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

Each room had equipment and toys that were readily accessible to the pre-school children on low level shelving in labelled boxes. There were dolls houses and kitchens within each room, and the supportive equipment was readily available. Cosy areas and arts and crafts were available in rooms and staff discussed and documented how this was managed based on the needs of the children. Staff also discussed how they were learning about the children and providing them with equipment and toys that were relevant to the new groups. This was supported by the record of the last team meeting in July 2025 and equipment requests from staff.

A large outdoor area was available on the premises. The area was covered with artificial grass which some paved areas. There was a large play structure with a bridge and climbing area available. A slide on a mound was also available with large steps. The children had access to a sandpit with a cover which had spades, buckets and toys to play with. An outdoor kitchen and playhouse, with supportive equipment, were also accessible to the children. The outdoor area also had a trees and flower beds available with picnic benches for the children.

### 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 service had a secure entrance to the service with a buzzer system and keypad locks in place. This prevented any unauthorised access to the service and exit from the service by children.
- The preventive actions following the last inspection were in place in relation to maintenance issues as all pedal bins were in good working order and there were no trailing cables posing a trip hazard.
- Blind cords were secured and were not accessible to children.
- Cleaning agents and medications were stored out of the reach of children.

### Infection Control:

- The temperature of the care rooms was maintained between 18 and 22°C on the day of inspection. Each room had current temperature recording sheets and a thermometer. Staff were aware of the need to check the rooms temperatures daily and what measures to implement should the temperature rise above 22°C. These observations demonstrated that the preventive actions submitted following the previous inspection in August 2023 had been maintained.
- Staff members were aware of where to store their personal items and there was staff storage in the main entrance.
- On their return from outdoor play the children were observed to wash their hands prior to their lunch.
- On the day of inspection, no children required their nappy to be changed. Staff members were able to describe the nappy changing procedure which included the use of gloves and aprons and handwashing. The sanitary facilities included the nappy changing procedure and required items such as aprons.
- No outings were observed. Staff members were able to discuss trips to the local area and the appropriate safety measures which included high visibility vests with important information and the children's attendance books for head counts and roll calls.

### 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 person trained in a First Aid Responder (FAR) course was available. On review of the documentation there were two staff members available with in-date FAR certification.
- (2) The first aid equipment available in the service provided adequate resources in the event of a first aid emergency. First Aid boxes were available in the kitchen and office which was conspicuous and easily accessible to staff members.

## 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 record of the previous fire drill on 14 July 2025 was available for review. The service was closed for a period in August. The service had maintained a record of previous monthly fire drills.
- (b) The registered provider had evidence of the annual maintenance of the fire alarm system on 28 August 2025 and the fire extinguishers on 30 July 2025.
- (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in the rooms and hallways.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service was appropriately insured for 32 children from 28 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.