

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL201
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Name of Service:	Luttrellstown Tots
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Address of Service:	42 Luttrellstown Drive, Castleknock, Dublin 15.
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Eircode:	D15 V8E2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Margaret Brown
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	27/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	Non-applicable
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin
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.
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Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Luttrellstown Tots was established in 2001 and is located in a residential area in North Dublin. The service is registered to operate a sessional pre-school service for up to 11 children aged between 2 to 6 years, from 9am-12.30pm, Monday to Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9am to 12pm Monday to Friday.

The service is positioned to the rear of the registered providers house and consists of a care room cordoned off from the registered provider's kitchen and living space. A separate entrance with a secure door leads to the care room. There is an outdoor play area which is accessible from the care room.

Staffing

The registered provider generally operates the service single handily on a daily basis. The registered provider has a named emergency person and an additional adult who is available if required.

On the day of the inspection the registered provider was present and working directly with the children. An additional adult was available on the premises providing support with the easter activities.

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

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-

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following regulations: Regulation 19 (1)(a)-Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the one care room and the outdoor play area.

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, the support person 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 registered provider is also the person-in-charge and has one named person who can deputise when required.
 - (b) The registered provider was present in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and this was further evidenced through discussion with the registered provider in relation to own role and the role of the emergency person.
- (2) The files of the registered provider, emergency person and the additional adult who is available if required were reviewed as part of the inspection.
- (a) There were two written and validated references available from past employers.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- (b) There were four written and validated references from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and two adults. 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 the registered provider, and two adults had not lived outside of the state for six months or more as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the registered provider and the one emergency person who work directly with the children held 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.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1) There were eight preschool children being cared for by the registered provider on the morning of inspection.
- (3) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(8) (c) The registered provider, has an arrangement in place for a second person who is familiar with the service to be available in an emergency situation.

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

Basic Needs:

- The children attending the service bring snacks provided from home. An alternative snack was available if required. The registered provider discussed how the healthy eating policy is shared with parents of the children.
- Children's labelled water bottles were available within their reach throughout the session, should they feel thirsty at any stage.
- Children's sense of identity was promoted throughout the care room. For example, there was a 'family picture' wall display, 'birthday date' display, an 'all about me' wall display and the children's artwork displayed.
- A rest area was available to the children in the care room. This area included soft cushions, cuddly toys and books providing the children with a comfortable place to rest or engage in quiet activities.
- The registered provider was observed to give children verbal reminders in advance of moving from one activity to the next activity. This provided the children with a sense of stability, security, and predictability.
- The inspector observed the children engage in an outdoor easter activity. The children also engaged in physical activities indoors such as Irish dancing. This supported their social, cognitive, and gross and fine motor development.
- The children were observed to bring home an easter art activity and the registered provider engaged in conversations with parents at drop off and collection times. These updates keep parents informed about the daily morning activities of their child.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Equipment and Materials:

- The care room was bright and welcoming with plenty of natural light. There was a sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in the care room.
- The room was well laid out with designated areas of interest to provide for different types of play. Equipment available included a library, various sorting, stacking, measuring, and connecting equipment, sensory equipment, building blocks, jigsaws, art materials including aprons and a nature table.
- There was a construction area, a kitchen with supporting equipment, and a dress up area with a selection of age and stage appropriate costumes with supporting props. These designated areas provided children with opportunities for imaginative role play.
- Children were observed to take part in free play and group work. The layout of the room facilitated these choices as the toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and were visible and accessible to the children. In addition, play materials and equipment were themed which provided for spontaneous play opportunities.
- The outdoor play area included a wooden playhouse with a slide and climbing ladder. There were also toys available which were stored in an outdoor shed.

Supporting relationships:

- Interactions between the registered provider and supporting adult with the children were observed to be kind, caring and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children.
- Children were exposed to the Irish language for example children appeared to be familiar with saying words in Irish when the registered provider discussed mixing colours in Irish during an art activity. Exposure to different languages supports the children's own language development.
- Language, literacy and mathematics were supported in the care room through discussion, songs and stories. At circle time the registered provider was observed to ask the children open ended questions and ask each child about their upcoming easter holiday plans.
- Children were observed to be familiar with cleaning up and putting their toys away. This promoted independence.
- There was evidenced the service is integrated with the local community, there was a community wall display which showed photographs of arranged educational visits for example visits from an Garda Síochána, an Post, the fire brigade and the ambulance corps.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- The registered provider discussed how the service supports children to transition to school. For example, meetings are held between the service and school staff to support a smooth transition for each child. In addition, the service arranges a teacher visit from the school to visit the service. The service has books which included colourful photographs of school bags and equipment inside the school classrooms.

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 unannounced arrival at the service by the inspector, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The inspector was asked to show identification by the registered provider who answered the door.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to children attending throughout the inspection.
- The registered provider discussed how they check children's snack boxes for any choking hazards, including grapes.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely and locked away out of reach of children.
- There were no trailing flexes or wires observed to be accessible to the children.
- The glass patio door had visibility strips.
- The radiators had protective covers making the surface temperature inaccessible to the children attending.
- Windows were all positioned at a high level and were inaccessible to the children attending.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair and there was documentary evidence that the registered provider carried out daily risk assessments prior to the arrival of the children to the service.
- The outdoor area was appropriately secured with high walls and fencing. This area was accessed via the care room.

Infection Control:

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, and hand paper towels hygienically dispensed. Children were familiar with handwashing.
- There was a fridge present to store perishable goods brought from home for snack time. The registered provider discussed how she is aware to check the children snack boxes from home for any choking hazards such as uncut grapes.
- Foot operated pedal bins were in use for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care room and sanitary facilities. These were observed to be in good working order.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in the care room, and the windows were open to allow fresh circulation of air.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition. There were completed cleaning schedules on display in the care room and sanitary facilities.

Fire Safety:

- All emergency exit doors were observed to be clear from obstruction. This helped ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there was evidence that the children's attendance book was used daily to document the times that the children arrived and left the service.

(3)

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- (a) The registered provider ensured that any visitors entering the service signed in the visitor book. The inspector was asked to sign in on arrival to the service.
- (b) The registered provider kept a record in writing of any visitors in the visitor book. The visitor book was positioned at the door of the service for easy access.

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) Evidence was available to show that the registered provider held a valid First Aid Responder (FAR) certificate.
- (2) The registered provider ensured the following.
 - (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, and unobstructed if needed to access quickly.
 - (b) The registered provider showed the inspector a suitably equipped first aid box which was available at all times for the adult caring for children attending the service if required.

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.*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A record of fire drills was available on the premises with fire drills carried out monthly with the most recent fire drill completed on the 7 March 2026.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment were up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced in November 2025 and the smoke alarms on 5 November 2025.
- (2)
- (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- (4) There was a notice of the fire evacuation procedures displayed in a prominent position on the wall in the care room.