

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL313
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	The Toddle Inn
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Unit 3A Century Business Park, St Margaret's Rd, Finglas, Dublin 11
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D11 K16N
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Joy Sherlock, Shermaine Gaffney
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	05/03/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	12	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L.A Webster
<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

The Toddle Inn is located on the first floor of a building within a business park in north Dublin and caters for children aged 2-6 years old. The service is registered to provide two sessional classes from 09:30-12:30pm and 13:30-15:30pm. Additionally the service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service is comprised of one large care room with sanitary accommodation and an enclosed outdoor play area towards the front of the building. The care room is spacious and can accommodate a maximum of 22 children.

### Staffing

The registered providers both work within the service, one of whom works directly with the children, and one working in a supernumerary capacity. The registered providers employ three adults that work directly with the children. On the day of inspection, the deputy person in charge and two staff members were present when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service. Shortly after the inspection commenced, one of the registered providers arrived to facilitate the inspection process.

### 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 Management and Recruitment; 11 Staffing Levels; 19(1)(b)(3) Health, Welfare and Development of Child; 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, and 32 Record of Complaints.

However, upon inspection, an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 31 Notification of Incidents. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

## Additional Information

This inspection was triggered as a result of information received by the inspectorate on 22 February 2026.

## Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, deputy 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-

- (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.

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
  - (b) The designated person in charge and the deputy were present when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained at the service throughout the inspection.
  - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and this was evidenced through discussion with management and staff.
- (2) Discussion with the registered provider and a review of files showed that no new staff have commenced employment since the last inspection on 02 April 2025 when all staffs' files were reviewed. As the files were previously reviewed and found to be compliant section (c) Garda vetting disclosures were reviewed as part of this inspection.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for five adults. However, the service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all adults employed.

(7) (a) Staff Training Records

- There was documentary evidence available to show that five staff members had completed their mandatory child safeguarding training. Adults reported to the inspector that they had been made aware of how to identify any child protection concerns and the procedure of reporting practices that are disrespectful or harmful to children.

### 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) There were three adults caring for 12 children on the morning of inspection. In addition, one of the registered providers were available to provide support if required.

(3) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the 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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

### Compliance Information

(1) (b) The following practices were observed on the day to be in place to support the children within the service:

- Interactions between staff and children were observed to be warm, respectful, and supportive throughout. Staff consistently communicated with the children through low and calm tones, offering direction to the children when needed. Additionally, staff ensured that comfort was provided to children when needed through gentle touch, a hug or sitting with the children.
- A designated cosy area was available within the room that allowed for children to rest and included comfortable materials such as cushions and soft toys.
- Parents/guardians were given information on their child's food intake, toileting and sleep via an electronic communication application.
- Activities and materials available were suitable for the age and stage of the children in the care room.
- Children were observed to move freely in their care room and independently choose their activities and play experiences.
- The care room was designed to support the age and developmental stages of the children attending the service, equipment and materials were stored at a low level to encourage the children's independence decision making skills.

(3) Staff engaged in practices that were supportive and respectful, in line with best practice.

### 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 entrance door leading into the service required entry through a buzzer system. A second door that is securely closed leading into the hallway of the care room prevented any unsupervised children from leaving the service and restricted any unauthorized personnel from gaining access to the premises.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely and out of reach of children.
- Blind cords were safely secured to the wall.
- There were no observable hazards or trailing flexes within the care room.
- Furniture was securely anchored.

##### Infection Control:

- Foot operated pedal bins were in use for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities. These were observed to be in good working order.
- Children's individual lunches containing perishable items were stored within the refrigerator to prevent any spoiling.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Anti febrile medication was observed to be in date, stored in the correct packaging and out of the children's reach. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for one adult; however, this disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed.

##### Infection Control:

2. At 11:02 am, a child was observed eating food from another child's lunchbox and staff were not aware of this at the time. This posed a potential risk of cross contamination.

3. The tables were not observed to be cleaned following the morning activities before lunch. A child was then observed to eat their lunch from the table which posed a potential cross contamination risk.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting has been applied for. We will continue to monitor dates of expiration.

##### Infection Control:

2. Staff discussed different ideas, have settled on each child making their own place mats and will use at snack times. All staff will sit with children during snack times to ensure children are not reaching for other children's food.
3. Each child will make their own place mat, designed by the child, laminated to allow for correct cleaning. Staff are aware that all tables must be wiped down prior to children eating.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

Photographic evidence.

##### Infection Control:

Photographic evidence.

### Summary Comment

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

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

*A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:*

*(d) a serious injury to a pre-school child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner whether in a hospital or otherwise.*

### Non-Compliance Information

(d) The registered provider did not ensure that the procedures specified under Regulation 31 were completed within 3 working days regarding a notifiable incident which occurred since the last inspection.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

A notification has been sent in, and staff have been reminded of their duty to report incidents.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 31 (d).

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) *A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) *the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
  - (b) *the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
  - (c) *the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (2) *A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) *a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
  - (b) *the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider’s complaints policy.*

### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered providers ensured the following:

There was a complaints policy maintained which outlined the following:

- (a) The procedures to be followed when making a complaint.
  - (b) The way complaints would be dealt with.
  - (c) The procedures for keeping the complainant informed on how the complaint is being dealt with.
- (2) (a) It was observed that a record of complaints is kept within a complaints folder within the service.
- (b) Complaints were seen as dealt with in accordance with the services policy.