

# 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>	02/04/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L Jameson
<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).

## Conditions if applicable

Not applicable

## Description of service

The service is located on the first floor of a building in a business park in north Dublin and comprises of one large care room with sanitary accommodation and an enclosed outdoor play area to the front of the building.

The care room is large and bright and can accommodate a maximum of 22 children. The service is registered as a sessional service and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service caters for children aged from 2 to 6 years old.

## Staffing

The registered providers both work in the service, one of whom works directly with the children, and one works in a supernumerary capacity. The registered providers employ four adults to work directly with the children. On the day of inspection, four staff members were present when the inspector arrived unannounced in the service. One of the registered providers arrived shortly after to support the inspection process and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

## 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.

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 providers, 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
  - (b) The designated person in charge was rostered to be present all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on and when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.
  - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.
- (2) The full staff files of the two registered providers and four adults employed to work in the service were reviewed on the day of inspection.

- (a) Six written and verified references were available from past employers.
  - (b) Six written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for six adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
  - (d) Not applicable as there was no evidence to suggest that any staff had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or longer, after the age of eighteen.
- (3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to four adults before employment commenced.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the four adults who worked 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection.
- (3) The adult child ratios were maintained for the duration of 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-

(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

(1) (a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

#### Basic needs:

- Staff members were observed to use positive and respectful language on the day of inspection. Children's achievements were reinforced with praise and recognition.
- A large cosy area was observed in the care room, providing a space where children could rest and relax if they so wished.
- The children who were toilet trained used the toilet independently with discreet supervision and assistance provided by staff members. Nappies were changed at scheduled times and more frequently when required.

#### Supporting relationships around children:

- There was a clear sense of familiarity between staff members and the children. Children appeared content and comfortable in their environment with staff members attending to the children's individual and specific needs as required.
- The children were supported to follow their own interests, decision making was encouraged by staff members who were observed to actively supervise and guide the children throughout the day.
- Staff members discussed how they communicate with parents through updates on digital software applications and informal chats at drop off and collection times.

#### Physical and material environment:

- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children in the care room, facilitating a comfortable area to eat meals and take part in tabletop activities.

- 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.
- Equipment and materials in the care room were in good working order. Materials including jigsaws and puzzles, construction toys, cars, animals, a home corner with supporting equipment and dress up, a cosy area and a selection of books were available to the children, facilitating a range of play and learning experiences and promoting imaginative play.
- Children's artwork, photographs, family walls and birthday charts were displayed throughout the care room, supporting the children's sense of identity and links between home and the service.
- An enclosed outdoor play area was available for the children. The equipment and toys included a climbing frame, opportunities for sensory play activities and various ride on equipment providing gross motor and learning opportunities for children. The children were observed to use the outdoor play area on the day of inspection.

### 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 was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Flexes and cords were stored safely out of reach of children.

##### Infection Control:

- The service was equipped with warm water, liquid soap and hand paper towels. Staff members were observed to support children with handwashing at regular intervals throughout the day, for example, after toileting and before mealtimes.
- Pedal bins were available to ensure the hygienic disposal of contaminated materials.
- Windows in the care room were observed to be open which allowed for circulation of air and reduced the risk of cross infection.

### 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:

- The emergency fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for one staff member. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

#### Infection Control:

2. The following equipment in the care room was torn, leaving the internal foam exposed:
  - A couch in the cosy area.
  - Two round, foam pillows in the cosy area.

This reduced the likelihood of effective cleaning and increased the risk of cross contamination.
3. Toilet rolls in the sanitary accommodation were not hygienically dispensed and were observed to be stored on top of the toilet units, this posed a risk of cross infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting has been sought for staff member in question. Garda vetting has been added to staff training records in the staff supervision folder where it can be better monitored to avoid reoccurrences.

#### Infection Control:

2. The couch and all foam pillows with gold circle closures have been removed from the room. All future equipment will be checked and preference given to removable, easy clean items.
3. The service has contracted a new company to supply the correct size toilet rolls to fit the current dispensers and a rolling order has been arranged.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

### Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.
3. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

## 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) Staff were observed to greet children on arrival and their attendance and departure were promptly recorded.

(3)

(a) The service entrance was adequately monitored by staff, the person in charge greeted the inspection team at the door to allow access.

(b) A visitor book was available and provided to the inspection team to sign on arrival to the service.

### 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) A person who held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service. This was evidenced in the FAR training record maintained for one staff member and their scheduled attendance in the service.

- (2)
- (a) The first aid box available in the service was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous location on the premises.
  - (b) A first aid box was available for the children in attendance in the event of an emergency.

### 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 was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. The records indicated that fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 31/03/2025.

(4) The evacuation procedure was conspicuously displayed on the premises which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire or emergency in the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) Documentary evidence was not available to demonstrate a maintenance check had been carried out on the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the previous twelve months.

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

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

The service has contracted two companies to carry out the relevant maintenance checks of the alarm system and firefighting equipment which will be completed on a regular basis.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Documentation and photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 26.