

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015FL326

Name of Service: Tippy Toes

Address of Service: Coolquay, The Ward, Co. Dublin

Eircode: D11 YH66

Name of Registered Provider: Rebecca Hemeryck

Service type: Sessional

Date of Inspection: 12/02/2026

No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 7 th Floor Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8, D08X01K
Inspection undertaken by:	L.A Webster
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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Description of service

Tippy Toes is a privately owned early years' service that based in North Dublin. The service offers sessional care to children aged from 2-6 years from 9am-12pm Monday to Friday over 38 weeks of the year as part of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. Additionally, the service is registered to operate school age care in the afternoons. There is a secure outdoor area towards the rear of the service.

Staffing

The service employs three staff members, including the registered provider who works directly with the children. On the morning of inspection, the registered provider and deputy person in charge were present, working directly with the children.

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 provider, deputy person in charge, 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.*

(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 required.
 - (b) A review of the roster evidenced that the person in charge of the deputy person in charge was rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and this was further evidenced through discussion with staff.
- (2) A review of paperwork and discussion with the registered provider showed that there are currently three staff employed within the service. The files and qualifications of the three staff were reviewed.
- (a) There were four written and validated references from a source other than a past employer.
 - (b) There were two written and validated references from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that three adults who worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification that is deemed of equivalence by the minister

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 were 15 children being cared for by two adults.
- (2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of the children.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The following care practices were observed to be in place to support the children within the service:

Basic Needs:

- Displays such as 'Family Walls' 'Birthday Walls' 'Community Walls' and children's artwork were displayed within the care rooms, and it was evident that the service emphasised the children's sense of belonging and identity.
- Practices such as transitions from play to lunch time were observed to be a pleasant experience for the children, and children showed familiarity with the daily routines of the service.
- Individually labelled bottles of water were available to the children.
- Lunch time was observed to be a warm and social interaction between staff and children.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff were observed to be kind, respectful and caring towards their interactions with the children, which created a calm atmosphere within the service.
- Throughout the morning, it was observed that staff engaged with the children during play, prompting and extending their learning. This was evident in one play scenario, where a child was doing a 'weekly shop'.
- Staff were observed to use positive verbal and non-verbal language, activities and strategies to support children throughout their morning.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The layout of the care room facilitated an abundance of choice and spontaneous play opportunities for the children. Toys and equipment were accessible through low level shelving and were visibly labelled and themed for easy access.
- The care room was thoughtfully designed, with designated play areas for the children to engage with and provided plenty of resources to choose from. For example, a designated hair and beauty area was created to mirror familiar community settings, supporting the children in exploring everyday roles and routines.
- There was an adequate number of tables and chairs to accommodate the developmental age and stage of children within the care room.
- The outdoor play area was available to all children and was designed with a soft ground surface. It was observed as a spacious and well-designed area that prompted various play scenarios for 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 entrance to the service was appropriately secured upon the inspectors' arrival. The service entrance operated through a buzzer system that allowed entry into a main hallway and a second door is securely locked to prevent children from leaving the service unsupervised and restrict any unauthorised access to the service. Additionally, the outdoor area was securely fenced and gated.
- The care room was in good condition, with no visible hazards or trailing wires observed.
- Risk assessments were available for both indoor and outdoor areas and adequately recorded.
- Blind cords were securely attached to the wall and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely and locked away out of reach of children.
- Shelving units were firmly anchored to the wall to ensure stability and safety.
- In discussion with staff, the service operates a nut free zone and a popcorn free zone.

Infection Control:

- Upon arrival, it was observed that the service was clean and hygienic and up to date cleaning schedules were available and observed within the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and wall mounted paper towels were available for appropriate hand-washing practices. Both staff and children were observed to show familiarity with routine handwashing before lunch time, and various times throughout the morning.
- 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.
- An ambient temperature of 16-22°C was maintained in the care room, and the windows were open to allow fresh circulation of air.

Fire Safety:

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

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured the appropriate recording in real time of each child entering and leaving the service on the day of inspection.

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 was trained in First Aid Response (FAR), expiry date of September 2026 and was immediately available to the children attending the service. Additionally, the registered provider ensured that staff held up to date FAR certification and were immediately available to the children as needed
- (2) (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, and unobstructed if needed to access quickly.
- (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available at all times to the adults caring for children attending the service.

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)
 - (a) The records available demonstrated that fire drills are held monthly within the service and the service conducted a fire drill on the 28 January 2026.
 - (b) A record was available detailing the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm systems in the premises.
 - Records demonstrate that the firefighting equipment had been serviced annually, with the last service taking place on the 03 March 2025
 - Records demonstrate that the smoke alarms have been serviced on a quarterly bases with the last service taking place on the 29 January 2026.
- (4) A visual notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was consistently displayed around the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the pre-school service was adequately insured, with an expiry date of 27 March 2026.