

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL332
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Name of Service:	Treehouse Childcare
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Address of Service:	Allendale Walk, Allendale, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D15 CR27
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Name of Registered Provider:	Aileen O'Reilly
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	09/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	42	PM	40
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5, The nexus Building, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Ballycoolin, Dublin 15.
Inspection undertaken by:	Y Kelly & AM Coyle
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

Treehouse Childcare is an early years service established in 2005 which operates from a purpose built two storey building in Clonsilla, Co Dublin. The service provides a full day care, part-time and sessional service to preschool children from 1 to 5 years. The service operates from 7.30am to 6.15pm, Monday to Friday. There are four rooms in the service as follows: Toddler Room and Preschool Room located on the ground floor and the ECCE Room 1 and ECCE Room 2 situated on the first floor of the service, with sanitary facilities, a kitchen, a staff room and an office. The outdoor play area is to the rear of the service. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and can cater for a maximum of 52 children.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 17 staff members to work in the service. A manager is employed to coordinate the day-to-day operations of the service, working with a team of 15 staff members who work directly with the children. A chef carries out cooking and catering duties. There is an area manager employed by the registered provider who was not present during the inspection. The registered provider was not present in the service during the inspection. In total there were 13 staff members present on the day of the inspection.

Methodology

Tusla 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 the regulations 9, 10, 11, 16, 19, 27 and 32. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16(k). As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Toddler Room, Pre-school Room, ECCE Room 1 and ECCE Room 2.

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

The inspection was carried out following receipt of information to Tusla Early Years Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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

(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;

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service manager was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service at 09:30am and was present for the duration of the inspection.

(2) Sixteen staff files were reviewed on the previous inspection on the 19th of February 2025. The files for four staff members were reviewed, two of which were new staff members. The following was recorded:

(a) Seven validated and written references were available from past employers.

- (b) One validated and written reference was available from a reputable source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 4 staff members whose files were reviewed. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring the service to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International Police vetting was available for 3 adults who had lived outside of the state for a period of more than six months.
- (4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 4 staff members whose files were reviewed and who may work directly with the children in the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.
- (7)(a) The registered provider ensured that employees were supervised and provided with appropriate induction. In discussion with recently appointed staff members the staff members were able to describe the induction process and the system in place regarding the review of the service's policies and procedures. The Child Safeguarding policy outlined the services' responsibility to provide induction training to all staff and students to ensure that they understand their obligations as a mandated person under the Children First Act 2015. Through discussion with staff during the inspection, staff demonstrated their familiarity with this policy and relating procedures, describing incidents that would require reporting if witnessed or suspected and naming the services Designated Liaison Person. There was documentary evidence available in the service that demonstrated that twelve staff members had undertaken the Children's First training programme.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies relevant to this inspection were requested and reviewed.

- Complaints Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Staff Training Policy
- Supervision of Staff Policy

- Child Safeguarding Policy

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced at the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In the Toddler room there were 8 children aged 1 year to 2 years being cared for by 2 and, at times, 3 staff members.
- In the Pre-school Room there were 10 children aged 2 years 2 months to 3 years 8 months being cared for by 3 staff members.
- In the ECCE Room 1 there were 14 children aged 2 years and 10 months to 4 years and 2 months being cared for by three staff members.
- In the ECCE Room 2 there were 10 children aged 3 years and 9 months to 4 years and 11 months being cared for by two staff members.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present in the service at all times. This was confirmed by the staff roster and sign in records.

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:

- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there was a record kept in writing of the following information in relation to the service:

- (g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with regulation 10, these were provided in digital format in the service.
- (i) Details of staff rosters were kept on a daily basis and available for inspection.
- (k) The registered provider ensured that accident and incident records were kept in written records. A sample of 11 accident and incident records were reviewed as part of the inspection and all 11 accident and incident records were completed and signed by parents as a means of ensuring that parents had been informed that their child had an accident/incident whilst attending the service.

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) Appropriate and suitable care practice was observed, as evidenced by the following:

- The staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. Children were responded to when they required attention. Appropriate communication using soft tones was observed and children were provided with comfort when needed. This supported the development of relationships and a sense of belonging.
- The children were observed having morning snack consisting of crackers, ham and cheese, fish curry and couscous for dinner and pancakes for afternoon tea. The mealtime experience was observed to be a leisurely sociable occasion, where the staff sat together with the children and chatted and offered support and encouragement when needed. Children's water bottles were accessible in the care rooms throughout the day.
- Staff supported children to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after using the bathroom and before mealtimes time which promoted self-care practices amongst the children.
- There were cosy areas in the care rooms where children could select a book for reading and relaxation.
- Staff communicate with parents through use of a digital software application to share information about children's care needs.
- All children used the outdoor play area on the day of the inspection.

(3) No practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally, physically harmful or neglectful were observed during the inspection. Staff members were observed engaging with the children using a partnership approach and showed positive regard for the children at all times throughout the inspection. During the inspection the staff members throughout the care rooms were observed approaching children's behaviour in a supportive manner, promptly re-directing and distracting the children at the earliest signs of conflict whilst showing respect for the children involved. This prevented any escalation or upset on the children's part. The staff members, in conversation with the inspectors, were clear on what are and are not acceptable and appropriate ways of responding to and caring for children and described how they would comfort and reassure any child if they became upset, tired or distressed. Staff members were observed engaging with the children using a partnership approach and showed positive regard for the children at all times throughout the inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that all children attending the service were supervised at all times. Children were observed being appropriately supervised whilst in the care rooms and in the outdoor area of the service and when accessing the sanitary facilities.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service had a complaints policy in place which detailed the procedure a person should follow in order to make a complaint in relation to the service.

(b) The process of making a complaint was outlined in the complaints policy, as was how the complaint would be dealt with by the service.

(c) The policy detailed how the complainant would be kept informed of the complaints procedure.