

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY256
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Name of Service:	Teddyhouse Creche
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Address of Service:	99/100 Altan, Western Distributor Road, Knocknacarra, Co Galway
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Eircode:	H91 YN51
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carlie Healy
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	11/08/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	26
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla - Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A- (1st Floor-Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	F Nic Dhonnacha
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

Teddy House Creche is registered to provide full day care to preschool children. It is in the Altan apartment complex, on the Western Distributor Road, on the west side of Galway city. The service is registered to cater for children aged from 1 to 6 years of age between 08:00 and 18:00. There are 4 playrooms, namely The Playgroup room, The Toddler room, The Junior Montessori room and the Senior Montessori room. There are 2 designated sleep rooms with 4 cots and 3 cots, and a staff /administration room. The premises has its own kitchen, where children's meals and snacks are prepared, cooked and stored on site. Stackable beds are available for the sleep provision of pre-school children aged over 2 years, when required. Quiet rest areas are provided in each of the playrooms, to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if they choose to. There is a designated outdoor play area to the rear of the premises offering a wide range of play experiences for the children.

Staffing

There were 12 staff working in the service including the registered provider, manager, childcare staff, cook and a student over the age of 18 years who was on a childcare placement.

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. 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The registered provider was the named designated person in charge in the service and there was a named manager and deputy if required.
- (b) The registered provider and deputy person in charge were available on the premises throughout the period of the unannounced inspection.
- Twelve staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection which included the registered provider, manager, deputy person in charge, kitchen cook, a student and 7 childcare staff.
- (2)(a) Twenty-four of the required 24 written validated references on file were from a past employer.
- (b) No references were from another source were required.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 12 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years.

- (d) Vetting documents showed that international police vetting was available for 6 adults who lived and worked outside this state for longer than 6 months while over the age of 18 years.
- (4) The qualifications for the 10 adults staff working directly with children were reviewed they hold 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)-*
- (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 inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service there were 7 adults working directly with 25 preschool children in the service. Additionally, there was a student over the age of 18 years on a childcare work placement (who was supervised at all times while caring for the children) and there was a kitchen based cook. The designated person in charge also provided direct care to children during the day. A review of a sample of attendance records showed that an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children during service hours of operation.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the day of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.

Toddler playroom: One staff cared for 3 children aged 17 months to 24 months. The staff member cared directly for the 3 children in the afternoon.

Playgroup room: Two staff cared directly for 8 children aged over 2 years of age to 3 years of age in the

morning and 9 children in the afternoon.

Junior Montessori: One staff cared directly for 7 children aged from 3 to 4 years of age in the morning and for 7 children during the afternoon.

Senior Montessori: One staff cared directly for 7 children aged 4 to 5 years in the morning, and one staff member cared directly for 7 children during the afternoon of the inspection.

(8)(a) There were more than 2 adults always present during the hours of operation of the service. The attendance records reviewed showed that at least 2 adults were always present in the service during opening hours.

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:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service. The food observed was healthy and nutritious.
- The snacks provided by the service consisted of a selection of sandwiches, brown bread, cheese, flap jacks, yogurts, crackers and pieces of fruit.
- There was water available in each playroom and outside in the play area throughout the session.
- Children were observed enjoying snack time and meals. The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their snack and meals in a relaxed and unhurried environment.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.
- All the children from Junior and senior Montessori were toilet trained and either toileted independently or with some assistance as required. The dignity of children using the toilet was preserved.
- Nappy changing procedures were carried out throughout the day on the younger children. Privacy and dignity was maintained at all times in each of the 2 designated nappy changing areas.

- The staff supervised children's hand washing before snack and mealtimes, after toileting, after blowing their noses, after outdoor play and prior to going home.
- Children had plenty of opportunities to move about freely, exploring their environment and improving their emerging skills such as coordination and balance.
- Cosy rest and relaxation areas were available in each of the 4 playrooms on the day of inspection.
- All the children had the opportunity to play outside on the day of the inspection. These children were appropriately dressed wearing sun hats when playing outside and sun cream was applied as the day was very warm.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- A key person system was in place for each child to support their development and to inform curriculum planning. Documentary evidence indicated that the role of the key person was also to liaise with parents and guardians.
- On speaking with staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the pre-school including the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection and drop off times, via notebooks, text messages and by phone calls.
- Each classroom had learning journals which showed photographs of children involved in activities, the themes the children engaged in and staff observations. Each journal will go home to parents at the end of the year.
- There was evidence of short, medium and long-term curriculum planning. The programme of care was flexible and guided by the children's choices. A support agency was working with the preschool, the staff advised that guidance and learning is being provided in relation to curriculum planning. Children were supported by the staff during periods of individual and group-based activities, the staff sensitively supervised and intervened when necessary. The themes of the week included under the sea, pirates and treasure hunts.
- The staff were observed to be caring and supportive in their interactions with the children. During observed interactions, the staff demonstrated that they knew the children well, recognising and valuing their individual interests, needs and learning. The staff were observed to be interested in the children, spoke in low tones, listened to them and responded to their requests. The staff interacted in a positive way with

the children e.g., they sat at the children’s level, maintained good eye contact, showed empathy and a good understanding of each child.

- Staff were observed helping children find solutions, supporting them and talking to children in a variety of ways- discussing, questioning, modelling, commentating and initiating games and activities.
- In the playrooms, the children engaged in free play, story time, tabletop activities and role play where the children changed costumes.
- The children chatted to the inspector about their day and talked about their families, likes and interests.
- On the day of inspection, all children played outside to the rear of the pre-school. These children were observed playing with sand in the sand box, climbing the large activity centre, kicking ball, hiding in the play house, while some children were stacking cones and knocking them down again.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The layout of each playroom allowed the staff to supervise the children as they moved into the different interest areas.
- The equipment was stored on low-level shelving and was readily accessible by the pre-school children. The play equipment and materials were age and stage appropriate and offered a child manipulative activity designed to encourage hand eye co-ordination, develop fine motor skills and logical thinking.
- Suitably sized tables and chairs were provided in the playrooms for the pre-school children.
- The resources were organised and easily accessible to each pre-school child.
- Visual aids, maps, posters, themes and children’s artwork were displayed at a low level for children to view.

OUTDOOR PLAY AREA:

- There was a combination of real grass and artificial grass surfaces. The area was secured with metal fencing.
- Items included an activity centre, slides, a large sand box with shovels, spades buckets and sieves, balance beams, insert tyres, a see saw, playhouse, planting boxes, motion toys, cones, balls and trikes. Additionally, there was a storage shed with additional toys and play materials.

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 service provided evidence that 3 staff members were trained in first aid responder (FAR) and were available to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) There was a first aid box, safely stored, easily accessible and in a conspicuous position in the staff room adjacent to the kitchen.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service and items were within date.

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) A record in writing was kept and maintained in the service of the monthly fire drills. The last monthly fire drill was dated 16/07/2025.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment with the last annual service dated 28/02/2025.
- The annual maintenance for the services smoke and fire detection system was dated 28/02/2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the pre-school room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was available for 34 preschool children in a full day care setting with an expiry date of 27/03/2026.