

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE031
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Name of Service:	Tots Creche & Daycare Nursery Limited
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Address of Service:	4 The Great Southern, Newbridge, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W12 AT27
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Name of Registered Provider:	Annette Byrne, Audrey Murray
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	20/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	36	PM	27
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co Kildare
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty and S Quigley
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

Tots Crèche, Daycare and Nursery Ltd. is registered to provide full day, part-time and sessional care to children aged 0 to 6 years. The service is one of ten services operated by the registered providers. The service operates from five care rooms in a purposely-adapted crèche facility. A separate sleep room and sanitary accommodation is provided together with an outdoor area which is located at the rear of the building. The service opens from 7.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday.

There is a kitchen on the premises where all meals and snacks are prepared.

Staffing

The registered provider employs ten staff members to work in the service including the service manager and a cook. Ten staff members were present on the day of the inspection, the area manager and operations manager arrived subsequent to the inspectors arrival and remained on the premises for the remainder 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, information and records, 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 the following regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 – Staffing Levels

Regulation 15 – Record of a preschool child

Regulation 19 – Health, welfare and development of the child

Regulation 23 – Safety

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures

However on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 30.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, record of a preschool child.

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 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

(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

(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)

The manager confirmed that no new staff members had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection dated 11th December 2024. No staff files were required to be reviewed.

The Garda vetting for all staff members was reviewed and was in compliance with the Regulatory notice to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4)

All adults who worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Education and Care or a qualification deemed equivalent 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.*
- (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) An adequate number of adults were working with the children. There were seven adults working directly with thirty six children in the morning and five adults working with twenty seven children in the afternoon. The service manager and deputy were available to assist as needed.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement for the age of children and type of service provided was always maintained.
- (8)(a) There were at least two staff members on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two staff to be on the premises at all times of opening.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 12 records of preschool children maintained in the service were reviewed by the inspectors to assess compliance. The documentation reviewed evidenced that each of the records detailed all of the required information outlined under Regulation 15(1) (a) to (i) detailed above.

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)

A healthy eating policy was in place in the service. Staff stated breakfast, snacks, and a hot lunch are provided by the service for children attending on a part time and full day care basis. Children availing of the ECCE programme in the Preschool rooms take a morning snack in from home. The adults sat with the children when eating, promoting independence and social skills. Drinks were always available within the rooms and were offered with meals and snacks.

The care rooms were suitably resourced with a variety of equipment and materials which were all arranged on low level shelving units, facilitating the children's choice of play.

The children moved freely within the rooms, engaging in free play and activities. Transitions between care routines and activities were well managed with staff explaining to the children what was going to happen next. Staff supported the children to manage their personal care. Staff supported children's independence with toileting, prompting them to use it routinely. Children who wore nappies had these changed at regular intervals and in between when required.

The children were provided with an opportunity to sleep after dinner. They slept in cots or low beds appropriate to their age and stage of development. The children were made comfortable for sleep with their outer clothing and shoes removed and soothers given to those who used them. The inspectors observed younger children being put to sleep when they showed signs of tiredness outside of this time.

The adults fostered positive relationships with the children by offering support through attentive listening, responsive interactions, and gentle guidance. They engaged kindly with the children, comforting children when they became upset. Group activities, such as cooperative play and shared meals were designed to develop communication skills, strengthen social bonds and help children build friendships. A key person approach was used to support children in forming secure attachments with staff.

Staff communicated with parents at drop off and collection together with an online interactive application which parents could view in real time.

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

The inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending.

General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- Hand sanitisers and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.
- All blind cords were secured.

Infection Control:

- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins in the indoor areas.
- Individual bed linen was provided for children. Staff stated that bed linen is laundered once a week or when required.

Administration of Medication:

- There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency.
- Individual care plans were in place for children requiring emergency medication

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance and placed babies on their backs to sleep.

- Sleep logs were maintained in the dedicated sleep room and the younger care rooms, and individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position every ten minutes.
- The temperature of the rooms where children slept were maintained at the required temperature ranges.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.
- Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Children were observed washing their hands in the garden however, there was no soap or paper towels available to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
2. There was no system in place for removing mouthing toys in the ECCE 1 room. Children were observed mouthing multiple toys and staff did not remove them from use. This poses a risk of cross contamination.
3. There was only a swing bin available in the garden. Staff were observed disposing of tissues and other waste and handling the bin lid whilst doing so. This poses a risk of cross contamination.

Administration of Medication:

4. Although there was documentation in place to complete when administering medication, this had not been completed appropriately. A sample of five medication records were reviewed and none had witness signatures recorded and three records did not have the signature of the person administering the medication. Failure to complete these records accurately can affect the continuity of care of a child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The service attached soap dispensers and paper towel dispensers onto the walled area in the garden and attached sign so children can a clearly defined area for handwashing while outdoors. The service will ensure all staff use the handwashing facilities outdoors and clean children's hands before returning indoors. All staff have re-read the hand hygiene policy and procedure and signed also.
2. The service have an infection control procedure in place for mouthed toys, however as noted from the inspector this room was very challenging, and the children are very active. The manager/person in charge has spent more time in this room supporting the early years educators. The company has recognised a

need to observe the children before starting ECCE in September. Therefore, we are having an opening day in every service for parents and children to engage with their new environment and meet key workers and get paperwork signed, while educators can observe children and support families before opening in September. This will enable us to place the children into rooms according to their abilities.

3. The new pedal bin arrived that afternoon and is in place. We now have an extra stock of pedal bins in storage and available when needed.

Administration of Medication:

4. Adhering to all policy and procedures ensure the correct steps are taken when administering medication. All staff have read the policy on administration of medication, signed and dated. The Operations Manager, Area Managers and Service Manager will carry out unannounced inspections in between our internal pre-tusla monthly inspections to make sure this is not happening.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Photo of hand towel and soap dispensers on the wall and signed hand hygiene and infection control policy.
2. Open day dates and email to managers. Signed infection control policies.
3. Photo of pedal bin.

Administration of Medication:

4. Copy of signed administration of medication policy by staff.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting evidence were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A record in writing was available of fire drills that took place in the service. The last fire drill took place on the 7 May 2025.
 - (b) A record was available on the day of inspection detailing that the fire fighting equipment was serviced during July 2024 and the smoke alarms were last serviced on the 23 January 2025.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(2)
- The registered provider did not ensure that there was adequate clear floor space available to the children in the Baby/Wobbler room. There were six children attending on a full daycare basis.
- Two children were aged under 1 year requiring 3.5 sqm of clear floor space each.
- Four children were aged 1 year requiring 2.8 sqm of clear floor space each.
- There was 13.95sqm available to the children, whilst 18 sqm was required for the age and number of children currently attending the service on a full daycare basis.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

With immediate affect one child was able to move on into a new room. Bookings department now know the correct square footage of the room and know not to over book the room.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documents submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 30.