

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KE037
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Toad Hall Childcare
-------------------------	---------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	11 Curragh Finn, Kildare, Co. Kildare
----------------------------	---------------------------------------

<b>Eircode:</b>	R51 YF70
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sinead Hall
-------------------------------------	-------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	13/01/2025
-------------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	21	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co Kildare
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Fiona Carty
<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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
---------------------------------	-----------------

### Description of service

Toad Hall Childcare is a privately owned sessional service located in an urban setting in Kildare Town. A service is provided to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service offers two separate sessional services and is open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5.00pm for 52 weeks of the year. The premises is located in a purposely adapted domestic dwelling and comprises of 3 care rooms, sanitary accommodation, an office and an outdoor area to the rear of the building.

### Staffing

There were five adults present on the day of inspection including the registered provider who was 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, 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 16 – Information and records.

Regulation 23 – Safety

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations 15 and 16, information and records.

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, 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

The inspection focused on the recruitment records of all staff who worked in the service.

(2)

(a)(b)

Of the ten references required seven written and validated references were available from a past employer. A further three written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults.

(d) International Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside of the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(4) Records were available detailing the required qualifications or equivalent for all staff members.

### 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) An adequate number of adults were working with the children at all times.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratios were maintained. There were five adults caring for twenty one preschool children.

### 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 ten records were reviewed by the inspector.

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a), to (i) of the above Regulation for all of the records reviewed.

## 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:*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

*(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

## Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A written record was available in each care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
- (i) A staffing roster was available in the service detailing hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection.
- (j) Signed parental consent was available to administer temperature reducing and emergency medication.
- (k) A sample of accident and incident records were reviewed and were signed by staff and adults and completed appropriately.

### 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

(1a) Drinking water was always available to the children, in the care room rooms. Parents provided the snack for the children which included a variety of healthy foods including fruit, crackers, yoghurt and sandwiches. Staff were observed engage in conversation and assisting younger children when required during snack time.

Children were encouraged to look after themselves according to their age and stages of development. Staff supported children to develop independence with opening snack items, using the toilet, washing their hands and taking care of their belongings.

Children's rest areas were available in the care room, there was soft matting and cushions available.

The children were able to move freely around the care rooms and engage in different types of activities of their choosing. On the day of inspection children were observed engaging in imaginative play together. Language development was encouraged during story time and when adults assisted the children to scaffold their learning. Adults were observed to be kind and warm to the children and minor disagreements between children were managed promptly by distraction and positive behaviour methods.

The adults demonstrated positive regard for the children by using gentle tones when communicating and showing a keen interest in them engaging in conversation during the inspection.

The adults supported children during group and individual play activities. Staff were observed communicating with parents at drop off and collection times.

There were three care rooms available to the children. All care rooms were a supportive learning environment for the children. They were bright and spacious and laid out with identifiable interest areas including a home corner, construction materials, art areas a quiet corner incorporating a book area, low level shelving was available containing table top activities.

Children's artwork and large educational posters are displayed on the wall. All the play resources were visible and accessible to the children at their height.

A range of play materials were provided to promote all key areas of the children's learning and development.

Toys were clean, in good repair and included a range of materials including wood, paints, and moulded plastics.

There were two large outdoor areas available to the children with a variety of ride on materials, a climbing frame with a slide and playhouses. Sand and water play was also available to the 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

The inspector 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. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor play environment was safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products, medications, and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

#### **Infection Control:**

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy. All children's hands were washed prior to eating and following use of the toilet

#### **Fire Safety:**

The emergency exits were free from obstruction. Regular fire drills took place to aid safe evacuation 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.

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
  - (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024, and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had taken place on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024.