

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE057
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Tiny Tots Pre-school
-------------------------	----------------------

Address of Service:	Flinters Est. Comm. Building, Flinters Close, Athy, Co. Kildare
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	R14 RH24
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Redmond
-------------------------------------	------------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	02/12/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child & Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Ballymore Eustace road Naas, Co. Kildare W91 X38W.
---	--

Inspection undertaken by:	F. Maher
----------------------------------	----------

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.
---------------------------------	-----------------

Description of service

Tiny Tots pre-school is a private sessional service located in a community building within a housing estate on the outskirts of Athy, Co. Kildare. The service opens Monday to Friday from 09:00-12:15hrs and sessional care is provided to children aged between 2-6 years. Two pre-school rooms, an office and kitchen and sanitary and nappy change facilities are provided. An outdoor play area is located to the rear and sides of the service.

Staffing

There were seven adults employed in the service and six adults were present on the day of the inspection. Five staff members were working directly with pre-school children and included the person in charge and one staff member who was engaged in administrative duties. The registered provider was not present and does not provide direct care to 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(b)(d), (4) – Management and recruitment.

- Regulation 11(1), (3) – Staffing Levels
- Regulation 15 (1) – Record of a Pre-school Child
- Regulation 16(k) – Record in Relation to Pre-school Service
- Regulation 22 – Food and Drink
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child
- Regulation 25 (1), (2)(a)(b) – First aid
- Regulation 26 (1)(a)(b), (4) – Fire Safety Measures
- Regulation 28 – Insurance

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 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
- (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, 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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), (b)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required. The named persons in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability and was documented in the service.

The records of eight staff members, including the registered provider were reviewed.

(2)

(a)(b) Two validated references were available on file for all staff members from either a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all employed staff members.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed.

(4)
Six childcare staff members, employed to work directly with pre-school children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

International police vetting was required for one staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period greater than 6 months as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Staff member has contacted relevant services and the process has been started.

Preventive Action

Be more thorough on the interview process and reading of CVs, request information on durations of residence.

Supporting documentation submitted

Document x 1

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 9(2)(d) has not been met at this time as the document remains outstanding.

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)
There were 30 children attending the service being supervised directly by five adults.

(3)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the inspection.

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)
The service maintained a record in writing of all children attending the service. A sample size of 10 child enrolment forms were assessed and contained all the relevant information as outlined (a)-(i) in the above regulation.

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:

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

Compliance Information

(1)(k)

A sample size of 10 accident and incident forms were assessed, of these, six were completed in full with all the relevant details recorded.

Non-Compliance Information

However, inadequate information was documented on four of the records as follows,

- The child's full name and date of birth was not recorded on two of the forms.
- The full name of the staff member completing two forms was absent.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

At staff meeting discussed correct polices for record keeping procedures, a sample accident and incident report was completed.

Preventive Action

Manager and room leader will both oversee that the forms have been completed fully before signing.

Supporting documentation submitted

Document x 1

Photograph x 1

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 16(1)(k) has been met.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Staff advised if a child has forgotten to bring their snack, or asks for an extra snack, there is food available such as bread and butter/toast and fruit that can be prepared. Fresh drinking water was freely available in the service and the children's snacks were stored in the fridge on arrival. Staff also advised the inspector, they incorporate healthy eating on a regular basis with the children encouraging conversations about healthy food choices. The children also assist the staff in baking/cooking activities such as brown bread and making soup with vegetables in season. A wall display, in the entrance foyer, included examples of the high sugar content of some of the drinks and yoghurts observed by staff in the children's lunch boxes with the varying amounts of sugar displayed in small plastic bags.

Staff were observed to sit with the children during snack time making it a social occasion for the children as they chatted and engaged with each other.

Non-Compliance Information

1. It is acknowledged a healthy eating policy was in place in the service and staff had outlined the types of sugar content in certain drinks as outlined above; however, the foods observed provided by parents for their child's morning snack did not align to the policy that stated, 'healthy eating was promoted' and 'fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolate, crisps, nuts or nut spreads are not allowed'.

It is acknowledged some of the children did have fresh fruit such as a banana, blueberries, a pear and a mandarin orange and/or a sandwich with cheese or ham, and/or mini bread sticks, however, the registered provider did not ensure that suitable and nutritious food was being provided for each child attending the service as observed by the following:

- Every child was observed with a high sugar content snack in their lunch boxes.
- Some children were only provided snacks with a high sugar content with no healthy option included.
- The foods observed included, a bag of mini chocolate biscuits, several pre-packaged cake-type bars, some had part chocolate covering, chocolate spread on crackers, chocolate crisp-rice bars, a yoghurt with a side portion of mini chocolate biscuit beads and pre-packaged fruit type drinks.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Issued healthy eating letter to parents, any food not allowed in accordance with healthy eating policy to be returned home and alternative offered to the child.

Preventive Action

Daily inspections of lunches, reminders sent out to parents if lunches provided are not suitable.

Supporting documentation submitted

Document x 1

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 22 has been met. This will be reviewed at the time of the next inspection.

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 main entrance door to the service was secure with a bell entry system; this was controlled by the staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the primary school and the pre-school service.

The kitchen was secured with a high-level bolt mechanism to ensure the children did not gain access and therefore to any hazards within.

During conversations with staff members, they advised they were very observant of any food/fruit provided that had the potential risk of choking and immediately cut the food/fruit into smaller pieces. Staff also advised they immediately remove any necklace a child may wear into the service.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents which were inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towel, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying and handwashing routines were well established and observed.

Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used nappies, tissues, paper towel and waste. Plastic aprons, disposable gloves and nappy sacks were available for hygienic nappy change practices.

Administration of Medication:

Staff in conversation with the inspector, advised they were aware of the safe administration of medication procedures to be followed if medicine was required to be administered to a child attending.

Fire Safety:

Staff were familiar with the safe evacuation routes to take if an emergency occurred on the premises as advised to the inspector and regular monthly fire drills were practiced. Fire exits were clearly signed and free from any obstruction.

Outing:

An outings policy was in place to guide practice when undertaking an outing from the pre-school; this was confirmed by the person in charge.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. It is acknowledged a daily indoor risk assessment document was in place for the 'Big' room and for the outdoor area, however, following review of the available records, they had not been completed since 12 November 2025. The incomplete records may not have identified any risk/hazard in the pre-school room or outdoor area to date.

Infection Control:

2. Three nappy changes were observed on the day of inspection; the following infection control risks were identified:
 - The adult failed to remove their apron and gloves following the removal and disposal of the soiled nappy for each child and proceeded to place a clean nappy and dress the child with the used gloves and apron in situ.
 - It is acknowledged the staff member washed their hands and changed their gloves between each child's procedure; however, the apron remained in place for the three nappy changes and was only removed after all the nappies had been changed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

General Safety:

Staff members will now be assigned an area to ensure checks are completed and manager will ensure that daily checks are being completed and signed off on.

Preventive Action

Regular checks on procedures being signed and kept up to date, spot checks to ensure duties are being carried out correctly.

Infection Control:

Corrective Action

Nappy changing policy review to ensure all staff members are familiar with correct procedures, nappy changing procedure practice morning (with dolls) was carried out. Nappy changing procedure more predominately displayed in nappy changing area.

Preventive Action

Nappy changing policy to be visited regularly at staff meetings, manager to undertake spot observations of nappy changing.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs x 4

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 23 has been met. This area of practice will be reviewed at the time of the next 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)
Five staff members were trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)

The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the service.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the 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 fire fighting 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 written record was available of fire drills which were completed monthly in the service, the last recorded fire drill took place 17 November 2025.

(b)

A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire detection system in the premises and were last serviced May 2025 and 12 August 2025 respectively.

(4)

Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2026. The insurance provided cover for 38 children.