

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK090
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Name of Service:	Tiny Tots Paradise Ltd
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Address of Service:	Parcnagowan, Outrath Road, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
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Eircode:	R95 KT29
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Name of Registered Provider:	Geraldine Russell
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	17/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	52	PM	47
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow.
Inspection undertaken by:	Norma Thornton
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	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Description of service

Tiny Tots Paradise Ltd. is a registered full day childcare service located in the centre of Kilkenny City. The service provides full day, part-time and sessional childcare services for children aged 1 to 6 years of age Monday to Friday between 08:00 to 18:00 hours. The service is a purpose-built childcare facility comprised of five pre-school classrooms on the ground floor and a sixth classroom on the first floor which is used for school aged care. Four of the five pre-school classrooms were in operation on the day of inspection.

There is an onsite outdoor play area located at the back of the building which can be directly accessed from four of the five classrooms on the ground floor.

Staffing

There were 25 staff members employed in the service including the registered provider, business support administrator, two chefs and a kitchen assistant. All staff who as part of their role in the service held qualifications from Level 5 to Level 8 on the national Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) framework.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on assessment of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16(1) 21,22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28 and 29.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations 15, 16(1), 21, 22, 23, 24 and 29.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the four pre-school rooms that were in operation on the day,

Daffodil 1, Bluebells, Daisy and the Sunflower room.

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, persons 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) The designated person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (b) The staff roster demonstrated that one of the following, the registered provider, designated person in charge or a named deputy designated person in charge, was always onsite while the service was in operation.
- (c) A clear outline of the management of the structure was displayed in the service, identifying the lines of authority, accountability, the roles, and responsibilities of individual staff members in the service.

- (2) Staff files for 25 staff members, including the registered provider were reviewed by the inspector.
- (a)(b) Two validated references were available on file for each of the 25 staff members, from either a past employer or from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting certificates were available on file, for each staff member. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (4) Certificates of qualifications were available for inspection, for each staff member, who as part of their role were working directly with the children, demonstrating that each staff member held at least a minimum Level 5 to Level 8 qualification in early childhood care and education on the national QQI Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) While police vetting was available for three staff members and documented evidence that a fourth staff member had attempted to obtain police vetting, there was no police vetting available for one staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Police vetting has been obtained for the above staff member.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of Police Vetting certificate.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted are appropriate to address the non-compliances. The implementation of these actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is always 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) Throughout the inspection, the inspector observed that there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed in each of the four pre-school classrooms that were in operation on the day of inspection. Daffodil Room 2 was closed on inspection day.

In Daffodil Room 1, there were 8 children aged 4 to 5 years of age directly cared for by 1 staff member. From 14:30 hours 7 children remained for the evening with 1 staff member.

In Bluebells Room, there were 12 children aged 3 to 4 years directly cared for by 2 staff members throughout the day.

In Daisy Room, there were 10 children aged 2 years to 2 years and eight months directly cared for by 2 staff members throughout the day.

In The Sunflower Room there were 22 children aged 3 to 5 years directly cared for by 3 staff members and in the afternoon, 18 children remained with the same 3 staff members.

Two additional staff members provided relief for staff breaks and assistance throughout all the classrooms in the service during the inspection. Three assistant supervisors/ deputy designated persons in charge were also present throughout the inspection providing relief and support to the staff.

(8)(a) On review of the staff roster and in discussion with the staff present, the inspector was assured that there were always at least six adults on the premises while children were in attendance in the service.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (i) On review of a sample of 12 registration records of pre-school children attending the service, the inspector observed that records of the particulars (a) to (i) were maintained for each preschool child.

(3) The children's preschool records were available on the premises for inspection by a parent /guardian, employees and persons as authorised by the registered provider.

(4) The registered provider demonstrated that each pre-school child's registration record was retained for a period of two years after the child completed their attendance at the service.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (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

On review of records available and open for inspection, the inspector was reassured that the registered provider, maintained records of the following information.

(1)(a) All staff members employed in the service had a staff record containing written details of their position and role in the service, their qualifications and certificates and professional experience.

- (b) to (f) The service’s “Statement of Purpose and Function” which was displayed on the notice board in the service and available to parents/guardians and any authorised persons detailed elements (b) to (f).
- (g) The written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 were available in the service.
- (h) Children’s daily attendance records were recorded on a digital application, recording children’s arrival and departure times.
- (i) Staff rosters were available for review. The inspector observed that the staff roster recorded for the day of inspection was confirmed on observation of staff present in the service.
- (j) The inspector reviewed a sample of 12 administration of medication records and observed that they were completed and documented in line with the service’s administration of medication policy.
- (k) A sample of 24 incident records were reviewed and found to be recorded in line with the service’s accident and incident policy.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Throughout the pre-school classrooms the inspector observed that there was adequate and appropriate furniture, play equipment and materials provided for the children

Each classroom contained age-appropriate interest areas which included kitchen/ home areas, construction areas, rest and reading areas and tables created with themed sensory materials such as small world animal figurines, and sensory materials.

There were child level shelves which provided children with access to a variety of colourful and wooden manipulative, connective and stackable materials, jigsaws, pegboards, bead and maze tables and mark making materials.

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

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service which is communicated to parents upon initial registration of their child in the service. Staff explained that a breakfast of cereal and milk is available each morning. A four-week menu plan of suitable healthy and various food is provided by the service for morning snack, dinner and tea daily. The weekly menu plan is displayed in the entrance hall for parents to see and the healthy eating policy is available on request.

Samples of snacks included rice cakes, crackers, breadsticks scones with jam and butter, and fruit.

Dinner menu options included roast chicken, chilli con carne, fish fingers, spaghetti bolognaise, homemade burgers beans and chips, beef stew, salmon/ cod pasta bake, chicken casserole, chicken/ beef curry and rice, meatballs marinara, creamy chicken a- la- king with rice, shepherds pie, bacon and cabbage, or pasta carbonara.

Meals provided at teatime included sandwiches, crackers with hummus / pâté, wholemeal bread and cheese, sausage rolls, yogurts and fruit.

Staff in each classroom ensured that children had constant access to drinking water with drinking stations provided in each room and jugs of fresh drinking water replenished throughout the day.

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 service was secured at the main entrance with a call coded keypad / call bell system. Only staff employed in the service could gain access to the service. All parent/ guardians and visitors to the service had to be authorised and allowed access to the service by a staff member. The large glass entrance doors allowed staff to clearly view

who was present at the entrance before permitting entrance to the service. The outdoor area located at the back of the building was secured with a high ten-foot wall. These structural provisions helped to ensure that no unauthorised person could enter the building and to mitigate against any child exiting the service unsupervised. Cleaning equipment and cleaning materials were stored securely and safely in a designated sluice room away from the classrooms. Children did not have access to the kitchen area.

Infection Control:

There was an adequate number of toilets and hand wash basins available for both the staff working in the service and for the children.

The children were observed to be aware of the importance of handwashing post toileting, messy and outdoor play and prior to mealtimes. Staff were observed supporting and assisting children with handwashing when required and as requested by the children.

The handwashing practice of staff members was reflective of the service's infection control policy. The staff were observed to wash their hands frequently post attending to the children's personal needs and prior to helping the children with meals.

Cleaning schedules were available for review in each classroom and were recorded to date.

Administration of Medication:

No medication was observed to be administered in the service on the day of inspection. In discussion with the staff members, child centred medication plans had been devised for children who were prescribed emergency medication. The inspector was assured through discussion with staff that they were well informed on the procedures to follow for the administration of emergency medication if required. Emergency medications were safely stored in a designated storage unit, out of children's reach but easily accessible to the staff.

Safe Sleep:

All children present in the service on the day of inspection were over two years of age. Children who wished to have a nap during their day in the service were accommodated in the Daffodil 2 classroom which had black out blinds to dim the light in the room. Several stackable beds were provided, spaced at 50 cm apart, each prepared with fitted sheets and cellular blankets. A staff member remained in the room with the children ensuring that each sleeping child's physical checks, colour, breathing and sleep position was checked at ten-minute intervals.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for all staff members however, the vetting disclosure for one staff member was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

After our Inspection we submitted Garda Vetting for all staff working on the premises. We have received most back but are still waiting on 7 to be returned by the Garda Vetting Bureau. The Staff member in questions is one of these 7. Once I have received it back from Early Childhood Ireland I will forward it onto my Preschool Inspector for her files. These 25 vetting applications were submitted in August 2025.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copy of email confirming application for renewal of Garda Vetting.

Copy of renewed Garda Vetting Certificate.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted are appropriate to address the non-compliances. The implementation of these actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1) Each child attending the service has their times of arrival and departure recorded daily by the staff on the service's media application which parents/ guardians can access on their individual child.

(3)(a) The designated person in charge and staff ensured that no person other than a preschool child attending the service, persons dropping or collecting a child, employees or unpaid workers could enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee.

(b) There was a visitors record book present, which any visitors to the service were required to complete once authorised entry by a staff member.

The record maintained the date of entry, person's name, contact number, reason for entry, staff member approving access and check in and out times.

(4) The record of authorised visitors or contractors to the service was observed to have been maintained for greater than one year.

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

(2)(a)(b) There was first aid bag stored on a designated shelf in the service, the location of which was known to all staff members.

The first aid contents were adequate, and records demonstrated that the first aid contents were checked monthly and replaced if necessary.

Emergency medications were stored in a clearly signposted storage cupboard in the kitchen-, the location of which was known to all staff members.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There were eight staff members employed in the service whose certification in first aid responder (FAR) training had expired in February and April 2025. It is acknowledged that the registered provider provided evidence that FAR training had been booked for 8 staff members over the month of August.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Far Training took place over three days (20/09/2025, 27/09/2025 and 04/10/2025). 8 Staff took part in this training. We have been advised by the provider of this training who were Pulse 8 that certs will not be emailed to participating staff for another two weeks. Once I have received the certs I will forward them to my Preschool Inspector.

A one-day refresher training will be organised every two years so certification will not run out of date in the future. A note of this date has been recorded by our HR Department.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of email confirming attendance by staff for FAR training.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted are appropriate to address the non-compliances. The implementation of these actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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) The following fire safety records were maintained.
- (a) There was a written record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on the 10 June 2025.
 - (b) A record of the service and maintenance of fire equipment and the service's smoke alarm system was maintained. The last maintenance check for the fire-fighting equipment was recorded as having taken place on the 20 June 2025 and for the smoke alarm system as having taken place on the 01 May 2025.
- (2) The fire safety records were available and open for inspection by the early years inspector or by a parent / employee on request.
- (3) The designated person in charge demonstrated that records were maintained for the five years prior to inspection.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that a fire evacuation procedure notice was clearly displayed in the main entrance hall.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate displaying adequate insurance for a full daycare childcare service for up to 100 preschool children was displayed on the notice board in the entrance hall.

The insurance certificate provided cover from 28 March 2025 to the 27 March 2026.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The registered provider and staff reported that the service had no structural issues.
- (b) The service was observed by the inspector to be secured at the main entrance and the registered provider ensured that all the perimeter of the service was secured.
- (e) The inspector observed that adequate and suitable sanitary facilities were provided throughout the service for all the staff and children in attendance.

Non-Compliance Information

- (c) The inspector recorded high temperatures ranging from 22° to 26°C throughout the service throughout the day. The outside temperature was recorded as 21°C. It is acknowledged that where possible staff used fans to circulate air and cool the environment with limited success and the recommended classroom temperatures of 18 -22°C was not maintained.
- (d) The flooring on the stairs coming from the bathrooms in the Sunflower classroom had been removed and had not been replaced.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Room Temperature: As advised on the day of inspection we have been in contact with an Air Conditioning and Refrigeration contractor, who have visited the premises and given us a quote to install air conditioning throughout the building. For financial reasons we have decided to install this system on a room-by-room basis over a period of approx. 2 years. We will start with the largest room which has a lot of glass and is the hardest room to keep cool during the summer and warm during the winter. In two years (due to the high cost of the system) we hope to have the entire building completed.

Flooring in Sunflower Room: The entire flooring in this room has been replaced.

Daily room temperature checks are carried out to ensure that rooms are kept to the required temperatures.

Weekly room inspections are carried out to help record maintenance concerns in the building which are then reported to management so repairs can be organised.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of the quote received for the installation of the Air Conditioning system showing the company we will be using to install same.

Flooring: Images of the new flooring.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted by the registered provider are appropriate to address the non-compliances. The implementation of these practices will be reviewed on next inspection.