

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY008
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Name of Service:	Torc Childcare Service
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Address of Service:	Ballyspillane Family Resource Centre, Ballyspillane, Killarney, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V93 FD1H
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Name of Registered Provider:	Eibhlin Ni Chathain
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	26/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	35	PM	9
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Creagh and N. Reidy
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	N/A
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Description of service

Torc Childcare service is a registered community based early years service, providing part- time care and sessional care to children aged from 0 to 6 years. The current opening hours are 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday inclusive. The service operates from a detached purpose- built premise within Ballyspillane Family Resource centre. There are three playrooms, namely the Toddler room, Preschool 1 and Preschool 2, each with adjacent sanitary facilities. There is a designated spacious, fully enclosed outdoor facility available to the children.

Staffing

There are currently 15 adults attached to the service, this includes 1 adult on a community employment (CE) scheme, 1 volunteer and the registered provider who is not service based. There are 5 adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme.

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.

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

(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person to deputise in her absence as required.
- (b) When the unannounced inspection commenced, the deputy in charge was on duty to assist with the inspection process and she remained on duty for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to each of the 15 adults attached to the service were inspected.
- (a) Of the 30 references required, there were 17 references from previous employers on file with records of validation.
- (b) Of the 30 references required, there were 13 references on file from a source other than a previous employer with records of validation.
- (c) Garda vetting was on file for each of the 15 adults. The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Evidence in respect of 1 adult currently in the process of renewing Garda vetting was available to the inspector.
- (d) Police vetting was available on file for 5 adults who resided outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for greater than six consecutive months.
- (4) The 12 adults employed to work directly with the children had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or a qualification as deemed by the Minister with copies of the relevant qualifications on file.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(d) Police vetting was not on file for 1 adult who is currently on leave who had resided outside of Ireland for a period of longer than 6 months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) Police vetting for the staff member has been forwarded.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(d) A copy of the police vetting has been received.

Summary Comment

The documentation submitted by the person in charge relating to the non-compliance under Regulation 9 was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.

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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The required adult to child ratios were observed in all three care rooms as follows:

Morning:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Toddler Room (18moths to 2 ½ years)	7	2

Preschool 1 (2 to 3 years)	15	3
Preschool 2 (4- 5 years)	13	3

A student was not included in the adult child ratios.

Afternoon:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Toddler Room (18moths to 2 ½ years)	4	1
Preschool 1 (2 to 3 years)	0	0
Preschool 2 (4- 5 years)	5	2

(8) (a) The registered provider did ensure that a minimum of two adults were always on the premises during the hours of operation.

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) The details of the attendance of each child were recorded daily on the attendance list for each care room.

Time in and out were recorded.

(i) A staff roster was available to the inspectors, and the roster was accurate to the staffing recorded on the day of inspection. Historic staff rosters were also available for assessment.

(j) Four records of medication administration were assessed, and each record contained all the required details. The records had requests for administration completed by parents/ guardians, with two staff signatures on the administration form.

(k) The accidents and incident record books were reviewed, and 17 records were assessed. All 17 records were completed, signed and dated by both staff and parents/ guardians.

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:

- The snacks on the day of inspection were served at appropriate times and children were able to access their drinks throughout the day; the children's reusable water bottles were stored on low- level shelves. Assistance was given to the children that required help with packaging and children were observed to be self- sufficient where possible.
- At snack time a child stated he was still hungry after finishing his snack, and additional food was available to be given to him.
- Staff supported children with toileting when needed, in the sanitary areas located adjacent to the care rooms and nappies were observed to be changed on routine and as required.
- Children were reminded to wash their hands and helped when needed.

- The layout of the care rooms supported the children to move freely within their environments and to actively engage in their chosen activity, inclusive of tabletop activities, dress- up play, sand activities, story time and art activities.
- The children had several opportunities for outdoor play during their time in the service. Since the last inspection of the service a sensory room was introduced off the outdoor area, facilitating five children at a time.
- There were rest areas available in the rooms, with soft seating, soft matting and cushions, allowing children to sit and relax away from the larger group if needed.

Supporting Relationships:

- Each staff member was assigned to a care room. The children were accustomed to the staff and were observed to seek their support when required.
- Family trees were displayed in the care rooms which supported the children's sense of identity and belonging.
- The staff were observed to speak with parents on drop off and collections and any updates were communicated by sending letters or via the WhatsApp platform.
- The children were observed to play alone and play in small and large groups. The play was child led with the adults assisting where needed but allowing each child to select their activities.
- The staff demonstrated sensitivity to the children and were comforting and kind when speaking with the children.
- Children with additional care needs were observed to be integrated into the service and supported when needed.
- Transitions were managed well with staff informing children when they were moving from one activity to the next, such as when moving from free play to snack time. Children appeared to be aware of the routine and what to expect next.

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

- Low level shelving units were in place in all the care rooms to display interest items at the children’s eye level.
- Toys and materials appeared clean and in good condition, with a cleaning schedule available, documenting their cleaning and maintenance.
- The toys and materials available provided opportunities to promote children’s learning and developmental needs. The variety of materials on offer facilitated all children’s engagement, keeping them active and involved. Interest areas included areas with construction toys, art and crafts, books, dress up clothes, kitchens, blocks, baby gym, sensory board, water trays, and sand trays.
- Outdoors, children were observed to engage with a range of equipment, such as wheeled toys, magnetic shapes, play- house and slide.

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

- The parents/ guardians of the children attending the service provide the snacks. The snacks observed on the day of inspection appeared to be appropriately nutritious, such as yoghurts, cheese, crackers, sandwiches, a variety of fruit and water.
- During discussion, the staff advised that additional food was available in the onsite kitchen if a child became hungry.
- The service promoted healthy eating, in keeping with their Healthy Eating policy, displaying healthy eating posters, the food pyramid, and children's art display of healthy food options on the walls. Staff advised that the service runs ‘health eating week’ at the commencement of the 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

(1) It was evident from the staff rota that there was at least one staff member trained in First Aid Responder available on the premises at all times.

(2)(a) First aid kits were stored up high, out of reach of children and clearly identifiable in each of the care rooms.

(b) The three first aid kits in each room were inspected and all were suitably stocked for the number of children attending the service. These were available for staff to attend to the children if required.

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 building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally and no obvious defects were noted on inspection.

(b) The premises appeared safe and secured. The internal and external doors were secured as required and the outdoor area was secured with steel fencing and gates. This prevented any child gaining access to the car park and prevented unauthorised adults from gaining access to the children.

(c) All areas were well lit by natural light and artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, stale smells, or stuffiness.

(d) The indoor and outdoor areas were well maintained, and routine cleaning schedules were in place.

(e) The service had adequate and suitable sanitary facilities available adjacent to each care room for the number of children attending. The Toddler room had an adjacent room with a nappy changing unit, change mat, and hand wash basin available.