

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH100
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Name of Service:	Tiny Tots Creche
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Address of Service:	Old School, Kilkerry, Dundalk, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A91 T2KN
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Name of Registered Provider:	Karen Holland
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	18/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	35	PM	14
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	M Flood
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
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Description of service

Tiny Tots Creche is a privately owned childcare service that has been in operation since 1998. The service provides sessional, part-time and full day care and education to pre-school children aged 2-6 years. The service is registered to operate from 08.00am -6pm each weekday and caters for the care needs of a maximum of 51 pre-school children.

This service operates from the “Old School House building” which has been purposely renovated and is located in a small rural village in County Louth. The premises consists of 2 playrooms, 3 separate sanitary areas, a kitchen area and office. The children have access to a spacious and enclosed outdoor play area on the grounds .

Staffing

The service employs 6 childcare staff including the registered provider who also works directly with the pre-school children. One additional staff member is employed to carry out catering duties.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16.

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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued regarding excessive hot water temperatures in the nappy changing sanitary area. The registered provider gave written assurances of appropriate immediate actions undertaken in the service to control the risk to children within 24 hours of the notice being issued.

Acknowledgments

The inspector would like 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

(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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge who is also the registered provider and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived on the premises and were present throughout the inspection.
- (2) Eight staff files were reviewed which included the registered provider, 5 childcare staff, 1 staff member who is engaged in catering duties and the contracted music teacher who attends the service on a regular basis.
- (a)(b) There were 2 written and validated references available for 7 members of staff from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) A processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for all members of staff and the contracted music teacher. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that all 6 staff members who work directly with the preschool children held at least the minimum required level 5 childcare qualification on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) The registered provider did not ensure that appropriate vetting procedures had been completed for all staff. The following documents were not available:

- (a)(b) The required 2 written and validated references for the contracted music teacher who attends the service on a regular basis were not available for inspection.
- (d) Documentary evidence of international police vetting was not available for the contracted music teacher who had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (a)(b) The registered has obtained two written references for the contracted music teacher. These references have been validated. These records will be kept on file and should any other external services be used in the future the registered provider will obtain all the necessary records before they attend the service.
- (d) The registered provider has obtained Garda vetting and international Police vetting for the contracted music teacher. All records will be kept on file and going forward the registered provider will obtain all the necessary records for any external services before they attend the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of vetting documents

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliances under Regulation 9 have been addressed.

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) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service at 10.35am:

The Bizzy Bees Room:

- There were 18 preschool children aged 3 - 4 years with 2 members of staff.

The Creative Caterpillars Room:

- There were 17 children aged 2 - 3 years cared for by 2 members of staff including the registered provider. One additional staff member who was reported to be attending a meeting, returned to the service at approximately 11.15am.

The adult: child ratios were correct.

(8)(a) Following a review of the available documentation e.g., staff rotas and children’s attendance records the information demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

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) The following records were present for inspection and reviewed:

- (h) A written record was available of the arrival and departure times for the children attending the service on a daily basis. Each room recorded their own attendance on the attendance books.
- (i) Documentary evidence was available of the weekly staff roster which was reflective of the staff present in the service.
- (j) No medication was administered during the inspection. The medication records reviewed were complete and detailed all required information including; parental signatures to indicate that they had been informed, 2 staff signatures and information pertaining to the time and dose of medication were also recorded. Documented parental consent was also available.
- (k) A sample of 6 accident and incident records for the current school year were reviewed. All records were complete. The records included a parental signature to indicate that they had been informed about the incident and signatures of the staff and manager indicating that they had reviewed the information.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs:

- The children's care needs were attended to on a regular basis for example, hands were washed before snack times, after messy play and outdoor play. The children's noses were cleaned regularly throughout the day.
- The children were observed to move freely in the care rooms. The routine observed provided the children with a variety of large group and independent activities.
- All children had a change of environment into the outdoor area. All children who accessed the outdoor area were dressed appropriately to go outside.
- The children were encouraged to be independent with toileting and discreet supervision was also provided by staff when accessing the sanitary area. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to some of the children after toileting.
- Nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with lots of friendly interactions observed between the children and the staff.
- The staff working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and were observed to support the children to find positive solutions when they experienced challenge in sharing play equipment e.g., positive language, redirection to another activity or toy and the use of timers.

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

Snacks and lunches were provided by the parents, a variety of foods such as sandwiches, cheese, crackers and fresh fruit were provided. Large pieces of fruit e.g. grapes were monitored by the staff, and it was observed that the staff present cut the fruit down into smaller pieces as per safety guidelines. All perishable items were appropriately stored in the refrigerator.

For those attending on a part-time and full day care basis a hot meal was prepared by the catering staff on the premises. On the day of the inspection the hot meal consisted of mince beef, carrots, mashed potatoes and gravy. Drinks were generally stored on a low-level accessible surface for the children to access as required thorough out 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.

Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection:

General Safety:

1. The hot water temperature in the nappy changing sanitary area, exceeded the recommended maximum safe hot water temperature of 43°C. The hot water temperature was recorded as follows:
At 1.06pm the hot water temperature in the nappy changing area was recorded at 79.5°C. This is a scalding risk.
An immediate action notice was issued in respect of this safety concern to which an accepted response was received.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety

1. Thermostats have been fitted to the basins in the changing rooms, hot water is set at 43 °C
The registered provider will ensure that the thermostat remains set at 43 °C

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance. Based on this information the non-compliance under Regulation 23 has been addressed. Implementation and sustainment of the corrective and preventative actions will be assessed at 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

(2)(a) (b) The first aid box available was adequately equipped and was stored in a conspicuous location where it is easily accessible in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that a person with a First Aid Responder qualification was at all times available to the children attending the service. Documentary evidence indicated that while two staff members had a First Aid Responder (FAR) qualification these staff members were not on the premises at all times.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

First Aid:

- The registered provider will ensure that another staff member is trained in FAR and that there is always a trained member on the premises. The registered provider has indicated that training will take place in early 2025.

The registered provider has given an undertaking that all training is kept up to date.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance. Based on the assurances given by the registered provider that a member of staff

who is FAR trained will be on the premises at all times and an undertaking that additional training will take place, the non-compliance under Regulation 25 has been addressed. This will be for review at the next inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated.

Non-Compliance Information

(c)The sanitary facilities accessed by the preschool children attending the Bizzy Bees Room felt cold and the recorded ambient temperature at 11.04am was 12.8° C. This temperature is below the required room temperature of 18-22° C.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- c. An assurance has been given by the registered provider that the exit door leading to the garden from the bathroom will always be kept closed. The temperature will be monitored in the bathroom.
The process of monitoring the temperature will be maintained.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance. Based on the assurances given the non-compliance under Regulation 29 has been addressed. This will be for review at the next inspection.