

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK174
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Teddy's Community Playgroup
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Old Court House Dromoclogher Co. Limerick
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P56 YX38
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Mary Lynch Raferty
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	25/09/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	20	PM	5
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	J Ryan
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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
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### Description of service

Teddys Community playgroup is a non- profit organisation that offers a sessional and a part time service to children aged 2 to 6 years of age.

It is opened Monday to Friday from 09:00hrs to 14:00hrs and provides a school aged service until to 17: 30hrs.

The service operates from the old courthouse located in the village of Dromcollogher, Co Limerick. The service has 2 playrooms available to the preschool children, sanitary facilities for the children and staff, a staff office and kitchen area. There is a well-resourced outdoor play area located to the rear of the building.

A second off-site outdoor play area is located a short distance away from the premises that the children access daily under the supervision of the staff.

### Staffing

There are six staff working in the service each day and five staff have achieved an award in early childhood care and education. The staff participate in ongoing and continuous professional development training with all six staff having up to date first aid responder training. The registered provider does not work in the service.

### 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 regulations 9,10,11,19,24,25,26 and 28.

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*

*(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) On the day of the inspection the designated person in charge of operating the service and the named person who was able to deputise as required were available.

(b) During the period of the inspection the person in charge was available at all times. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy manager were always accessible on site.

The registered provider had ensured that each employee working in the service was suitable and competent as the following documents were available on file for all staff employed. Six staff files were reviewed on the day of the inspection.

(2)(a) Twelve written and validated references from past employers were available for all six staff.

(b) References from sources other than past employers were not required for any of the staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the national vetting bureau of an Garda Síochána were available for all six staff employed at the service. All garda vetting documents were dated within the last three years as per the regulatory notice EYI-RN12.3 renewal of Garda vetting published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 01 January 2024.

(d) Police vetting was not required for any staff member employed in the service.

(4) Five adults working directly with the children held an appropriate qualification in early childhood care and education.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

### Compliance Information

The policy and procedure manual contained the required policies and procedures relevant to the provision of a sessional and parttime service.

The following policies were reviewed and deemed to meet the requirements of the regulations and supported staff in their practice of caring for the children.

- Outdoor Play Policy
- Outings policy.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

*(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.*

#### Compliance Information

(2) On the day of the inspection there were 20 pre-school children and 5 staff on the premises for the morning sessional service. For the part time hours in the afternoon until 14.00hrs there were 5 preschool children present with 3 staff. At all times the written staff roster showed that the person in charge ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

### 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

##### (1)(a) BASIC NEEDS:

Healthy eating was promoted within the service. The parents provided the food and snacks for the children each day and these were observed to be nutritious and healthy. Children had access to their drinks in the playroom, each of which were stored within easy reach of all children. Break time was treated as a social occasion with staff sitting and chatting to the children while they dined.

Sanitary accommodation was located close to the rooms in the service. The children were allowed independent access to the bathroom and were always within hearing distance of staff. Assistance was offered if required.

Pictures were displayed and used with the children to support personal care. Staff were heard encouraging and supervising the children while they washed and dried their hands properly.

The rooms had a supply of tissues and wipes which were accessible to the children. Lidded bins were available for the safe disposal of waste.

Rest area with soft seating, soft floor coverings, cushions and blankets were accessible in the playrooms.

The children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level in the choice of play activities.

### **PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:**

This part time service comprised of 2 playrooms, sanitary accommodation areas and two separate outdoor play areas located at the entrance to the service and off site a short distance from the playschool. The group of 20 children were divided into two separate groups with one group downstairs and one group upstairs for the morning sessional service. This allowed children more individual care by staff supervising them.

Adequate and varied play equipment suited to the age and stage of development of the child was available in each room and in the outdoor play area. Surplus play equipment was in storage and used on a rotational basis following cleaning.

Children were observed playing in the secure outdoor play areas which was well resourced with outdoor play equipment such as playhouses, picnic benches, ride on toys, mud kitchens, climbing frames, sand boxes and plant boxes.

Routinely the group spent all of the session outdoors and only returned to the room for snacks. Activities and learning that take place indoors also took place in the outside play area where a class room was developed.

### 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.*

#### **Compliance Information**

(1) On the day of inspection each child attending the service was checked in and out by staff and a record of each child's attendance was maintained on a daily basis and was available and accessible at all times.

(3)(a) No persons other than the following could enter the premises without being approved by staff:

(i) A preschool child attending the service.

(ii) A person dropping or collecting a preschool child.

- (iii) An employee.
- (iv) unpaid worker.
- (b) A daily visitors record of any other persons entering the service was in place.

### 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) Six staff had up to date first aid responder training completed in February 2025.
- (2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box that was easily accessible and in a conspicuous site in the preschool facility.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

### 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 record was not available of the monthly fire drills that were practiced. The last fire drill took place in September 2025.
- (b) A maintenance record for the firefighting equipment's annual service was dated January 2025. The smoke alarm system was serviced in January 2025.
- (4) A fire assembly point was identified to the front of the premises. Notice of procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the main entrance area of the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was available for the service and had an expiry date of 27/03/2026.