

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LS036
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Timahoe Tots
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Timahoe, Co. Laois
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<b>Eircode:</b>	R32 DD51
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Deborah Quinn
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	09/05/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	27	PM	12
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D. Molloy
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Timahoe Tots is a privately owned and operated full day care, part time and sessional service which has been in operation since 2008. The service is located in the village of Timahoe in rural Co. Laois. The service currently cares for children in the age range from one year to six years. The service operates between the hours of 8.00am to 6.00 pm from Monday to Friday and accommodate up to 40 preschool children. This converted domestic dwelling is a standalone single storey building located on the village green in Timahoe. The premises is used for the sole purpose of operating an early years' service. The service consists of an entrance lobby, a cloakroom area, a connecting hallway and two playrooms, the front playroom, and the toddler room. A designated sleep room is provided. A kitchen is located off the front playroom. There are five sanitary accommodations for children's use and one nappy changing facility, in addition to one toilet for adult use.

A large secure outdoor play area is provided to the back of the service. Parking and set down is available on the public road.

### Staffing

The service is staffed by five staff in addition to the registered provide who is the person in charge of the service. Early Childhood qualifications of staff range from level 6 to level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9 and regulation 19 and regulation 23.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the large playroom, nappy changing and sanitary accommodations and the outdoor play area.

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, 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.

(6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who-

- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and

*(b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date.*

*(6A) is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “*

*(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”*

### Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,  
(b) The registered provider who is the designated person in in charge was present during the inspection and the roster showed that at all times the registered provider was present during the opening hours of the service.

(2)

The registered provider stated that one new staff member had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection.

(a) Validated references from new staff members’ past employers, in particular the most recent employer was available for review.

(b) A validated reference from reputable sources was available for review.

(c) A vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the new staff member was available for review.

(d) Police vetting from other police authorities was not required.

- (3)  
Required vetting was carried out prior to new staff member being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4)  
All employees held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6-8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- (6)(a)(b)  
Not applicable as no employee had signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016, to the effect that they intended to retire from employment in a pre-school service.
- (6A)  
One employee was working with children under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) on the day of inspection.

## 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.*
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides— (a) a sessional pre-school service, and (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3)*
- (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)  
The required ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection. The registered provider ensured that there were sufficient adults working directly with the children. Records showed that the adult child ratio was upheld in the service.

(4)

The required ratio of adults to children was observed during the inspection and records showed that the sufficient adults were rostered to work with the children each day.

(8) (a)

The registered provider had ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

*A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker, or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

The registered provider had ensured that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations was available on the premises and could be viewed by

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker, or contractor, and
- (c) an authorised person.

### 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:**

Healthy eating was promoted, in line with the health eating police and a healthy nutritious diet was provided. A two-week menu was in place. The service offered breakfast, morning snack, dinner, mid-afternoon snack, and tea. The main meal of the day was pasta bolognese with fresh fruit and milk and water. Tea was a selection of toasted sandwiches and yogurts.

Children were supported to become independent and self-caring and were encouraged to take care of their own belongings including hanging up their coats and opening bags and lunch boxes and tidying up their toys when finished playing.

Children were offered choice throughout their time in the service, and it was noted that they move freely indoors and outdoors, and some children chose to relax in the cosy corner.

##### **SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:**

It was observed that the children appeared comfortable in the company of staff and a warm relaxed atmosphere was noted.

Staff remained constant, with the same staff in the service each day and this consistency created continuity of care and provided opportunity for children to form relationships with the staff.

Parents involvement was encouraged, and parents had opportunity to meet with staff each day at hand over time and could come into the service and avail of individual meetings to discuss their own children's progress.

Transitions from preschool to primary school was supported as towards the end of the year the children discussed their plans to move to their new school and become familiar with the idea.

Children who needed additional help and support were given this by staff who helped children promote their social skills.

### 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 entry to the service was secured so as to ensure the safety of the children within and the main door was operated on a controlled entry system from inside. The outdoor play area was securely fenced and secured with gates that were locked from within and a high wall around the perimeters prevented access. All cleaning, sanitising products and equipment were stored in safe place out of reach of children. A pest control system was in place to safeguard against pests.

##### Infection Control:

Children were observed washing their hands regularly and were assisted if required. Adults were observed offering assistance if necessary.

The service was clean, and staff were observed surface cleaning during the inspection and adults were familiar with the infection control policy.

The service was well ventilated with openable windows and air purifier system which allowed air flow and air exchange.

##### Administration of Medication:

A site-specific medication policy was available in the service and had been reviewed annually.

Staff were familiar with policy and practice in relation to safe administration of medication.

No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

##### Safe Sleep:

A designated sleeping room was provided for children's use which was restfully decorated and had black out window curtains. Temperature was controlled and the room was appropriately ventilated.

Staff were aware of best sleep practices, physically monitored sleeping children, carried out and recorded sleeping checks.

##### Fire Safety:

The fire exits were unobstructed. A notice of the fire assembly point was on display to show fire assembly point to the back of the service.

## Outings:

The registered provider stated that no outings were conducted from the service.

## 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)  
Staff had up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and were available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)  
(a) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible location on the premises.  
(b) The first aid box was readily available in the 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 firefighting 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(a)

A written record was available of the fire drills carried out in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as being carried out on 24 April 2023.

(b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The fire alarms were serviced on November 30, 2022, the firefighting equipment was checked in July 2023.

(2)

The record was available and open to parents, guardians, employees, and the authorised person.

(3)

The person in charge stated that records were retained for a period of 5 years after creation.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the premises.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

A copy of up-to-date insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. was available in the service. The insurance certificate was valid until March 2024.

## Part IX - Inspection and Enforcement

### Regulation 33 – Furnishing of information to agency

*A registered provider shall furnish the Agency with such information as the Agency may reasonably require for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations and the information shall be in such form, if any, as may be specified by the Agency.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider facilitated the inspection and provided access to all information as was required for completion of the inspection.