

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MH136
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tigers Childcare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	56 Blackcastle Demesne, Slane Road, Navan, Co. Meath
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Therese Noonan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	12/08/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	46	PM	37
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	AM Cunningham & D Murray
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

The service provides full day care, part time and sessional care and education to pre-school children aged 1 to 6 years. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service is a purpose-built childcare facility, consisting of five care rooms. Four care rooms were in operation on the day of inspection, namely Discoverers room, Explorers room, Active Cubs 1 and Active Cubs 2 (Active Cubs 3 was not in use on the day of inspection). Additional facilities in the service include a kitchen, sanitary facilities (nappy changing areas), sleep room, sensory room, office and outdoor play areas. Two enclosed outdoor area are located to the rear of the building.

### Staffing

There are thirteen adults employed in the service including a manager, deputy manager, a supervisor and a cook. An agency staff member was also present on the day of inspection. Two staff members work term time and were not present on the day of inspection. Additionally, following commencement of the inspection the quality support manager and a staff member from another of the Tigers services arrived and stayed for the remainder of the inspection. The service operations manager joined remotely for feedback at the end of the inspection.

### 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.

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

The CAPA process was protracted due to a delay regarding the provision of police vetting.

#### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the deputy manager, quality support manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection. Also, the services operations manager who joined remotely at feedback.

### 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.

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(c) A clear management structure that identified specific roles of each employee was displayed in the reception area.

Sixteen staff files were reviewed.

Thirteen files consisted of staff employed in the service.

Additionally, one relief staff members file and the quality support managers file were also inspected as they were present on the day. An agency staff member file was also inspected.

(2)(a)(b) Thirty-two validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for all staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for 3 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent

## Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) Police vetting was not available for 2 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

A full audit of all existing staff files within the service was conducted to verify that up-to-date International Police Clearances are on file for all current employees.

The two colleagues identified during the inspection have since completed and submitted the required police clearance documentation.

All managers responsible for recruitment and onboarding have been reminded of their responsibility to ensure police clearance is received and filed before any employee commences work. HR has provided a refresher briefing on compliance expectations and documentation standards. For all future acquisitions, our HR team has developed an audit tool which will be used to check staff files for completeness during the acquisition onboarding process.

Our existing recruitment procedures already ensure that new hires have the correct documentation prior to starting employment, and this additional audit step will ensure the same level of compliance for all colleagues prior to starting employment.

## Supporting documentation submitted

Police vetting for one staff member was received by the early year's inspectorate on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025. On the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025, evidence was submitted to the Inspectorate that police vetting for the second staff member has been sought.

## Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted evidence to demonstrate that police vetting was in place for one staff member. The police vetting for the second staff member was not submitted and remains outstanding.

## 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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service as outlined below.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity on the day of inspection:

- The **Discoverers room** there were 2 adults with 9 children ranging in age from 1 to 2 years attending on a full day care basis.
- The **Explorers room** there were 2 adults with 12 children ranging in age from 2 to 3 years attending on a full day care basis.

- The **Active Cubs 1 room** there were 3 adults with 17 children ranging in age from 3 to 5 years with 9 children attending on a parttime basis and 8 children attending on a full day care basis.
- The **Active Cubs 2 room** there was 1 adult with 8 children ranging in age from 3 years to 4 years attending on a full day care basis.
- The **Active Cubs 3 room** not in use on the day of inspection.

One additional staff member was able to provide relief as needed.

(8) The registered provider ensured that there were always two adults on the premises when the service was in operation, as evidenced in the staff roster maintained 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,

#### Compliance Information

##### Basic needs:

The staff spoke to all children in a positive way and listened attentively to each child. They used welcoming facial expressions and gentle vocal tones, and the children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment. The children in the Discoverers and Explorers room who became upset or who awoke from sleep were nurtured and cuddled until they were ready to re-join their group. These children had their nappies changed regularly and in a timely manner. The children in the Discoverers room slept in the cot room while the children in the Explorers room slept on stackable beds in the care room at the allocated sleep time. A record was kept for the younger children of nappy changes, sleep times, meals and issues pertaining to each child as occurred during the day and this information was passed on to parents or guardians by an electronic tablet device.

The staff members were observed sitting and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required. All children enjoying meaningful, sustained play with tabletop activities, art and crafts and free playing with lots of conversation and laughter observed. Transitions were handled smoothly in all care rooms with staff giving the children ample time to complete one activity before starting the next. Children in the preschool rooms got an opportunity to be "little helper" at lunch time and tables were set for children to have a dining experience

which they appeared to embrace and enjoy. Children independence with personal hygiene was encouraged and support provided as needed.

### Supporting Relationships

Staff members communicated with parents and guardians on a daily basis, both informally during drop off and collection, and through updates in real time on mobile tablet devices regarding each individual child's snacks and meals, nappy changes, sleep times and activities. Parents could remotely access this information online throughout the day, in relation to their own child, and could message the staff members working in the care rooms during the day if required.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

### Compliance Information

(b) Adequate facilities for rest were provided in the service for the number and age range of children attending. A cot room off the Discoverers room had 10 standard cots and the older children were facilitated to sleep on stackable beds which were placed in the Explorers room. All cots were observed to be in good condition with appropriately fitting mattresses. Within all care rooms there were suitable rest areas with floor mats, cushions and soft toys provided, should a child need to rest or take a break from activities during the day.

(3)(a) There were two separate well-maintained fully enclosed outdoor play areas provided to the rear of the premises. The top outdoor area had a hard surface and some artificial grass. Equipment available included a sand table, a climbing frame, blackboards, kitchen area and ride on toys. A shed was available with additional play materials. The lower outdoor area down the steps was covered with artificial grass and had areas which included, tuff table for sensory play, tyres, a bench, climbing frame with tunnel beneath, climbing frame and slide, mud kitchens, art easel, blackboards and blocks.

### 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

- The care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving at their height which supported children to select and become involved in meaningful, sustained play experiences.
- The outdoor spaces were equipped with age-appropriate play materials and equipment to facilitate the children to engage in energetic play and physical activity. On the day of inspection, the younger children had access to artificial grass surface area with access to, for example, ride on toys, small climbing frame, mud kitchen, sand table, and a tuff tray with bark. A shed was available to store additional outdoor equipment. An additional outdoor space was available to facilitate the older children’s learning and development in the outdoor environment. This space was equipped with materials such as a climbing frame, ride on toys, sand table, tyres, balance beam, black board, mud kitchen, wooden bench and bark in a storage stand with shovels etc.

### 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 service had a 3-week menu plan. On the day of inspection breakfast was served between 08:00 and 09:00am which includes a variety of cereals. A morning snack was served at 11am which was milk or water to drink, chicken wrap, fruit mix of mango, banana and strawberries. Dinner was served at 14.00hrs which was Spaghetti Bolognese. An afternoon snack was served 16.00hrs which consisted of hummus cucumber and bread sticks.

## 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The main door to the service was secured with a buzzer system and the outdoor spaces were enclosed. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- All play materials were placed on stable based shelving units. Play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children present in the service.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- An indoor and outdoor risk assessment was conducted on a daily basis.

##### Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.
- Fridges were available in the care rooms for the refrigeration of perishable items.

### art 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Records demonstrated that the date and time of attendance and departure in respect of each pre-school child is recorded on a daily basis

### 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) The service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

### 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 written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 17/07/2025.

(b) A record was maintained of the mains powered smoke alarms and firefighting equipment on the premises. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 20/06/2025. The firefighting equipment was last serviced on the 02/10/2024.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 66 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026.