

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MN058
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tots to Teens
-------------------------	---------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Carrowhatta, Scotstown, Co. Monaghan
----------------------------	--------------------------------------

<b>Eircode:</b>	H18 NV97
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Niamh Boylan
-------------------------------------	--------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	10/07/2025
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	42	PM	34
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	No.18 the Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Skinnader and M. Flood
<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
---------------------------------	----------------

### Description of service

Tots to Teens has been operating as a community run childcare service since 2002. This service provides full day care, part-time and sessional education and care to pre-school children aged from 0 - 6 years of age. The service is open from 08:00 to 18:00 each weekday and caters for a maximum of 90 children. The service operates from rooms in a local GAA sports complex in the village of Scotstown Co. Monaghan. On the day of inspection there were 6 rooms in operation namely: Sunny Rays, Bright Sparks, Little Ladybirds and Busy Bees which provided care to preschool children and Shooting Stars and the Meeting Room which provided care to school age children. There are 2 separate sleep rooms, nappy changing and sanitary accommodations, a kitchen, staff room and an office. The service has 2 outdoor areas to the front of the building and side of the pitch. The large multipurpose hall is also available for the preschool children to access for play.

### Staffing

The service employs 33 staff. Twenty-two of the staff members work directly with the preschool children. Three staff are employed in administrative, or room support duties, four as service cooks and four adults work directly with the school age children.

### 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

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to a Garda vetting disclosure not being available for 1 member of staff in the service. The registered provider responded and gave written assurances of appropriate immediate actions undertaken in the service to control the risk to children within 24 hours of the inspection.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the deputy person in charge, the service manager, 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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and a system in place to designate a named deputy person to deputise as required.

(c) Staff were aware of the management structure and the roles and responsibilities of staff.

There were vetting files for 33 staff presented for inspection.

(2)(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for 29 members of staff.
- One staff member had 2 written references.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda vetting disclosure was available for 32 staff members. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented on the day of inspection, international police vetting was available for the 6 of the 8 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of greater than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that 22 members of staff, who worked directly with the pre-school children had a minimum Level 5 childcare qualification.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) and (b)

1. Three staff members did not have 2 written and validated references.
2. Two written references were not validated.

(c) One staff member did not have a processed Garda Vetting disclosure available for inspection. A Garda Vetting, immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of the inspection in relation to no Garda vetting being available for the staff member.

(d) Two staff members who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more did not have the required international police vetting.

(3) Appropriate vetting procedures in relation to obtaining written references, validation of written references, obtaining Garda vetting and international police vetting where required, had not been carried prior to all persons being appointed as per the findings of Regulation 9(2) above.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) and (3)

Missing references have been received and validated.

References on file that had not been validated have now been checked.

Missing Gardaí Vetting was received on the 17/07/2025.

Two staff members who resided outside the jurisdiction have now received international police vetting. Going forward management will ensure all vetting and validated references are on file prior to any staff member commencing the service.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of references, the Garda vetting and International police vetting x2 submitted.

### Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the registered provider's responses and supporting documentation. The Inspectorate is satisfied with the responses submitted and the non-compliances in relation to Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b)(d) and (3) 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 children attending the pre-school service in the Sunny Rays, Bright Sparks, Little Ladybird and Busy Bees Rooms.

(2) When the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service there were 4 preschool rooms in operation, namely; the Sunny Ray, Bright Sparks, Little Ladybird and Busy Bees Rooms.

The following adult:child ratios were observed:

- Two staff in the Little Ladybirds with 4 children aged 11 months - 1 year and 2 months.
- Three staff in the Busy Bees with 11 children aged 1 years and 8 months - 2 years and 9 months.
- Three staff in Sunny Rays with 11 children aged 3 - 5 years.
- Two staff in Bright Sparks with 16 children aged 3 - 5 years.
- In addition, there were 2 members of staff employed as cooks present; one staff member in administrative duties and break cover and a floater member of staff. The service manager also arrived at the service at approximately 13:15.

(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)(h) All children present were signed in on the electronic application in use in the service for each room.
- (i) A weekly staff rota was available for the service which documented the staff who were rostered to work including break times.
- (j) Two children required medication during the inspection. Whilst the administration of the medication was not observed by the inspector, the information was recorded and documented in accordance with the service's administration of medication policy and parents were appropriately informed.
- (k) A sample of 12 accident and incident forms were reviewed. All forms were complete and contained the required manager, staff and parental signatures to confirm that they had been informed about the incident.

### 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

There were 4 preschool rooms in operation on the day of inspection namely the Sunny Rays, Bright Sparks, Little Ladybirds and Busy Bees Rooms.

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

#### Basic needs:

- The children from all rooms had free movement in the care rooms and had periods of time outside and in the communal hall downstairs.
- All food was provided by the service and the children had access to drinks of water or milk. The children were afforded plenty of time to finish their food. The dinners were of an age-appropriate consistency and portion size in the various rooms. Staff sat with the children while they were eating. Morning snacks consisted of a selection of fruit and bread sticks and evening snack was potato wedges and fruit. A second afternoon snack was available for any child who stayed on late to 17:00 hrs. Dinner on the day was potatoes, mince vegetables and gravy. An alternative serving of pasta was available for those who did not eat the potatoes.

- All children who were toilet trained were encouraged to be independent with toileting and step ups were provided. Discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required, when the children were brought out to the sanitary accommodation outside the care room. Gentle handwashing reminders were given to the children after toileting.
- Handwashing was also encouraged after being outside and before lunchtime. Attention was given to personal care in all rooms such as nose blowing, use of bibs in the Little Ladybird Room and Busy Bees rooms.
- Nappies were checked and changed on a regular basis with pleasant interactions between staff and children observed.
- In the Little Ladybirds and Busy Bees Rooms child-led sleep needs were facilitated in the service. The staff followed the children's routines and were also alert to signs of tiredness displayed by the children. Children were observed sleeping at various intervals in the sleep rooms.

### Supporting Relationships

- The staff were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner. Soft tones, along with positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children and staff members and the children were observed to actively seek out the staff.
- Transitions between activities were smooth and minor behavioural issues were dealt with swiftly and did not escalate.
- A key worker system was in operation in the room and staff used an electronic application (an 'App') to provide information to parents on their child's care and daily routine in the service on a daily basis. Information shared included details of each child's personal care routines such as what they ate, when they slept, nappy changes and play activities. The staff also reported that communication with parents is conducted verbally at collection and drop off and there was a parents notice boards with information in the corridors. A communication book is also used in some of the care rooms for information sharing about the children's daily needs, appointments or collection information.
- Individual plans were observed on display in the Little Ladybird and Busy Bees Rooms for children who required additional supports or medical care.
- The manager reported that the service holds a parents 'open night each year when their child is ready to move to the next care room.

- It was reported that team meetings occur in the service on a regular basis and that the staff from the preschool rooms have allocated weekly protected time for curriculum planning. Staff supervision is also provided by the room leader and the service manager.

### 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,*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b)

- A suitable comfortable rest area was available in all the rooms, with soft seating and soft mats provided, should a child need to take a break from activities during the day.
- There was 1 cot room off the Little Ladybirds room with 5 cots for the children under 2 years of age who required a sleep. An additional cot room was available off the Busy Bees room with 9 cots.
- While not observed in use on the day stackable beds were available, should an older child require a rest or sleep.

### 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

##### Infection Control:

- It was observed during one round of nappy changing that the staff member did not change their apron between each nappy change. This is a cross contamination and infection control risk.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Infection Control:

The staff member in question has been verbally reminded regarding the importance of changing aprons in between nappy changes.

A full staff meeting took place in September when all staff returned after the summer and the full team reminded of this. It was documented in the minutes for staff to sign. Staff have also been reviewing our policies and procedures for the service and this will continue.

### Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have accepted the registered provider's response and the non-compliance has been addressed. This will be for review 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

(1) The registered provider ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, on the premises at all times. Seven FAR certificates were reviewed.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available to the preschool children.

### 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 maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service, the last recorded 10/6/25.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarm system dated 16/6/25 and 3/4/25 respectively.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.