

# TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MO125							
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tots 2 Teens							
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Tooreen, Ballyhaunis, Co Mayo, F35 YA33							
<b>Email Address:</b>	tots2teens.tooreen@gmail.com							
<b>Name of Registered Service Provider:</b>	Annette Cuddy							
<b>Type of Service Registered:</b>	<b>Sessional</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	1	5	0	3	2	0	2	2
<b>No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:</b>	<b>AM</b>	11	<b>PM</b>	-				
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.							
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Farrell							
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector							

## Areas which were the subject of this Inspection

<b>Governance</b>	<b>Health Welfare and Development of Child</b>	<b>Safety</b>
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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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<b>Description of Service</b>	Tots 2 Teens is a non-profit, community-based childcare service run by a voluntary committee and located in a rural area in the village of Toreen, Co Mayo. The service is registered to provide services for children aged from 2-6 years of age and offers a morning session from 08:45-12:15midday. A school age service is also provided.
<b>Premises</b>	The service is located in a section of the local community centre located at the rear of the building. The pre-school service was an extension to the building and has two large playrooms, one of which is used for preschool children and the second used to provide school aged services, an office, kitchen, storerooms, lobby space and sanitary facilities.
<b>Staffing</b>	There are three adults employed to work directly with the children in the service. One of the adults is employed under the Access and Inclusion Model. Two other adults provide relief services when required. The registered provider is not involved in the day to day running of the service.
<b>Methodology</b>	<p>Tusla’s Early Years Inspectorate (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.</p> <p>The findings on inspection are based on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information obtained through examination of documentation</li> <li>• Direct observation</li> <li>• Discussion with relevant staff</li> </ul> <p>This inspection was unannounced and focused on areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required.</p> <p>The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service.</p> <p>The Inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including: clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.</p> <p>The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.</p>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

## GOVERNANCE

### Part III - Management and Staff

#### Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

- (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—
- consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
  - consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
  - 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
  - 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:

(2)

The vetting documentation for two of the five adults in the service had been reviewed at the last inspection on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 and deemed to have met the regulatory requirements. The following was available for three adults new to the service since the last inspection:

- Two written validated references from a past employer in particular the most recent employer in respect of one adult.
- Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána for three adults.
- International police vetting was not required for the three adults who had not lived outside of the State for a period greater than six months as an adult.

- (4) Evidence of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework was available for one adult new to the service since the last inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information:

(2)

(a)

- The written validated reference available on file for one adult were from sources other than past employers in particular the most recent employer.
- There was no evidence of the validation of a written reference from a past employer on file for a second adult. A second unvalidated reference was on file from a source other than a past employer and it was unable to be confirmed if a second reference from a past employer was required as there was no employment history available for the adult.

## Part III - Management and Staff

### Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

	<p>(4)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There was no evidence of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework available for one adult new to the service since the last inspection.</li> <li>2. There was insufficient documentary evidence available to show that the qualifications obtained by a further adult who worked directly with children in the service were equivalent to at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or equivalent as required under this Regulation.</li> </ol>
<p>Corrective &amp; Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider:</p>	<p>The service advised in written responses that:</p> <p><b><u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u></b></p> <p>(2)(a)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff member is no longer working in the service.</li> <li>• The reference of one staff member is now validated and a second reference from a previous employer for this staff member has been obtained.</li> </ul> <p>(4)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Documentary evidence of the qualifications of the adult have been submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.</li> <li>2. The service is now aware that the adult’s qualification does not meet the criteria and they are not working in the service.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u></b></p> <p>(2)(a)</p> <p>The service will ensure that all references are validated and from previous employers as required.</p> <p>(4)</p> <p>The service will ensure that all staff qualifications meet the requirements that are in place.</p> <p><b><u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u></b></p> <p>The service submitted the following evidence to the Early Years Inspectorate:</p> <p>(2)(a)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the validation of a written reference from a past employer and a copy of a second written validated reference dated for the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2022.</li> </ul> <p>(4)</p> <p>Evidence of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or equivalent was submitted in respect of one adult.</p>
<p>Summary Comment:</p>	<p>The actions taken and evidence submitted by the service has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the non-compliance found on inspection.</p>

## 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.
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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)—
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

#### Compliance Information:

- (1) Three adults provided direct care to eleven children in the service on the day of the inspection. The sample of staff and child attendance records reviewed indicated an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children at all times.
- (5) The minimum ratio of adults to children for a sessional service was adhered to during the inspection with three adults caring for the eleven children aged between two years and six months and six years in attendance.
- (8)
- (c)  
Not applicable as the registered provider does not operate the service single-handedly.

## 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 children sat together at a large table supervised by the adults to eat their snacks that had been provided from home and stored in the service's refrigerator. The adults sat with the children and encouraged conversations in an unhurried manner with the children given plenty time to eat their meals. Food provided from home included sandwiches, wraps, crackers, selections of fruit and yoghurts. The children had individual identifiable drink containers and drinks were available throughout the session.
- The children in attendance were toilet trained and encouraged by the adults to use the toilet by themselves when they felt that they needed to with supports and assistance provided by the adults when needed.

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

### Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

- Care was given to the children’s appearances with aprons provided to protect their clothing during messy play and art activities. Wellington boots and appropriate outdoor clothing were available to be used when playing outdoors. The adults prompted and supervised the children when washing their hands before lunch and after toileting and outdoor play activities.
- A comfortable rest area with soft seating and mats was provided in one area of the playroom for children to rest and relax in if they wished to during the session.
- The children enjoyed dance and movement activities with the adults using coloured silks in the large playroom. Each child was given a chance to pick a particular dance style/move that the rest of the group followed. All of the children benefitted from outdoor play during the session and were seen to enjoy running and climbing promoting their gross motor development.
- The adults worked closely with the children involving themselves in the children’s activities and provided appropriate levels of praise, directing the children towards positive behaviours encouraging them to share and take turns.

#### **SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:**

- A keyworker system was evident in the service to assist with the establishment of firm relationships between the adults and children with the children divided into groups named the “oranges” and “apples”.
- The adults were observed to be gentle and kind in their approaches to the children addressing them by name, using soft tones of voice and involving themselves in the children’s play activities the child’s level. The adults were seen to respond promptly to children’s needs and requests.
- The playroom had a display of children’s family photographs creating a connection with the child’s home and the service. A photographic display of the children’s birthdays also promoted a sense of belonging in the service. The promotion of simple social rules such as taking turns, tidying up, learning to share helped the children to develop the skills involved in being part of a group.
- There was a daily routine in the service that was displayed on the playroom wall and was followed on the day. The adults alerted the children to upcoming transitions and used methods such as songs to focus the children at tidy up time.
- The adults advised the inspector that in addition to verbal communications at drop off and collection times, electronic messaging systems were used to help communicate with parents/guardians for example information including photographs of the children’s activities in the service.

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

- There was one large playroom used by the preschool children. The playroom had two distinct sections, including a section dedicated to messy play and artwork. This section had play equipment such as a water table and a sand table with utensils that children were observed to enjoy imaginative play building a “house” on the inspector’s entrance to the playroom. A selection of art and craft items

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

### Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

were available to the children in this section including art easels set up with paper, coloured paints and paint brushes ready for use if the children chose to paint.

- The main playroom area was spacious with high ceilings and was attractively laid out in clearly defined interest areas. The interest areas included a construction area with hard hats and equipment including assorted wooden blocks, transport area, well equipped home corner, hair salon with recycled items such as hairdryers, sensory corner with a sensory wall and an office area with recycled telephones. The children were seen to enjoy playing with the toy medical equipment including stethoscopes that they used to examine people during imaginative play. A wide variety of small world toys were provided including farm machinery, farm animals and a farm. A rest area with an overhead canopy and soft seating was located beside a library with age-appropriate books and available should a child wish to rest/relax during the session.
- The toys and play equipment were made from a number of mediums including wood, plastic and metal. The nature table included items such as pinecones, dry leaves, feathers and smooth stones providing different textures for the children to experience playing with. Open shelving was used to store and display the play equipment facilitating children to choose their preferred play activities. Artwork made by the children including green shamrock decorations reflecting the service's current St Patrick's Day celebration's theme were displayed in the playroom. The children had also made St Patrick's Day greeting cards for their families. Tables waist high to the children were provided with chairs appropriate for use by the children in attendance on the day.
- An enclosed outdoor play area was directly accessible from the playroom and located to the rear and side of the service. Numerous ground coverings were in place including tarmac, cement and recently laid blue impact absorbent ground cover positioned underneath the service's outdoor climbing systems and slides. There was a grass hillock to one side of the outdoor space that had been developed with inclined climbing areas and a slide. The top area of the grassy hillock had been barricaded off and was inaccessible to the children due to an uneven surface that was awaiting repair works. Wooden planting boxes were used to plant seasonal flowers and also used for the children to play digging games with spades and buckets during the winter months.
- A wooden playhouse was positioned to one side of the area and held play equipment such as toy kitchen items and a table with chairs that the adults advised the inspector was used when the weather was favourable. Numerous attractive features had been created at the wooden fencing to the sides of the outdoor area including music walls, water wall and activity centres. A wooden bench provided seating in the space. Outdoor toys including ride on toys and hula hoops were stored in a wooden shed.

## 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:

- On the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service the main entrance door to the lobby area was found to be secured and remained secured during the inspection. A bell system was in place to facilitate admittance to the service and prevent unauthorised access. A keycode securing mechanism positioned at a high level was in place on the internal door from the lobby to the playroom to prevent children from leaving the playroom unnoticed. Securing mechanisms were in place on the other internal doors leading to storerooms and the adult sanitary accommodation. The gates to the enclosed outdoor area were secured during the inspection.
- Accurate records of the children's and adult's attendance in the service were kept by the adults and the inspector was requested by the designated person in charge to provide details of attendance in the service in a visitor record book.
- Storage in a secured cupboard was provided in the messy play section of the playroom for cleaning products with additional supplies stored in a room off the kitchen and inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment in the playroom were clean, in good condition and suitable for the age and developmental stages of the children using them.
- The children were supervised by the adults at all times when playing in the outdoor area.

#### INFECTION CONTROL:

- The service was observed to be clean during the inspection with high contact areas frequently cleaned/disinfected by the adults. Cleaning schedules that had been enhanced due to COVID-19 pandemic were in place with records kept by the adults of the cleaning and disinfecting procedures undertaken in the service.
- The children's snacks were stored in a refrigerator in the entrance hall under 5°C.
- Regular hand washing by the children and adults was observed. Children washed their hands before eating, after toileting and outdoor play. Age-appropriate signs with pictorial prompts signage were in place in the sanitary units to prompt the children to wash their hands correctly. Adequate warm water, liquid hand-soap and paper towels were provided in the sanitary units. Hand sanitiser was provided in hand sanitiser dispensers.
- Foot pedal operated bins were provided throughout the service for the disposal of waste including paper towels and were observed to be used correctly by the children when disposing of waste. Tissues were provided for the children to clean their noses with as needed.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

- No medication was administered to a child on the day of the inspection. The adults demonstrated awareness during conversation with the inspector of safe practices regarding the administration and storage of medication should it be required.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

	<p><b>FIRE SAFETY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The emergency exits in the service were found to be free from obstruction on the day.</li> </ul>
Non-Compliance Information:	<p><b>GENERAL SAFETY:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A rodent bait box that was potentially accessible to the pre-school children was observed in the outdoor area.</li> <li>Metal hooks had been used to create a music wall feature on the side of a wooden playhouse at varying heights with the metal hooks positioned at a low level posing potential safety risks to the children.</li> </ol>
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider:	<p>The service advised in a written response:</p> <p><b><u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u></b></p> <p><b>GENERAL SAFETY:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pest control company used by the service have moved the bait station to another location outside the perimeter fence.</li> <li>The hooks have been removed from the music wall.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u></b></p> <p><b>GENERAL SAFETY:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children will not have access to bait stations.</li> <li>We will ensure only small safe hooks are used to hang toys.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u></b></p> <p><b>GENERAL SAFETY:</b></p> <p>The service submitted the following photographic evidence to the Early Years Inspectorate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of the removal of the bait box from the area.</li> <li>Evidence of the removal of the metal hooks from the side of the wooden playhouse.</li> </ol>
Summary Comment:	<p>The actions taken together with the evidence submitted by the service has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the non-compliances found under the regulation on inspection.</p>

## Additional Significant Risk Identified

### Regulation 8- Notification of change in circumstances

- (1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C (2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.
- (3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C (2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Non-Compliance Information: (1) & (3)

## Additional Significant Risk Identified

### Regulation 8- Notification of change in circumstances

	The inspector was advised by the adults that the person in charge had changed in September 2021 without an application for approval for the change in circumstances being made to the Early Years Inspectorate.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider:	The service advised in a written response: <b><u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u></b> The person in charge is now changed and an email of confirmation of the change was received by the service on the 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2022.  <b><u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u></b> Any changes in circumstances will be applied for on time in future.
Summary Comment:	The actions taken by the service have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and the non-compliance has been addressed. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

## Additional Significant Risk Identified

### 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:

(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor.

Non-Compliance Information:	(a) There were no employment histories available for three adults new to the service.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider:	The service advised in a written response: <b><u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u></b> Two curriculum vitae have been submitted. The third adult no longer in service. <b><u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u></b> The service will ensure that all employment history is on file for all staff. <b><u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u></b> Copies of two curriculum vitae were submitted by the service to the Early Years Inspectorate.
Summary Comment:	The Early Years Inspectorate has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted by the service and deemed it to have addressed the non-compliance found on inspection.