

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015RN054				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Toddle In Community Childcare Centre				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Loughglynn, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon				
<b>Eircode:</b>	F45 PC82				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Roslyn Mcdonnell				
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	09/05/2023				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>17</td> <td>PM</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </table>	AM	17	PM	n/a
AM	17	PM	n/a		
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	<p>Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon</p>				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. Kennedy				
<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).

## Conditions if applicable

Not Applicable

## Description of service

Toddle In preschool is a community based early years' service managed by a local voluntary committee. The service is registered to provide a sessional service for children aged two years six months to six years. The hours of operation are from 8.45hrs to 12.15hrs Monday to Friday and operates for 38 weeks of the year. The service is operated from a room within the community centre located in a rural village of Loughlynn, Co. Roscommon. There is an outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

## Staffing

A total of three adults were employed in the service at the time of inspection and all three staff worked directly with the children. The registered provider does not work in the service and has employed a designated manager to manage the service. The three adults hold a relevant major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

## 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 inspections 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.

## 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
- (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)

There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.

Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.

(2)(a) & (b)

Since the last inspection on the 21st of May 2021, the person in charge advised that no new staff had commenced working in the service.

Six of the six written validated references on file in respect of the three staff were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the three staff.

(d)

Documentary evidence indicated that none of the three staff, had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years, and therefore did not require police vetting.

(4)

The three staff working directly with the children had evidence of *Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)* Level 5 to Level 6 in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

Documentary evidence indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

At all times during the period of the inspection, the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(2) The person in charge ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained.

On the morning of the inspection, there were 17 children present. There were three staff, directly caring for and supervising these children. Additionally, the person in charge assisted with the administration parts of the inspection.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.*

*(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h) and (i)

A sample of ten children's records were randomly reviewed by the Early Years Inspector.

The entries reviewed were factual, consistent, and accurate.

The ten random children's records contained the following:

- The name and date of birth of the child.
- The date on which the child first attended the service.
- The date on which the child stopped attending the service (where relevant).
- The name and address of the child's parent or guardian, and a telephone number where that parent or guardian (or a relative or friend of the parent or child) can be contacted during the hours of operation.

- Written authorisation / permissions for collecting the child.
- Details are recorded of any illness, allergy, or additional need(s) the child had, together with all the information relevant to the provision of specific care or attention.
- The name and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner.
- A record of any immunisations the child has had.
- Written parental or guardian consent was included to allow the child to have appropriate medical treatment if there was / is an emergency.

(4)&(5)

The person in charge advised and documentary evidence from file review indicated, that all relevant children’s records were kept for 2 years from the date a child stops attending 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

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 lobby notice board and available for parents, guardians, employees, unpaid workers, contractors, and authorised persons.

### 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

- The children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance. Play activities and experiences were developmentally appropriate and suitably challenging. The children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment. The children were observed at free play, making puzzles, drawing/ painting, playing house / kitchen, using transport vehicles on tracks, and at dress up / pretend play. The children were observed stacking, constructing, shape sorting, connecting, and playing with animals. The children chatted to the inspector about their most fun activities in preschool.
- In the outdoor area the children played with sand and water, on rockers, slides, and were observed building blocks, drawing, and playing group games. They were also observed playing in the mud kitchen, and on the climbing frame.
- The staff read stories and children questioned the characters and gave their views. The children sang songs and chatted about colours, days of the week and the weather. The staff used visual aids and probed with questions such as 'who is this?', 'how many are there?'. The staff acknowledged a child's achievements, 'well done', 'that's great' and the children were observed chatting, laughing and having fun.
- The staff supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships by having a key person system for each child, showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust, listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures, and body language, using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact, providing opportunities for individual and small group activities and play, leading to increased social awareness, co-operation, collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of belonging,

providing opportunities for children to learn from each other and with each other, to work together, join in and contribute to projects and tasks,

working with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life, and any other concerns.

- On speaking with the staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the pre-school including the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times and via text messages and by phone calls.
- The staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them, and talking to the children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, and commentating, extending a child's activities and initiating games and activities. The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences. The inspector noted the staff acknowledged a child's achievements 'that is great' 'well done' and used questions such as 'what should we do next?', 'is there any other way to do this?', to allow children to critically think and explore.
- On the day of the inspection the staff showed kindness. They were thoughtful, supportive, and reassuring whilst caring for the children. They cared for children by being supportive while the children engaged in free play, role play, and creative play. A climate was fostered where the children knew their boundaries. The staff supported children to enter social groups, and to learn to help and positively engage with other children. They encouraged and praised children for specific, positive, and appropriate behaviours. Children were given positive alternatives, rather than just being told 'no'. Children were supported in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict. The children could identify, name, and explore their feelings both positive and negative.

### 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-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The design, organisation and resourcing of the pre-school environment supported each child's wellbeing, learning and development, within the ethos and philosophy of the service. The environment provided a range of challenging, diverse, creative, and enriching experiences for all children in line with their stage of development. The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried. The play materials and environment were changeable, flexible, and responsive to the emerging changing needs, preferences, and interests of the children. The staff encouraged children to interact and to engage with a range of materials, activities, and equipment in the environment, based on the child's choices, age and stage of development.

The indoor playroom was designed and arranged to

- maintain a space that was clean, organised, and free of clutter,
- accommodate children individually, and in small groups,
- divide the space into areas that were supplied with materials organised in a way to support children's play and learning,
- give all children access to the same facilities, activities and play opportunities, to promote their welfare and development.
- The equipment was stored on low-level shelving and was readily accessible by the pre-school children.
- The play equipment and materials were age and stage appropriate, they were designed to offer a child manipulative activity, to encourage hand eye co-ordination, to develop fine motor skills and logical thinking.
- There were a variety of items and interests including dress up clothing, baby dolls with nappies, household/ kitchen and a shop area with utensils, irons, baskets, shopping trolley, shop register, a

washing machine, tables and chairs. There were links, connectors, puzzles, games, insets, paints, crayons, mark making materials, stampers, pencils, stencils, stick on eyes, feathers, and pom poms. There were tracks, transport vehicles and animals. There was a vanity dresser, dolls heads for hairdressing and hair dressing materials. There was a library book area with a large selection of age-appropriate books.

- Displayed on the walls were visual aids, educational materials, photographs, posters and children's artwork of the children's handprints, themes including our family tree, days of the week, healthy eating, a kindness tree, helper of the week, numbers, and a birthday chart. There were also photographs of children engaged in activities and party times.

(1)(b)

Rest / quiet area was provided in the playroom in the form of bean bags, to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he or she chose to.

(3)(a)

### **Outdoor area**

- The outdoor area was surrounded by fencing and gates. The area was covered with artificial grass.
- The outdoor play equipment and materials were age and stage appropriate.
- There was a wall mounted basketball hoop. There were climbing frames, with rockers, push cars, a mud kitchen with utensils. There was a table with boxes of toys, blocks, transport toys and a lidded sand unit with shovels, sieves and containers. There was a water tray with play accessories and a playhouse.

### 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

- There was a healthy eating policy. The person in charge advised that healthy eating was promoted within the service by visual aids, and adherence to best practice guidelines.
- At 10.30hrs, the children had their morning snack which consisted of sandwiches, wraps, rolls, crackers with various fillings, a selection of fruits to include strawberries, apples, mandarins, and grapes. and water or juice to drink.
- Clean and safe drinking water was at a low-level and accessible to children in the playroom.

### 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 external door was appropriately secured to prevent a child gaining unsupervised access and unauthorised persons gaining access to the premises.
- The external outdoor play area was secured by fencing and a gate so that unauthorised persons could not access or enter the area or children could not exit unsupervised.
- The children had no access to the kitchenette with the provision of a wooden gate as a system of security.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- There were restrictors in place on the low-level windows as a safety security precaution.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were wall mounted to prevent any trip or strangulation hazard.
- The heating system was thermostatically controlled, to ensure the temperature was maintained between 18°C to 22°C.

- Passageways and exit routes and doors were free from obstruction. Emergency lit signage pointed to exit routes.

### Infection Control:

- Staff prompted and supervised the children to wash their hands before eating and following toileting, messy play, and outdoor play.
- Adequate liquid soap and paper towels were available at the wash hand basins in the sanitary areas
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- A cleaning and disinfection schedule was available in the service. There were suitable cleaning products available in the service.
- The inspector noted high contact areas were cleaned regularly, as per best practice guidance. The outdoor play equipment was cleaned prior to/ after a child's use, with documented records maintained.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playroom.
- There were foot pedaled lidded bins in the sanitary areas and playroom.

### Administration of Medication:

- There were no medications administered to a child on the day of the inspection. The staff demonstrated knowledge of safe practices with regards to the safe storage and administration of medication should it be required.

### Fire Safety:

- Records on file demonstrated that fire drills were carried out twice a month which helped to ensure that adults and children were familiar with the procedures in the event of an actual fire.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. An electric cable from the refrigerator was trailing and within child reach which could pose potential risk of injury.
2. A visibility strip was not provided on the low-level glass panel on the door to the outdoor area which could pose risk of injury to a child.

#### Infection Control:

3. The mechanical ceiling vents in the children's sanitary accommodation had evidence of dust and debris which could prevent them from operating effectively.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2023, the person in charge advised of the following

#### General Safety:

1. The electric cable from the refrigerator has been secured with a cable cover.
2. Stickers have been put on the low-level glass panel on the door to the outdoor area.

#### Infection Control:

3. We have cleaned the vents but we are unable to remove the cover to get into the propeller. We are looking for thin blind cleaners to thoroughly clean the vents.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence was submitted of the secured electric cable from the refrigerator.
2. Photographic evidence was submitted of the stickers placed on the low level glass panel on the door to the outdoor area.

#### Infection Control:

3. Photographic evidence was submitted of the cleaned ceiling vents in the children's sanitary accommodation

## Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed. These will be reviewed on 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 service provided evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Three staff members had current training in first aid for children.

(2)(a)

There was a first aid box with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.

(b)

The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school

### 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 monthly fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was dated 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2023.

(b)

Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service dated 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2022. The smoke and fire detection alarm system for the premises had the last annual service dated 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2023.

(4)

A notice was displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire on the wall in the pre-school room.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service's insurance with an expiry date 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 was for 23 children and included the following -

- public liability insurance,
- insurance against fire and theft,
- buildings insurance,
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The premises appeared to be of a sound and stable structure on the day of inspection Windows and doors were in a good state of repair and appeared to be both watertight and weather tight when closed.
- (b) The site boundaries and outdoor play area was safely secured with metal fencing and a gate to guard against unauthorised access when children were present. The service was connected to both the public drainage and water supply.
- (c) There were openable windows in the room in the service and ceiling mounted fluorescent light fittings which were covered with shatter proof diffusers ensured a good mix of natural and artificial lighting and ventilation in the premises. Gas heating is provided with the most recent service record dated 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2023.

(d) The brightly coloured walls in the room in the service and heavy-duty floor lino throughout the premises was clean and well maintained on the day of inspection.

(e) Three separate toilets and three wash hand basins were provided within the sanitary accommodation for the children's use and a separate toilet and wash hand basin was provided for staff use.

Wash hand basins were serviced with thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and foot pedal operated bins.

Openable windows provided ventilation in both the children's and staff toilet areas.