

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY158
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Name of Service:	Tumbletots Playschool
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Address of Service:	25 Ashlawn, Clerihan, Clonmel, Co Tipperary
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Name of Registered Provider:	George Hahessy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	12/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher
Title:	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	N/A
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Description of service

Tumbletots Playschool is located in the village of Clerihan in south Tipperary. This sessional service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years of age and is open from 9:00 to 12:00, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks per year. The premises is a single storey purpose-built extension onto the registered provider's residence. The service consists of an early years room, sanitary accommodation and an outdoor play area to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There were three staff attached to the service and a total of three staff were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider is not service based.

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 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

A referral was made to the Fire officer to assess fire safety in the service due to the locking mechanism on the fire exit doors.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, registered provider, person in charge and staff 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) The service had a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named deputy in the service that could deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge and the deputy were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy were on duty at all times during the hours of operation.

(c) There was clear evidence on inspection of the management structure in place and the specific roles of each staff member. This was on display in the entrance area.

(2) The recruitment records in relation to four adults, three of whom were employed in the service and working directly with the children and the registered provider were the subject of inspection.

(a) Of the eight required references, five were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.

(b) Of the eight required references, three were from another source other than a previous employer with a record of validation on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained and were on file for each of the four adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was required and available for two of the four adults as they lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) Records demonstrate that three of the adults had achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 to level 7 as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) At the time of inspection, there were the adequate number of adults required, responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at all times.
- (3) The service exceeded the minimum ratio required as per regulation in the care room. The 15 children attending the service were supervised directly by 3 adults.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) The service has 19 early years children registered and a sample of 10 records were inspected. They were found to contain the required information as listed (a) through to (i).

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

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of the relevant documents.

Basic needs:

- Snack provided by the parents/guardians was observed to be healthy and nutritious. Children were observed eating filled sandwiches, rice cakes, crackers, yogurt and a variety of fruits. Extra fruit was provided by the service to children as fruity Friday was held to discuss fruits.
- The staff were observed helping and assisting the children where necessary at snack time.
- Individual water bottles were freely available to the children throughout the day, and they were stored on a child height shelf.
- The location of the sanitary facilities allowed children independent access, as needed. Staff were observed to manage toileting in a sensitive manner, for example, through offering reassurance to the children.
- The weather on the day was cold, damp and wet and the children were noted to dressed appropriately with warm coats and hats.
- A cosy area was incorporated into the playroom to accommodate children's need for rest and relaxation.

Supporting relationships:

- The atmosphere was observed to be relaxed in the care room at all times during the inspection and teamwork was evident between the staff and the children.
- Family photos and birthday calendars were displayed on the wall which promoted a sense of belonging for the children.
- Staff were observed encouraging positive behaviour. This was observed when staff encouraged children to be nice to siblings when children were doing circle time.
- During snack time, the staff remained with the children and assisted as required. The children were afforded sufficient time to enjoy the food in a relaxed atmosphere and adults conversed with children at the tables.
- The inspector observed positive and playful interactions between the staff and children. For example, the staff sat on the floor or at the table at the children's level and were building blocks, completing artwork and completing puzzles.
- The registered provider stated that they communicated with the parents through the use of a parent handbook, a learning journal, email and text messages or verbally at drop off or collection. Information was provided to parents to update them on the children's day in the service.
- The staff were observed to sit with the children and interact with them through discussing feelings, reading books and singing which supported positive relationships with the children and language development.
- All children were observed to be actively encouraged by staff to participate in activities. Resources were available which accommodated each child's individual needs such as physical equipment which was in use to ensure an inclusive environment where all children could sit comfortably and participate in tabletop activities.
- The available space within the main care room supported children to freely partake in their chosen activities. Outdoor pursuits were also facilitated and the children appeared to really enjoy the opportunities to engage in more active movement, such as cycling and playing ball.

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 entrance door was secured appropriately. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care rooms were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition.
- The outdoor area was a safe and secure space for the children with concrete walls, hedging and timber fencing. This prevented children gaining unsupervised access to an unsafe area.
- The equipment used in the outdoor area was in good condition and was able to be stored under a roofed area or in a shed when not in use.
- The first aid box was stored out of reach of the children.
- There were no cables or trailing flexes accessible to the children on the day of inspection.
- The blind cords were in restrictor devices.

Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before meals and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste in the sanitary area and the care room.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground on hooks and shelves.
- A refrigerator was available in the care room for the storage of perishable foods.
- Staff were observed sanitising the tables before and after the serving of food.

Administration of medication:

- The inspector did not observe the administration of medication on the day of inspection. The service facilitated the administration of prescribed medication if required and parental consent was gained for this. A medication administration page was kept in the service for use if needed.

Fire safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- Fire extinguishers were secured to the walls.

- The locking mechanism on the fire exit doors to the outdoor play area and front door were key locked with the key available beside the door. An alternative open door exiting the room into the private home of the registered provider was unlocked on a daily basis. A referral was made to the fire officer to assess fire safety in the service.

Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection. The person in charge informed the inspector that one yearly outing occurred and a risk assessment was completed prior to this occurring. On discussing the risk assessment with the person in charge, the inspector was informed of strategies in place to mitigate identified risks to the children.

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)
Up to date records of First Aid Response (FAR) certification were in place for one of the adults working in the service.
- (2)
(a) There was one sufficiently stocked first aid box available in the service, which was safely stored out of reach of children.
(b) The first aid supplies were always accessible, should they be required.

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) Fire drill records were reviewed. Evidence was available to show fire drills were practiced and recorded on a monthly basis. Records showed that the last fire drill was completed 06 November 2025.
 - (4) The services fire evacuation procedure was clearly displayed at the fire exit door on a notice board.

Non-Compliance Information

1 (b) The certification of servicing for the firefighting equipment indicated this was carried out on the 27 June 2025 but no records of maintenance carried out on the smoke alarm systems was available to be reviewed. On discussion with the registered provider, the inspector was informed that this maintenance had never been carried out. Yearly maintenance of smoke alarms is required. This poses a risk of safety to the children and adults in the service in the event of fire.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The smoke alarm maintenance was completed on the 15 December 2025. This will be completed on an annual basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Certificate of maintenance of the smoke alarm system as received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 26.