

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD088			
Name of Service:	Tigh Súgradh			
Address of Service:	Clonea Lower, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford			
Eircode:	X35 A526			
Name of Registered Provider:	Fiona Power Mulcahy			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date(s) of Inspection:	03/11/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	30	PM	25
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Community Care Building, Cork Rd., Waterford.			
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Bradshaw			
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	Not applicable			

Description of service

Tigh Súgradh is a registered full-day care service located in a rural area on the outskirts of Dungarvan, Co Waterford. It is a purpose-built house with three care rooms, a kitchen, a sleep room, and sanitary areas. The fenced-in outdoor area is at the rear of the building.

The service is registered to care for up to 36 full-day care children aged from 1 to 6 years and to operate from 08:00 to 17:30. However, it currently only offers care from 08:00 to 14:00.

The service employs five staff members, including the registered provider. On the day of the inspection, the five staff members were working directly with the pre-school 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.

Regulation 9 – Management and Recruitment;

Regulation 11 – Staffing Levels;

Regulation 15 – Record of Preschool Child;

Regulation 16 – Record in Relation to Pre-School Service;

Regulation 17 – Information for Parents;

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play;

Regulation 25 – First Aid;

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures;

Regulation 28- Insurance.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1) – Record of Preschool Child and 16(1)(h)(i)(k) Records of a preschool child.

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 registered provider, 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)(b)(c)

The service had a designated person in charge and a person to deputise if required. There was a clear management structure with the line management included in the parental handbook.

(2)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, the inspector reviewed five staff files, including the registered provider's file.

(a)(b) Validated references were available for review.

(c) Garda vetting was available for the five staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d) On a review of documents available, police vetting was not required for the staff members.

(4)

On review of the staff files, evidence was available to demonstrate that all staff working with preschool children had achieved 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.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(2)

During the inspection, there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children. There were 5 staff caring for 30 preschool children and 5 staff caring for 25 children in the afternoon. The registered provider was rostered to work directly with the children.

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:

- (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

A sample of 10 children's enrolment forms completed by the parents was reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (d) – (i) of this regulation.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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) Information required under parts (a) to (i) was available on the day of the inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The registered provider stated that the parents are emailed a copy of the parental handbook prior to their child's commencement in the service. The information required as part of this regulation was included in the handbook and/or displayed in the service.

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, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

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

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

Compliance Information

1)(a)

There were three care rooms for the children: the Toddler room, Preschool 1 and Preschool 2. Each room was equipped with a wide variety of play materials, which were of good quality and suitable for the age and stage of development of the children. The children were observed accessing the toys and materials from the open shelving, and the layout of the room allowed the children sufficient space to move around and play.

Toys and materials included kitchen/home corners and play shop with accessories, baskets of bricks, farm toys and dolls. The displays on the walls reflected the children's lives with family photos, birthday walls, and individually named hooks for children to hang their coats and bags on.

The service's achievements were displayed in the rooms with a picture story of the children's involvement in the development of a published story book, the four green flag awards and the children's interest in the construction of an extension.

(b)

Each of the rooms had cosy/rest areas with sofas, soft mats, and these spaces were away from the main play areas, where children could rest or take a break from play. There was a designated sleep room with four cots, if younger children required a sleep during the day.

(3)

The service had a designated outdoor play area for the children at the rear of the premises. This area was fully enclosed. The outdoor area had a large timber play bus, a play shop, and a planting area. Children's wellies were stored in the care room. The children had access to a climbing frame, see-saws and wheeled toys. There was a chicken run at the side of the premises, and the registered provider described how the children used the vegetables grown in the service and the eggs collected from the hens as part of their curriculum, cooking and baking.

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 has ensured that a person trained in first aid was available to the children at all times. Three staff members were trained to the first aid responder standard.

(2)

A suitably equipped first aid box was available to the staff and was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position near the sanitary area.

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 firefighting 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 drills were completed monthly, and a written record of these was available on the day. The last fire drill was carried out on the 6th of October 2025.
 - (b) A maintenance record was available to demonstrate the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire alarms. The maintenance was carried out on the firefighting equipment on the 5th of March 2025 and on the smoke alarms on the 10th of April 2025.
- (4)
- A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in each of the care rooms and at the exits.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was insured for 36 full-day care children. The expiry date is 27 March 2026.