

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW124
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Name of Service:	Tinahely Community Playgroup Ltd
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Address of Service:	School Road, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	Y14 DE43
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Name of Registered Provider:	Siofra Gallagher
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	13/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	32	PM	32
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke and S. Early O'Brien
Title:	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).

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Description of service

Tinahely Community playgroup is a community owned childcare service which first opened in 2010. It is a non-profit service that is registered to provide care and education for children aged between one and six years of age. The service is located adjacent to the local National School in the townland of Tinahely Co. Wicklow. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 07:30 hrs and 18:30 hrs (including a sessional Early Childhood and Education Scheme (ECCE) service for 38 weeks of the year). A school age service is also provided. The premises is a purpose built, two storey building with five pre-school rooms, all with their own sanitary accommodation. There is an office, staff room, laundry room, staff sanitary area, storage room and kitchen. There is a large outdoor area to the rear of the premises, which the children have access to.

Staffing

The pre-school is a community-based service and is under the control of a board of management. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. There are currently 16 adults employed in the service. This includes a person in charge, deputy manager, administration staff and full-time chef. Fourteen adults were present on the day of inspection. Eleven adults were working directly with the child on the day of inspection.

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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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

Following a discussion with the person in charge and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that there were three new adults employed in work in the service since the last inspection on 13 May 2025. Two were early years educators and one was the full-time chef. These files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The person in charge was present and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

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(b)

The person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of 16 adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for 16 adults.

(d)

International police vetting was available for two adult working in the service who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Fourteen staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed 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)

Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

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(2)

The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were 11 adults employed to work directly with 32 children on the day of inspection.

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;*
- (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.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

There was documentation of name, position, qualification and experience for all adults working in the pre-school.

(h)

There was a record of the daily attendance of each child attending the pre-school available in each care room.

(i)

There was a staff roster available of the daily attendance of each member of staff.

(j)

There were two correctly completed records of medication administered to children attending the service.

(3)

The person in charge ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

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Non-Compliance Information

(1)(k)

Following a review of 18 Accident and Incident records available in the service. Three records did not have the required parental signatures and 12 did not have the date of when parental signatures were obtained.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(k)

We have got all unsigned accident/incident reports signed by the parents and backdated any accident/incident reports with no dates on them. We will address this issue in our next staff meeting which will take place next week and remind staff that it is important that accident/incident reports are signed and dated by parents.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(k)

Photographic evidence of retro signed and dated accident/incident forms, in addition to minutes from the most recent staff meeting demonstrating the topic of completing accident/incident forms correctly was discussed with all staff were submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The above actions have addressed the non-compliances found on the day of inspection in relation to the regulation 16 (1)(k) and will be reviewed again on next inspection.

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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 main door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspectors to the service.
- All toys examined were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in the service.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route from each care room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- Cleaning schedules for all pre-school rooms and for the remainder of the premises were available and maintained.
- Each pre-school room had access to a sanitary area, with toilets, changing tables, running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children's soothers were stored in individual containers and named accordingly, cleaning and storing of soothers was included in the daily cleaning policy of the service.
- A foot pedal bin was available in all sanitary areas for the safe disposal of used paper towels. Foot pedal bins were also available in all pre-school rooms and the nappy changing areas.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1)

The person in charge ensured that all children attending the service were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The person in charge ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people has access to the pre-school service.

(b)

The person in charge had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the pre-school service

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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The person in charge ensured that all children were adequately supervised throughout their day and this was reflected by the adult/child ratios within the service.