

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

eTUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW209
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Name of Service:	Jolly Tots Creche
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Address of Service:	South Bray, 107 Oldcourt Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A98 N927
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Name of Registered Provider:	Denise Johnston
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	NA
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Early O'Brien
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	NA
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Description of service

This community based, non-profit part-time service is located in a two-storey semi-detached house with one care room. located in a housing estate in Bray, Co. Wicklow. The building also serves as a community resource centre. The early years' service is registered to provide care and education to children from 0-6 years of age. Children who currently attend the service are aged between two and four years of age. The service does not operate the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. The opening hours are from 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Thursday and 09:00 to 13:00 on Friday each week. This includes a part-time service in the morning and a sessional service in the afternoon.

Staffing

There is a Board of Management in charge of the service. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. There are currently five staff members employed in the service to work directly with the children including the person in charge and deputy person in charge. Three staff were present on the day of inspection, including the deputy person in charge who was managing the service on the day.

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, records and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4) - Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1)(2)(8) - Staffing levels

Regulation 16 (1)(h)(i)(j)(K) - Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 (1)(a)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 – First Aid

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures

Regulation 28 – Insurance

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16(1) - Record in relation to pre-school service.

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) The service manager is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.

(b) The deputy manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived at 10:00 on the morning of the inspection and was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)
On the day of inspection, the deputy person in charge stated that there were no new employees since the last inspection and the staff files reflected this. Regulation 9(2)(c) was reviewed in respect of all staff. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda vetting disclosure was available for all five adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as there was no evidence to suggest that any employee had lived outside of the State for a period of more than six months as an adult.

(4)

Records were available demonstrating that all adults employed in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times, 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)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for part-time day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were ten children being supervised by three adults on the morning of inspection.

(8)(a)

There was a minimum of two adults on the premises at all times during the 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:

- (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)
- (h) Children’s attendance was recorded on a hard copy register. These records included details of each child’s arrival and departure times from the service.
 - (i) A record of the staff roster was available and was reflective of the staff present on the day.
 - (j) Twelve medication records were reviewed and found to be completed appropriately with signatures from both staff and parents.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(k)
- Twelve accident and incident records were reviewed. Three of these records were not signed by parents at the time the accident/incident was recorded which is a risk to the health and safety of the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Parents/guardians of the three children that the accident and incident records related, to have now signed them. In the future, it has been agreed following a team meeting that the staff rostered to work on the day of the accident and incident will ensure that these forms are signed on the day by the parent/guardian.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider has submitted photographic evidence of three signed accident and incident forms. A list of attendees at a team meeting where this issue was discussed has also been included.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance. It will be reviewed on next inspection.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Basic Needs

Healthy eating was promoted in the service and staff reported that all meals are provided by the service for the children attending on a part-time basis.

On the day of inspection, the children were observed to be eating savoury mince and mashed potato for dinner, and yogurt and apples for snack. Staff advised that alternatives were available, and food preferences catered for. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their dinner. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported those who needed assistance. Children appeared happy and content within each of the care rooms.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner.

Children's nappies were changed regularly, and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care.

Supporting Relationships

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed supporting

children in their play. Staff were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day detailing information on food and nappy changes recorded in a folder which is immediately available to parents.

Physical and Material Environment

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was located to the rear of the premises. This is divided into two sections. The first section has a surface of paving slabs and the second a grass surface. On the day of inspection, the second play space was closed to the children as there was maintenance work being carried out on equipment. The outdoor space is directly accessible from the care room. Staff informed the inspectors that children spend at least two hours outdoors but this is also dependent on the weather. The play area has a canopy to provide shelter and was adequately resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment.

Programme of Activities

In the outdoor play area, children were observed to make choices on their own play materials within that environment.

Positive language was observed to be used across the staff team and with the children. Language development was supported in discussions observed both in play and at snack time where the adults encouraged the children to use words to describe their thoughts and feelings.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Physical and Material Environment

On the day of inspection, while it is acknowledged that the children spent lots of time in the outdoor play area, the care room was not observed to be an inviting or engaging play space for the children attending the service. Materials were not displayed in a child centred manner and were not immediately available to children. There were a limited number of age-appropriate toys available to the children. The pre-school room did not have clear areas of interest and equipment was not laid out to promote the emergent interests of the children. There was no clearly defined space for children to rest and relax. There were no books available to the children and the environment did not reflect the group of children who attend the service such as displaying a family wall, birthday wall or their artwork.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

New artwork/Family wall/Pecs were added to the crèche walls both inside and out. Age appropriate books and books of interest were added to a low accessible shelf. Rest spaces were re-established. The manager spoke with the team around the need for age/stage appropriate materials and enforced the daily schedule to include all materials being accessible until the end of the daily session even if the children play outside.

In the future, staff will ensure that both indoor and outdoor environments are inviting and fully equipped with age/stage appropriate materials that are changed weekly. There will be a continuous review of the child development policy at monthly team meetings and staff will discuss what is working well and what needs to be adjusted.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs have been submitted of the care room in line with corrective actions outlined by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance. These will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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

The inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

- The entrance door leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.

- The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor play environments were safe and free from hazards.
- Medication was stored safely and out of the reach of children.
- Storage facilities for hazardous cleaning materials were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate handwashing for staff and children in the sanitary area adjoining the care room and in the nappy changing area located directly outside of the care room.
- Good hand washing practices were observed after toileting and before eating when returning indoors from play.
- Foot pedal bins were available throughout the service for the safe disposal of used hand towels and other waste products.
- Children's coats and bags were stored on individual hangers outside of the care room.
- Tables were observed by the inspector to be cleaned before and after snack time.

Administration of Medication:

- There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of anti-febrile medication and prescribed medication and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required.
- Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication if required during discussions with the inspector.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, all emergency exits were observed to be clearly identifiable and were not obstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

On inspection of the service, the following were found to be a risk to the safety of the children:

Infection Control:

1. While it is acknowledged that a paper towel dispenser was available next to the sink in the sanitary area adjacent to the care room, the paper towels for hand-drying were not appropriately stored here. The towels were stacked together on top of the dispenser and staff and children were observed handling the stack of towels prior to taking one. At the sink in the care room where children were also observed to

wash hands, paper towels were stacked on the countertop with children and staff observed handling these prior to taking one. These actions pose a risk of cross contamination and the spread of infection.

2. Nappy changing practices were at odds to the services policy and procedures on nappy changing.
 - One staff member was observed to wear the same gloves while removing a soiled nappy, replacing a clean nappy and re-dressing the child which poses a risk of cross contamination.
 - Staff members did not sanitise the nappy changing unit after use and this poses a risk of the spread of infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. All paper towels/Toilet Rolls are now appropriately stored within the dispensers in the children's toilet next to the care room. A new paper towel dispenser was fitted to the wall beside the small sink in the crèche room to limit cross contamination and control infection.
2. A review session was held with all staff on the nappy changing procedure as per policy. The manager will ensure that future reviews will be carried out on a 3 monthly basis through staff meeting structure

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of the additional paper towel dispenser and evidence of attendance at the team meeting where the nappy changing procedure was addressed.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliances. These will be reviewed on the 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) A person trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. All staff hold current FAR certification.

(2)(a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available and safely stored on the premises.

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)

There was evidence of regular fire drills having taken place within the service. The last fire drill took place on the 5th of June 2025.

(b)

There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the premises dated 01 October 2024 and 26 May 2025 respectively.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the pre-school rooms

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a valid certificate of insurance which expires on 28 February 2026 for a creche which covers a maximum of 24 children aged between three months and six years.