

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2019DY003
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tracey's Tots Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Dunard Community Centre, Dunard Road, Blackhorse Avenue, Dublin 7, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D07 ETC6
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Tracey Hughes
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	01/10/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM	None
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Clíondhna Kerrigan
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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**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.
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<p><b>Description of service</b></p> <p>Tracey's Tots Preschool is a sessional preschool which is located in Dunard Community Centre. The service operates between the hours of 09:00 and 12:30, catering for children aged 2 to 6 years. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme and consists of one large care room, sanitary facilities, and kitchen. An Outdoor space is located to the front and side of the premises.</p>
<p><b>Staffing</b></p> <p>There were 3 adults caring for 19 children on the day of inspection, the registered provider works directly with the children.</p>
<p><b>Methodology</b></p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous inspection history</li> <li>• Any information received in relation to the service</li> </ul> <p>The findings on inspection are based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information obtained through examination of documentation</li> <li>• Direct observation</li> <li>• Discussion with relevant staff</li> </ul> <p>This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety, premises, and facilities.</p> <p>The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.</p>

The Inspection focused on examination of compliance under the following Regulations:

- Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment – (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(3)(4)
- Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(3)(8) (c)
- Regulation 19(a)
- Regulation 23
- Regulation 25(1)(2)(a)(b)
- Regulation 28

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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.
  - (b) The designated person in charge was present in the service throughout the inspection.
  - (c) There was evidence of the management structure within the service outlining the roles and responsibilities of each employee, situated clearly in the hallway.

(2)

- (a) There were six written and validated references available for 3 members of staff who work directly with the children.
- (b) Not applicable as no reference were from reputable sources.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for three employed staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every 3 years.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as no member of staff had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period no longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) All references and Garda vetting procedures were completed prior to the 3 staff members being allowed access or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) The registered provider and the 2 staff members who provide direct care to the children at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, at a minimum Level 5 on the National Qualification 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.*
- (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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to 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) On the day of Inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service. There were three adults working with 19 children aged from 2.8 years to 5 years of age.
- (3) During the Inspection, the adult to child ratio was maintained with three adults working directly with 19 children.
- (8) (c) Not applicable as the service is not run single handedly.

## 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

(1)(a)

(1)(a) Each child's learning development and wellbeing were facilitated within the preschool and evidenced by the following examples.

#### Basic Needs

- The children had opportunities to explore and develop play in a relaxed manner during the inspection. For example: children were discussing holidays, staff encouraged development of this theme by engaging themselves in the role play bringing together other children in the room through song and dress up play, this was undertaken in a seamless manner, encouraging a sense of belonging and curiosity. The daily routine was well structured with time allocated for Outdoor play.
- Toilet schedules were in use however it was accessible more frequently if required. Staff supervised children with their toilet use, promoted independence when suitable and assisted if necessary. On the day of inspection, it was observed that some children were being toilet trained, staff showed evidence of facilitating toileting choices in a child led manner. For example, one child whilst transitioning fully to the toilet, preferred to use a nappy standing up, this was accommodated in a supportive and dignified manner.

### Supporting Relationships

- Staff members interacted with children in a calm and empathetic manner with staff speaking to children using their individual names. Positive behaviour strategies were observed with children being praised and encouraged in their ventures, the positive effect of this was evident as children appeared content and relaxed with their peers and staff.
- Strategies such as timers were used to support children with challenging aspects of peer interactions, such as turn taking. Staff spoke to children at their level using eye contact and soft tones to engage with them as appropriate.
- The service maintains good engagement with parents via mobile phone applications and face to face interactions. The inspector observed upon collection that staff members updated parents regarding their children's day, staff allowed time for parents and their child to reunite in a non-rushed manner, conversations between parents and staff were observed to be relaxed and inviting.

### Physical and Material Environment

- The large care room was constructively planned, with various areas supplied with a range of developmentally appropriate toys and materials inviting self-directed play whilst encouraging a child's natural curiosity.
- Tables and chairs were of low level and of various sizes, allowing children to sit comfortably for tabletop activities and meals.
- Low level open shelved units were in use displaying toys, learning equipment and craft materials which were accessible and clearly labelled for the children.
- The room was well stocked with books, construction materials, jigsaws, animals, puzzles, small world and arts and craft materials.
- A rest relaxation area was available to children with a wipeable leather couch, soft cushions, and soft flooring underfoot.
- The Outdoor area consisted of a flat tarmacked surface, with areas of grass and maturing trees, artificial grass was located under an awning to the left of the building which allows for the space to be used in inclement weather. Differing gradients of paths and borders encourages a child's spatial awareness and gross motor development.

- There was a selection of mark making areas, tunnels, slides, tricycles, scooters and balance bikes, a selection of helmets was used. A portable sand tray was also available to the children, encouraging further sensory play.

### 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:

- Upon the Inspector’s unannounced arrival at the service, the main door was secured, with access authorised by staff via a doorbell system, this ensured unauthorised persons are prevented from accessing the service and children are prevented from exiting the service. The Outdoor area was fully secured by high fencing.
- Hazardous cleaning materials and medications were kept out of reach from children on high shelving.
- Daily risk assessments were carried out across the service. It is acknowledged that a risk assessment noted that the lock in the kitchen had recently broken, staff were aware of this and had implemented a safety plan ensuring the children’s safety through close supervision of those walking past the space. The kitchen is located away from the care room and through double doors, throughout the inspection no children were noted near the kitchen.

##### Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic manner throughout, equipment and toys were visually clean. Cleaning schedules were observed throughout the service.
- Sanitary areas included thermostatically controlled taps with warm water, liquid soap with paper towels used for hand drying.
- The nappy changing area was located in the accessible toilet, with children’s personal toileting items stored hygienically in storage boxes.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste throughout the service.
- Food items which were brought by children from home were refrigerated until snack time, preventing harmful bacterial growth.

### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed being given during the inspection however staff were able to safely outline the procedure for administration of temperature reducing medication if needed.

### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed throughout the service, with overhead green lighting in use indicating exit routes.
- Monthly fire drills were undertaken.
- Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the care room within the service.

## 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) Persons trained in First Aid to include FAR were immediately available to children attending the service.
- (2)(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position within the premises.
- (b) The first aid box was readily available to the adults caring for the children attending the pre-school service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The registered provider has ensured that the premises is adequately insured to include 22 children who can attend this sessional service with an expiry date of 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.