

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2024KE001
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Maap Childcare Limited T/A Tots Creche and Daycare Nursery
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Castle Park, Dunboyne Rd., Maynooth, Co. Kildare.
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<b>Eircode:</b>	W23 DX8P
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Annette Akerlind, Audrey Murray
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	29/04/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	50	PM	43
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 X38W.
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Mulhern, R. Phillips and S. Faherty
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors and Inspection and Registration Manager
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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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Maap Childcare Limited T/A Tots Creche and Daycare Nursery, Castle Park opened in 2024. It is one of 10 private services operated by the registered providers. It provides full day care, part time care and a sessional service to children aged 0-6 years from 07:00 to 18:30, Monday to Friday. The sessional service operates from 09:30 to 12:30. The service is located in a purpose-built, single-story building within a housing estate on the outskirts of Maynooth. The premises includes five care rooms, a cot room, and an outdoor area at the rear of the building. The children were allocated to one of four rooms on the day of the inspection. The fifth room was used for children to sleep and to accommodate school aged children in the afternoon.

### Staffing

There are 19 staff members employed to work in the service including two service managers, the cook and staff members who work directly with school aged children. Twelve staff members are employed to work directly with the pre-school children, 11 of whom were present during the inspection. An area manager is also currently working in the service to provide training and support for a newly appointed service manager.

### 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety and premises and space requirements. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child and regulation 27 – Supervision. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby, Wobbler, and Toddler rooms.

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 area manager, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part II - Registration and Register

#### Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.*

*(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) and (3) No changes had been made to the details in relation to the service contained in the Early Years Inspectorate register.

### 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.*

*(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:*

*(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*

### Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise.

(b) The person in charge was always on the premises during the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or a person who could deputise to be present at all times of opening.

(c) The service had a clearly documented management structure with staff roles outlined. Adults demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the lines of authority within the service.

(2) The inspection focused on records for eight staff who had been employed since the previous inspection.

(a) & (b) Appropriate consideration had been given to references for all eight adults. References had been sourced from past employers or from another source where adults had only one or no previous employers. All references had a record of verification checks carried out.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all eight adults. The inspection included a review of Garda vetting disclosures for two additional staff members to assess compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years. These had been renewed accordingly.

(d) International police vetting had been sourced for all adults who had lived in another state for more than six months as an adult.

(3) Garda vetting disclosures, international police vetting and reference verifications were dated prior to adults commencing work in the service.

(4) All staff employed to work directly with children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Minister.

(7)(a) Records were available with staff signatures stating they had read and understood the service's current policies and procedures. Induction records included training in relation to the services policies and procedures. Staff reported they were provided with a copy of the policies and procedures when they commenced employment, and updated policies had been discussed at a recent team meeting.

### 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,*

### Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working with the children. There were 11 adults working directly with 50 children. The managers were available to assist as needed.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement for the age of children and type of service provided was always maintained.

(8)(a) There were at least two staff members on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two staff to be on the premises at all times of opening.

### 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-*

*(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

The adults supported the children to manage their personal care. They helped them to wash their hands and clean their faces and noses as required. They changed the children's nappies at routine times and promptly when needed in between. They applied sunscreen lotion to the children's exposed skin before going outside appropriate to the weather. Two children who's clothing became wet from water play had their clothes changed in a timely manner. The adults used these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions with the children.

Snacks and meals were offered to the children at regular intervals throughout the day. The adults sat with the children, engaged them in conversation and promoted social and independence skills. Mealtimes were relaxed, social experiences with plenty of time for children to eat. Additional food was provided to children showing signs of wanting more. Jugs of water with children's cups and beakers were visible and accessible to the children indoors and outdoors. Drinks were regularly offered to the children.

Soft seating and mats were available within the rooms where the children could rest or take a break from activities. The children from the Baby room slept in the cot room according to their individual routines. The children from the Wobbler and Toddler rooms who required sleep were provided with an opportunity to sleep after dinner in the Preschool 2 room. A child attending the Wobbler room who was tired prior to this was provided with an opportunity to sleep on a floor bed in the Baby room. The children were made comfortable for sleep with their outer clothing and shoes removed and soothers given to those who used them. Staff checked on the sleeping children at ten-minute intervals and remained in the rooms where children slept on low beds.

A key person approach was used to support children in forming secure attachments and the staff were familiar with the children in their care. Transitions between activities and care routines were well managed with staff explaining to the children what was going to happen next and maintaining a calm atmosphere.

### Non-Compliance Information

A child in the toddler room was observed to throw a toy oven mitt at a childcare worker. Rather than responding calmly, and speaking to the child as outlined in the service's own policy, the worker responded by exclaiming 'Oh my God' and took the child by the wrist before lightly admonishing them. This does not constitute a suitable care practice under Regulation 19(1)(b).

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

At the monthly staff meeting, all staff read the draft inspection report, the service policy on managing behaviour and the promoting positive behaviour tips sheet. A discussion was had in relation to the non-compliance. All staff completed training regarding managing behaviour and promoting positive behaviour. This included demonstrations regarding verbal and non-verbal interactions, appropriate language, body language and voice levels. This training has been added to staff practical inductions so it can be conducted before staff start with the company.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Staff meeting agenda and record of attendance dated 14 May 2025

Behaviour management policy signed by all staff dated 14 May 2025

### Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliance.

### 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 children were appropriately supervised at all times including during indoor and outdoor activities, while eating and when sleeping.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

*(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*

*(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

*(4) Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*

*(a) a sessional pre-school service, and*

*(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both,*

*the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).*

### Compliance Information

There was adequate clear floor space in each room for the number and age of children in attendance.