

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC130
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Name of Service:	Tigers Childcare
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Address of Service:	Pembroke Wood, Passage West, Co Cork
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Eircode:	T12 TV0F
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Name of Registered Provider:	Therese Noonan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	64	PM	62
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Administration Building, St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork, T23X440
Inspection undertaken by:	D Cotter
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).

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Description of service

Tigers Childcare is a full day care service located in a residential area of Passage West, Co Cork. The service operates from a purpose built 2-storey detached building that has 6 care rooms available for use by children. The Junior Discoverers, Senior Discoverers, and Explorers and Senior Explorers rooms which are all located on the ground floor. The Junior and Senior Active Cubs rooms were located on the first floor. On the day of inspection, the Explorers room was closed and so was not assessed. There is a designated outdoor play area provided to the rear of the service. There are two dedicated sleep rooms, of which one is beside the Junior Discoverer's room and the second is off a corridor close to the Senior Discoverer's room. The service provides care to children aged between 0 and 6 years of age. The service is open each Monday to Friday between 7.30am and 6pm. Care is also provided to school going children at the premises.

Staffing

There are 23 staff attached to this service, including the registered provider who is not service based. On the day of inspection, there were 14 adults present on the premises, all working directly with the 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.

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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*

(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,*

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(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 registered provider had ensured that a designated person in charge and a deputy designated person in charge were assigned to the service.

(b) Both the person in charge and deputy person in charge were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived and were available throughout the inspection process.

(2)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that 17 new staff had been employed since the previous inspection. Of these, 15 staff work directly with the children. A total of 17 files were reviewed. In addition, it was also determined that 6 staff Garda vetting, who work directly with children, were due for renewal and required review. The following information was noted:

(a) From the total 34 required written and validated references, 20 had been provided by past employers with 18 validations on file.

(b) A further 12 of the required 34 written and validated references were from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Of the 17 new staff Garda Vetting disclosures required, all were available for review. In addition, the 6 staff Garda vetting disclosures were obtained, whose staff files were previously reviewed at the last inspection. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

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(d) Documentary evidence was reviewed for the 17 new staff which indicated that 10 staff had lived outside of the jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years. International police vetting was available, along with a certified translation where necessary, for all 10 staff.

(4)

Records demonstrated that 15 of the 17 staff had achieved at least a Major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. Two staff did not work directly with children and did not require a certification.

Non-Compliance Information

(9)

(2) (a) Two of the required references available from a previous employer had not been validated.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In their written response, the registered provider stated that the HR team had obtained the missing validations. A new system is in place to ensure all vetting procedures are carried out in future, prior to staff having access to or contact with children.

Supporting documentation submitted

The two validated references.

Summary Comment

Having reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The noncompliance under 9 (2) (a) has been adequately addressed.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Non-Compliance Information

On the day of inspection, the following policy was examined:

- Healthy eating policy.

While the policy was found to contain certain required elements, it failed to describe how food would be safely stored, prepared and served in relation to this service. The policy described flash frozen food received from a supplier who was not the supplier to this particular service.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In their written response, the registered provider stated that the policy had been amended to be specific to the Pembroke site. The service manager will ensure that the other policies are reflective of the practice in this specific site.

Supporting documentation submitted

The amendment to the Healthy eating policy was submitted.

Summary Comment

Having reviewed the actions and evidence submitted, the noncompliance under Regulation 10 has been adequately addressed.

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,

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Compliance Information

(1)

The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of staff working directly with the children.

(2)

On the day of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations.

The rooms were in operation as follows:

Morning:

Room name	Type of Service	Age Range	Number of children present	Number of adults required	Number of adults present
Senior Explorers	Full Day Care	2-4 years	13	2	2
Junior Discoverers	Full Day Care	1-2 years	9	2	2
Senior Discoverers	Full Day Care	1-2 years	13	3	3
Junior Active Cubs	Full Day Care	3-4 years	16	2	2
Senior Active Cubs	Full Day Care	4-5 years	13	2	2

Afternoon:

Room name	Type of Service	Age Range	Number of children present	Number of adults required	Number of adults present
Senior Explorers	Full Day Care	2-4 years	14	2	2
Junior Discoverers	Full Day Care	1-2 years	8	2	2
Senior Discoverers	Full Day Care	1-2 years	13	3	3

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Junior Active Cubs	Full Day Care	3-4 years	15	2	2
Senior Active Cubs	Full Day Care	4-5 years	12	2	2

(8)

The registered provider has ensured that there was a minimum of two staff at all times on the premises. This was evidenced through the staff roster and discussion with staff on the day

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

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

- Staff were observed to be kind and patient in their interactions with children.
- Extra time and support was given to children who were settling into the service.
- A strong ethos of teamwork was evident within the service. Staff were observed to work well together to support the children.
- A strong sense of connectedness was evident in the setting; each care room displayed a family wall and birthday chart which supported the partnership between home and creche. In addition to this a community wall was on display in the hallway depicting interest areas within the townland of Passage West.
- Evidence of partnerships with parents was evident in the setting. A schedule of parents coming in to assist with activities such as storytelling and art was on display.
- Staff used a digital application to communicate with parents daily. Records of mealtimes, naptimes, and photographs of activities were sent via the application daily.
- Staff stated they received monthly meetings with a supervisor to discuss their roles. It was also noted that whole team meetings are conducted monthly.

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- Staff further reported that they work with external agencies such as Better Start and Enable Ireland to support the needs of children in their care.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- Within the care rooms, low level units were in place to display interest items at the children's eye level. Each care room was equipped with ample resources and equipment
- The materials on offer were age and stage appropriate to each care room. For example, in the older children's classrooms, a variety of pre-maths equipment was available, while in the younger children's rooms, a variety of gross motor and sensory equipment was provided.
- Equipment appeared to be well maintained in a state of good repair.
- Outdoors, the children were observed to engage with a range of equipment such as ride on toys, and slides. Additional resources included balls, climbing frames and playhouses.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- A menu was made available to the inspectors which outlined the planned meals for each day.
- The snacks and meals observed were suitable, adequate, and varied.
- There was a weekly menu plan available on the notice board. It was reported to the inspector that this plan was sent to parents via the digital application.
- Water was readily available to the children with snacks and between snack/lunchtime.
- Breakfast, afternoon tea and the hot meal for the day was provided by the service. The hot meal was delivered to the service by a local company. Children brought their morning snack from home.

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- On the day of inspection, pasta bolognese was served as the hot meal at lunchtime. A vegetarian alternative was also available. Portion sizes were age appropriate and extra servings were available. The afternoon snack was a wrap with either ham or cheese and rice cakes.
- It was noted that mealtimes could be amended to suit children's needs with regard to sleep and rest.
- Children's dietary and cultural needs were catered for.
- Mealtimes were spread evenly throughout the day.
- Crockery was offered to children at each mealtime.

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 entrance had been secured, and this ensured no unauthorised entry to, or exit from, the service.
- All play equipment appeared to be in a clean state and of good repair.
- The outdoor area had been securely fenced to prevent unauthorised entry to or from the area.
- The children's bags and coats were stored safely off the floor.
- Windows in each care room had been made safe to prevent children from exiting or falling.
- Blind cords observed had been secured.
- Low level storage cupboards were secured with child proof locks.
- The stairway was well lit and fitted with suitable handrails.
- Bottle warmers were available for heating infant formula.

Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were in use throughout the service.
- Each bathroom and nappy changing area were fitted with liquid soap and paper towels.
- Nappy changing areas were supplied with disposable gloves and aprons.
- The nappy changing areas observed was equipped with clean and intact nappy changing mats with the surrounding area maintained in a clean condition.
- Barrier creams were individually labelled for each child who required them.

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- Windows were open in the care rooms to aid natural ventilation.
- Cot mattresses were fitted with waterproof mattress protectors.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff stated they were familiar with the procedure for administering medication.
- Medication for two children was stored in a safe secure area, inaccessible to children, but in reach of staff members if needed. It consisted of an in-date adrenaline auto-injector and a box of antihistamine with clear instructions on guidelines for staff members for one child and anti-febrile medication for another.

Safe Sleep:

- Frequent checks of sleeping children had been documented and were available for review. At ten-minute intervals, children's breathing, colour and position were physically monitored, as per the requirement for safe sleep practice.
- Sleep equipment maintained in a proper state of repair.
- Cot mattresses were clean and fitted correctly in each cot and floor bed.
- A minimum space of 50cm had been spaced between each cot.
- Sleep temperatures were within the recommended guidelines while children were sleeping at 18.5°C

Fire Safety:

- Wall tethered firefighting equipment was available throughout.
- Fire doors observed were free from obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Visibility strips had not been added to low lying windows and doors. This increased the risk of injury to children.

Infection Control:

2. Water was not thermostatically controlled at 43°C. Water in the sanitary accommodation attached to the Senior Discoverers room was measured at 44.2°C to 45.2°C. Failure to ensure that water is thermostatically controlled to no higher than 43°C may pose a scald risk or may hinder effective hand washing.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

In their written response, the registered provider stated:

General Safety:

1. Visibility strips had been fitted to all low-level doors and windows.

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Infection Control:

2. A plumber was contracted to ensure water temperatures were lowered to an acceptable range. A template has been designed to ensure staff are monitoring water temperatures daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence of the windows and doors.

Infection Control:

2. The new template in use for staff to monitor temperatures.

Summary Comment

Having reviewed the actions and evidence submitted, the noncompliance's under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

The registered provider had ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) training at all times available to the children. Through the inspection of staff records, it was noted that there were four staff who held in date certification. It was evident through examination of the staff roster that at least one of these adults was available at all times throughout the day.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was insured, with insurance for 64 children until 27 March 2027. The records detailed the category of service covered which was full day care, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.