

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY231
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Name of Service:	Tots & Co. Childcare
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Address of Service:	Beaumont Hospital, Beaumont, Dublin 9.
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Eircode:	D09 FY94
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rima Macken
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	17/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	42	PM	41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin and T. Nelson
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

Tots & Co. Childcare is located on the Beaumont Hospital campus in North Dublin. It is one of two services operated by the registered provider and has been in operation since 1996. The service is registered to provide full day, part time and sessional care to a maximum of 65 children aged 0-6 years old from 7:30am to 6:15pm, Monday to Friday. The service currently operates between the hours of 7:30am to 6:00pm. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and morning sessions between the hours of 9:30am to 12:30pm Monday to Friday school term only. The service is also registered to operate a school aged service.

The service consists of six care rooms namely the Baby room for children aged 0 - 1 year old; the Tweenie room for children aged 1-2 years old; the Toddler room for children aged 2-3 years old; the Junior Montessori Room for children aged 3-4 years old and the Senior Montessori room for children aged 3-6 years old. The Front Room which is used by the Junior Montessori room at mealtimes and in the afternoons. There is a designated cot room, office, staff room and kitchen. There are two outdoor play areas one for the younger children and one for the older children.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service in a supernumerary capacity and employs eighteen staff. This includes a person in charge, a deputy person in charge, thirteen childcare staff and three ancillary staff: a cook, assistant cook and the bus driver.

The person in charge, the deputy person in charge and ten staff working directly with the children, one school aged childcare assistant and two ancillary staff were present during the inspection. The registered provider arrived during the inspection and remained on site to help facilitate the inspection process.

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

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 9(2) and 9(4), Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-School Child, Regulation 19(1)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Toddler room and the Tweenie Room. Regulation 11 was inspected across all 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 registered provider, management, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN0303	17/06/2026	The main door to the service was propped open throughout the morning of the inspection posing a significant risk of an unauthorised person gaining entry to the service.
Status	The Registered provider submitted a detailed response with corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate. This statutory notice is now closed.	

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 had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) A review of the roster showed that a designated person in charge is rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined that seven new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection and all seven of these new staff members work directly with the children. In addition, Garda vetting for six adults whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

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The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) Eleven validated written references were available from recent past employers.
 - (b) Three validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all thirteen adults reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Documentary evidence was available that established that five adults who had lived in a state other than Ireland for more than six months as an adult had the required translated international police vetting available.
- (4) The seven staff who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs.
- There were 10 qualified staff available to 42 children present on the morning of the inspection.
 - There were 10 qualified staff available to 41 children present on the afternoon of the inspection.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection. In addition, the person in charge and deputy person in charge were available to provide cover where required.

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Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of ten children's registration records from across all rooms were reviewed as part of the inspection.

The registered provider ensured a record (1) (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) and (i) was maintained for each child.

In addition, a space was available on the form to record the date the child ceased the service as required under (c).

(3) Records were open to inspection for review by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspection team were available for review.

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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

(1)

(b) Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed, as evidenced by the following:

- A review of documentation, discussion with staff and observation on the day showed children were provided with varied food on a regular basis. Breakfast is served on arrival, a snack of fruit is served at 10:00am, a hot meal is served at 11:30am and an afternoon snack is served at 3:00pm. There was a three-week menu plan available, and the service have a healthy food policy.
- There was sufficient food provided, with additional portions available on request and an alternative hot meal was available if required. Drinks of water and milk were available to the children in the care rooms.
- Staff were observed to interact continuously with the children. For example, activity times and mealtimes were observed to be a sociable event and staff chatted amicably with the children.
- Children were observed to have the freedom to move freely in their care room and independently choose their activities and play experiences. The variety of materials and equipment observed in the care rooms facilitated a range of play experiences including creative, imaginative and language play and promoted exploration and curiosity. For example, children were observed to dress up with props which promoted fun role play experiences. Children were also observed to engage in sensory play and art activities. When one child did not want to engage in these activities the child was facilitated with this choice.
- Children's language development was supported through conversations, activity times, singing songs and storytelling activities which were observed during the inspection. The inspection team got a preview of some of the graduation songs as the children prepared for graduation the following day.
- Daily routines were available and were reflected in practice. Staff and children appeared to be familiar with the transitions between experiences such as that from play to mealtime to sleep. As a result, these transitions were prompt and smooth. In addition, there was evidence that children's transitions to school were supported. Staff discussed how information is shared between parents, the service and the school to ensure children are supported appropriately during this transition period.

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- Nappy changing and toileting were observed to be timely and pleasant experiences for the children.
- All children had access to outdoor play on the day of inspection. There was an outdoor play roster displayed in the care rooms to ensure children got an opportunity to play outdoors for an adequate amount of time daily. Suitable clothing and suncreams were available, allowing for outdoor play in diverse weather. The equipment and toys available promoted social, emotional and gross motor development learning opportunities for children.
- The inspector observed staff greeting a parent dropping off their child and updating the parent on the activities planned for the day.

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 following measures were observed to be in place to safeguard children:

General Safety:

- The inspectors were asked to show identification and sign in the visitor book on arrival.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.
- Blind cords were observed to be secured out of reach of children.
- Children's highchairs were fitted with a safety harness.
- The kitchen was observed to be inaccessible for children throughout the inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach to the children.
- The outdoor play area was appropriately secure and children who played outdoors were adequately supervised.

Infection Control:

- Foot operated pedal bins were observed to be used by children and staff for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- The sanitary accommodation areas were equipped with hygienically dispensed soap, hand paper towels and toilet rolls.

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- An ambient temperature of 16-22°C was maintained in the care rooms, and the windows were open to allow fresh circulation of air.
- The service was observed to be clean. There were cleaning schedules on display.

Safe Sleep:

- Outer heavy clothing was removed from the children before sleep time.
- Children under two years of age were provided with a cot for sleeping.
- Children over two years of age were provided with low beds for sleeping.
- An ambient temperature of was maintained for sleeping children.
- Children were observed to be physically monitored while sleeping at intervals of ten minutes or less and staff recorded the breathing, position, and colour of each child at each check.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency evacuation routes were clear of any obstructions. Up to date contemporaneous attendance logs for children were available which facilitate the safe evacuation of the premises in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. See Statutory Notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IN 0303.
2. Flexes and cables were observed to be accessible to the children, evidenced as follows.
 - A cable trailing from an air cooler unit was accessible to children in the toddler room. This posed a risk of injury. It is acknowledged that staff took immediate action and removed the unit once the identified risk had been brought to their attention.
 - There were cables observed to be trailing from an air cooler, radio and a plug in thermometer in the cot room. This posed a risk of injury. It is acknowledged that staff took immediate action and secured the cables once the identified risk had been brought to their attention.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. See Statutory Notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IN 0303.
2. The portable fan has been removed from the toddler room and cot room where the trailing cable was accessible to children. All trailing cables have been secured using appropriate cable management solutions

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and repositioned equipment so that cables are inaccessible to children. An inspection of all rooms was undertaken to identify and remove any additional trailing cables or similar hazards. Staff were reminded of their responsibility to identify and eliminate environmental hazards immediately on the upcoming staff meeting. Staff have received refresher training on risk assessment, environmental safety, and hazard identification. Staff will complete and document daily risk assessments paying close attention to trailing cables, and the Person in Charge/Manager will monitor compliance through daily, weekly and monthly health and safety audits. Any maintenance or safety concerns identified will be recorded and addressed immediately, with corrective actions documented.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photos, risk assessments and team meeting agenda submitted

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

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) Evidence was available to show that six adults hold certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training and one of these adults is rostered to be present at all times.
- (2) The registered provider ensured the following.
 - (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, and unobstructed if needed to access quickly.
 - (b) The person in charge showed the inspector a suitably equipped first aid box which was readily available for the adults caring for children attending the service if required.