

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LD024
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Name of Service:	Tumblin Tots
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Address of Service:	Ballymahon Community Playgroup, Mostrim Road, Ballymahon, Co. Longford
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Eircode:	N39 Y0E8
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Name of Registered Provider:	Elizabeth McLoughlin
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	24/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	28
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
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

Tumblin Tots is a non-profit based service situated on the outskirts of Ballymahon. The service operates from a large purpose-built premises and provides full day care, part-time and sessional care to pre-school children aged 0-6 years. After school services are provided to school age children

The service has five ground floor playrooms Teddies Den - for the infants / babies, Sunflowers - for toddlers, and Busy Bees room, Butterfly room and Rainbow room- for the preschool children. Additionally, school aged children have a designated playroom on the first floor.

Four of the five care rooms were operational on the day of the inspection.

The premises has its own kitchen, where children's meals and snacks are freshly prepared and cooked daily by a chef. There are two designated sleep rooms, nappy change facilities, a staff room, two offices and secured outdoor play areas for children's play at the rear of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service.

On the day of inspection, there were fourteen staff present, nine of whom were working directly with the children. The manager, chef, the administrator for the service and two adults employed to provide additional support to care rooms as needed were also present.

All adults working directly with the children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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

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- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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)(b) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required, both remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) There is a clear management structure in place in the service, and all staff are aware of the lines of authority and their own roles and responsibility.

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined that one adult had been employed since the previous inspection. One file was reviewed. Garda vetting disclosures were reviewed for all adults working in the service.

(2)

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- (a) Two written and verified past employer references were available in respect of the adult employed whose file was reviewed.
- (b) Not applicable, as the references were from past employers.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. An in date garda vetting disclosure was available for one staff member which required renewal since the last inspection on 5 February 2025.
- (d) Not applicable, as the adult had not resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) Not applicable.

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) There were twenty nine children attending the service being supervised directly by nine adults.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.
- (8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the Inspection. This was confirmed following review of the staff roster for the service.

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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.*

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) – (i) A sample of ten records were assessed, and all were found to be compliant.

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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) The adults working with the children spoke and interacted with them to in a kind and respectful manner. Their first names were used; appropriate eye contact and gentle vocal tones were observed being used during all interactions.

The adults were familiar with each child and their personality.

Freshly prepared food and snacks were provided at regular intervals during the day. Young children had the opportunity to feed themselves and they were offered drinks. The staff members sat with the children at mealtimes and encouraged social interaction and conversations. The staff members in the care rooms were observed nursing young children, comforting other children who were upset and supporting children who were settling into the service.

Toys and resources are accessible to the children on low shelving units, and the children were observed engaging in their choice of free play. The children were observed moving freely in the care rooms.

Children's toileting and nappy changing requirements were completed regularly and promptly when required. This area of practice was managed in a sensitive and positive manner.

Needs led sleep was available for any child requiring sleep in Teddy's Den and Sunflower room. Some of the younger children had two sleeps however many of the children needing sleep, slept at a designated time during the day and were provided with as much time as they needed to sleep.

Older children were encouraged to be independent as they managed their personal belongings and got dressed for outdoor play assisted by adults as needed.

Transitions were well managed throughout the day by the staff members in the service. There was a predictability to the children's day, and the routine was unhurried and paced to suit the needs of the children. The atmosphere was relaxed and fun. The children responded positively to this.

All children went outside for play on the day of the inspection. There outdoor area was spacious and equipped with plenty of toys and equipment available to the children.

Information regarding children is shared with parents/ guardians at the drop off and collection times. Written daily reports are provided for the children in the Teddy's Den and Sunflower rooms. Face to face meetings can be

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arranged for parents/guardians as necessary; email and telephone contact are used as an alternative method of contact. The service has an open door policy for parents.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The care rooms were equipped with age and developmentally appropriate toys, materials and resources. The outdoor area at the rear of the property was spacious and included various areas for different types of play. There was an enclosed area with a covered space assigned for the children in Teddy's Den and Sunflowers room. There was a wide variety of age toys and equipment for the children to use.
- (b)
- The rest areas in the five care rooms consisted of sofas and soft wipeable mats.
- A cot room directly accessed from Teddy's Den was equipped with six standard cots to provide for the sleep needs of children less than 2 years old attending the service. This room had air conditioning unit installed to maintain the environmental sleep room temperature between 16° – 20° Celsius
- A second sleep room directly accessed from the Sunflower room was available and had six cot and six floor beds for children requiring sleep. Appropriate bed linen was in place for the cots and low-level beds. They were stored in individual containers.

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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) Staff members present were trained in in first aid response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)

(a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the care rooms. Further refill supplies were available in the service.

(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes for children were available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

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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 firefighting 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) A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 20 July 2026.
- (b)
- A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment was serviced 27 May 2026, and the smoke alarm was last serviced on 16 June 2026.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the entrance hallway and rooms of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2027. The insurance provided cover for 88 children.