

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020GY003
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Jolly Tots at the Meadows
-------------------------	---------------------------

Address of Service:	4 Meadow Grove, Milltown Road, Tuam, Co. Galway
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	H54 NW81
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Elaine Tierney, Martina McDonagh
-------------------------------------	----------------------------------

Service type:	Full Day
----------------------	----------

Date of Inspection:	28/08/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	21
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency Unit 2, First Floor, Loughrea Shopping Centre, Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway. H62 XR82
Inspection undertaken by:	B Lavin
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

This full day care service was established in 2020 and operates from 07.30 to 18.30, Monday to Friday. It caters for children from 0 to 6 years. The service is located in a residential housing estate on the outskirts of Tuam, Co Galway. The service comprises four playrooms (two downstairs and two upstairs), a dedicated sleep room, sanitary areas, a kitchen and staff/office space. There was also a well-equipped outdoor play area to the rear of the premises. There was also a covered play area with direct access from the Toddlers playroom.

Staffing

The two registered providers work directly with the children. There are 11 staff in total working in the service.

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

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 providers, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN Code: 2624	28/08/2026	Police vetting was not on file for a staff member who had lived outside of the jurisdiction for longer than six months.
Status	Closed on 08/09/2026 as police vetting was provided for the staff member to the inspectorate on 07/09/2026.	

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.
- (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,

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- (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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspection, the registered providers were on the premises and facilitated the inspection.
- (2) Following a review of the service files and discussion with the registered providers, it was confirmed that there were 11 members of staff employed in the service and 1 student on placement.
- (a) There were 16 written and appropriately validated references available from a previous employer. There were 5 additional references available from a previous employer that were not validated.
- (b) There no references from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 10 adults and 1 student. The service did adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew garda vetting every three years.
- (d) A police vetting disclosure was available for one adult working in the service as they had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over six months.
- (4) Ten staff working directly with the children had evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in Early Childhood Care and Education or a recognised equivalent.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (a) (b) One written and validated reference was not on file for two staff members and one student working in the service. Five written references on file were not appropriately validated.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were not carried out completely before staff members were appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) One staff member working directly with the children did not have evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in Early Childhood Care and Education or a recognised equivalent qualification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2) (a)(b) One staff member is no longer working in the service. A written and validated reference is now on file for the second staff member. The five written references have now been validated.
- (3) The registered provider will ensure that these procedures are carried out prior to any staff member commencing employment.
- (4) That staff member is no longer working in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation submitted to the office of the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted were reviewed and the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 have been adequately addressed.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) An adequate number of adults were working with the children attending the preschool service.
- There were five adults working directly with children on the day of inspection. In addition, the registered providers provided relief cover for breaks.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:
- Preschool: One staff member cared for six children aged between two and three years of age.
 - Playschool: One staff member cared for four children aged two years of age.
 - Toddler: One staff member cared for six children aged one year old.
 - Baby room: Two staff members cared for five children aged one year old.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

Basic needs:

(1)(a)

- Drinking water was available on low tables in each playroom to all children throughout the day.
- In the morning there was breakfast available of toast and wheat-based cereals. A snack was served mid-morning. The parents provided this snack and consisted of crackers, yogurts, sandwiches and fruit. The main meal of the day, which was chicken curry, rice and vegetables was served at 12pm. An additional hot meal was served in the afternoon. Children who had a nap were served their meals after they woke.
- Care and attention were taken during mealtimes to eat at the child's pace and staff encouraged and supported children to feed themselves independently according to their age and stage of development.
- The staff were observed sitting at the child's level and chatted in a respectful manner during meal and snack times.
- The privacy and dignity of each child was respected during toileting practices and nappy changes.
- The children had access to the outside areas throughout the day. Children were observed to play, explore, climb and swing in the outdoor area to the rear of the service.
- Children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.
- Children slept on individual nap schedules which was observed on the day.

Non-Compliance Information

- Appropriate rest facilities were not available in the baby room and preschool room. Children in these rooms did not have an area they could rest or relax on. This was a non-compliance at a previous inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Corrective and Preventive Action

Materials to provide a rest areas in both the baby and preschool rooms have been ordered.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation submitted to the office of the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted were reviewed and the noncompliance identified under Regulation 19 has been adequately addressed.

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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent a child leaving the service unsupervised and unauthorised persons gaining access to the premises.
- The door into the kitchen and staff toilets had a system of security.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Blinds had fastener devices as a safety measure preventing any potential hazardous access.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- There was one designated nappy changing area. The nappy mats were intact. The children's barrier creams were individually labelled.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The children were prompted at various intervals throughout the day to wash their hands. Supervision was provided and assistance when necessary.

Safe Sleep:

- There were stackable beds available for children requiring sleep aged over 2 years.
- Children aged under 2 years slept in individual cots.
- Sleep records were reviewed and showed accurate entries.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were unobstructed throughout the service.
- Clear signage was available to highlight the exits.