

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022CC002
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Name of Service:	Toddle Inn Childcare
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Address of Service:	Harpers Creek, Glounthaune, Co Cork
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Eircode:	T45 YW59
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Name of Registered Provider:	Kelda Browne
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	48	PM	49
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurranaברה, Cork T23 X440.
Inspection undertaken by:	D Prendergast & M Burke
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

Toddle Inn Childcare is a privately owned, full day care service, which also offers sessional and part time care. It is registered to accommodate children aged 1 to 6 years. Sessional services are provided from 9.00am to 12.00pm daily, over a 38-week annual period, in conjunction with the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The setting is open 51 weeks of the year, with daily opening hours from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

The early years service operates from the ground floor of an apartment complex, which is situated in a residential area of Glounthaune, in Co Cork. It consists of four care rooms, each with either adjoining or adjacent children's sanitary facilities, a sleep room and an enclosed outdoor play space. An office, a staff canteen, a kitchen, a laundry room, a milk kitchen and staff sanitary facilities area also available. The registered provider is a multiple service provider.

Staffing

There are currently 28 adults employed at the childcare facility, 26 of whom are available to work directly with the children. This includes the registered provider, who works between this service and two other early years settings. A cook and a cleaner are not involved in the direct care of the children who attend. A student was also undertaking a work placement at the time of the inspection.

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

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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.

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

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN1889	13/07/2026	On review of the staff files, it was noted that police vetting from two separate jurisdictions, was unavailable for one adult.
Status	The registered provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

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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,
 - (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 person in charge, a manager and a designated deputy assigned to the service.
 - (b) Upon the inspectors' arrival, the manager was working at the setting. Further examination of the staff roster demonstrated that either the manager or the deputy was present on the premises during the hours of operation.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the manager, it was determined that 17 new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. On the day of inspection, a student was also present on an educational work placement

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programme. These 18 files were the focus of the inspection. In addition, Garda vetting for five adults, whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal, were requested for review.

- (a) Thirty-six written and validated references were required in total. Of these, 30 had been provided by past employers.
 - (b) There were six references and validations on file from sources other than previous employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 18 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting records with certified translations, were available on file for four of the staff members, who had lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer, as adults.
- (4) Records demonstrated that 15 of the 16 adults who were involved in the direct care of the children, either held a major award in early childhood care and education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent. One adult who did not have the required qualification, had a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (d)
 - While it was acknowledged that police vetting was available for one of the adults who had resided outside the State, while over the age of 18, the police vetting record had not been translated into English, by a reputable source of translation.
 - See statutory notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IN1889 served.
- (3) Procedures outlined in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to some of the adults being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service, as follows:
 - It was noted that the Garda vetting disclosure held in respect of one staff member was dated after the staff member had commenced working at the service.
 - As per part (2)(d), a certified translation for police vetting and two separate police vetting records, had not been obtained before these adults commenced their roles at the childcare facility.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (d) In her written reply, the registered provider stated that the staff member's police vetting record has been

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translated into English. As a preventive measure, the recruitment procedure has been reviewed and the pre-employment compliance checklist has been updated. Responsibility has been assigned to the manager to sign off on this checklist prior to each employee's start date. Staff recruitment records will also be audited regularly, to ensure ongoing compliance.

- (3) The written response acknowledged that, while Garda vetting had been applied for prior to the staff member's commencement, the staff member began work before the vetting process was fully completed. Once it was identified that the police vetting records were unavailable for the other adult, the adult was informed that they could not return to work until all the necessary paperwork was received. This was an oversight in the service's recruitment process, which has now been addressed through the implementation of a mandatory pre-employment compliance checklist and management sign-off before any employee commences work.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the certified translation for the police vetting and a copy of the staff pre-employment checklist.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted have adequately addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9.

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.

Compliance Information

Four mandatory service policies were reviewed and were found to meet compliance:

- Statement of purpose and function
- Policy on administration of medication
- Policy on safe sleep
- Policy on fire safety

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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children.

(2) The required adult to child ratios were met as follows:

- During the morning, 13 adults were available to the 48 children in attendance across the 4 care rooms, who were aged 1 to 5 years.
- In the afternoon, 10 adults were involved in the direct care of the 49 children present, who were aged 1 to 5 years. The manager was available in addition to the adults in the care rooms.

(8)

(a) At least two adults were present at all times throughout the inspection period. This practice was also evidenced through review of the staff roster.

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;*

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- (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

A sample of 12 children's records were assessed and deemed satisfactory, in outlining the required information from (a) to (i).

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

(1)(a)

Supporting relationships:

- During mealtimes, a relaxed social environment was evident, with conversation encouraged. Adults sat with the children and offered appropriate assistance.
- The children's participation was promoted across the daily routine. For example, during an observed circle time discussion about transport and holidays in the Inventors room, the children were encouraged to share their own experiences and following snack time in the Explorers room, the children assisted with tidying up.
- Transitions between activities such as meal and sleep times, were observed to be relaxed and children were noted to follow social cues during these times.

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- Support and verbal reminders were offered to children, as needed. For example, when children were washing their hands, and preparing to go outdoors. Staff members were also noted to use calm, soft tones of voice and joined in the children's play.
- Children's care needs were promptly responded to. For example, upset children were comforted and a staff member was observed to put children to sleep, when visible signs of tiredness were evident.
- During discussion, the manager outlined the various methods of communication used to exchange information with parents or guardians. These included in-person discussion, phone calls, a messaging application and the use of a digital application, which captured information in relation to the children's activities of daily living, such as sleep and mealtimes. Photographs and child observations were also shared via this application.
- At drop off and collection times, staff spoke with the children's parents and caregivers in a friendly and professional manner and provided feedback on their daily progress.
- It was reported that staff meetings were held monthly. Minutes from said meetings were recorded and presented for review. A messaging application and daily discussion were also used to share information. On the day of inspection, it was noted that staff worked together in a positive manner and supported one other, as needed.

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 security of the main entrance/exit door was ensured, which reduced the risk of unauthorised access and the risk of a child exiting unsupervised.
- The service's outdoor play area was enclosed by walls, wall panels and secured gates. Good supervision was provided by staff members while the children played outside.
- In the Little Stars room, all highchairs were maintained in good condition, were fitted with safety harnesses and had been adjusted according to the children's age.
- The indoor and outdoor play materials that were assessed were observed to be in good condition and had no sharp edges.

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- Restrictive opening devices were in place on low-level cupboards in the care rooms.
- Blind cords were secured by suitable safety clips.
- Cleaning agents, nappy changing equipment and first aid boxes were appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- Visibility strips were fitted to the low-level glass panel doors in the care rooms.
- There were no loose cables accessible to the children.

Infection control:

- Hygienic handwashing and drying were supported by the availability of warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels, at the children's and adults' wash hand basins. Lidded pedal bins were in place for the hygienic disposal of waste.
- Staff members were observed to wash their hands after each nappy change, before and after meals and assisted the children in doing the same.
- In the nappy changing area, good practice was observed in relation to infection control:
 - during nappy changing procedures, the staff wore suitable aprons and gloves.
 - the children's toiletries were stored in individually labelled drawer units.
 - nappy changing mats were cleaned with disinfectant spray, after each use.
- Waterproof mattresses were provided in all of the cots that were in use and the linen was clean and dry.
- The children who attended the Little Stars room had their own individual bed linen. During discussion with staff members, the inspector was informed that linen was laundered weekly. Additional linen was stored in individually labelled bags.
- Photograph labelled wall hook storage was in place for the children's bags and belongings.
- The premises appeared clean and well maintained. Dining furniture was cleaned after use and floors were swept regularly.

Administration of medication:

- Medication that had been specifically prescribed was safely stored, labelled and was in-date.
- Staff were familiar with the administration of individual and anti-febrile medication and the procedures for informing parents. A detailed care plan, in relation to prescribed medication, was noted in the Little Stars room.

Safe sleep:

- Staff conducted sleep checks on sleeping children every 10 minutes and recorded the children's breathing, colour and position on a digital application.

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- While in use to accommodate sleeping children, the air temperature of the Discovery room was recorded at 20.6°C. This fell within the recommended range of 18°C to 22°C, for children aged over 12 months.
- Blinds in the sleep room were drawn to deflect sunlight and children's excess clothing was removed before they went to sleep.

Fire safety:

- Emergency fire exit doors were unobstructed at the time of inspection.
- Fire exit signage within the service was clearly visible.
- Staff were aware of the emergency evacuation procedures.

Non-Compliance Information

Safe sleep:

The air temperature of the sleep room adjoining the Little Stars room was not maintained within the required range of 18°C to 22°C, for safe sleep practice. A temperature reading of 23.3°C was recorded. It is acknowledged that once alerted to this, staff took steps to reduce the air temperature. However, a subsequent temperature of 22.9°C was recorded, which remained outside the required range.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The elevated air temperature occurred during a period of exceptionally warm weather. Management have taken steps to reduce the room temperature, by adjusting the air conditioning unit and removing it from the unit in which it was housed, which has improved its efficiency. Children are continuously supervised and safe-sleep practices are maintained. Management will review temperature records regularly, to ensure ongoing compliance. The safe sleep policy has also been shared with all staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence and a copy of the safe sleep policy.

Summary Comment

The stated corrective and preventive actions are accepted in meeting the regulatory requirements.

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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.

Compliance Information

(1) The service provided evidence that eight adults held up to date First Aid Response (FAR) certification and that at least one of these adults was always on the premises during operational hours.

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) Written records of completed monthly fire drills were presented for review. It was noted that the most recent fire drill had been undertaken on 19 June 2026.
- (b) According to the servicing documentation, the firefighting equipment was last checked on 24 October 2025 and the wired smoke alarm was tested on 7 November 2025. It was also noted that the fire alarm was serviced during the inspection, with updated certification awaited.

(4) The service's fire evacuation procedures were visible in the main entrance area.