

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR122
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Star Tots Creche
-------------------------	------------------

Address of Service:	81 Lower Kilmacud Road, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	A94 W6W8
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Nathalie Roberts
-------------------------------------	------------------

Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

Date of Inspection:	16/06/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	83	PM	57
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland and O Quill
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Star Tots Creche is a privately owned service and offers sessional, part-time and full day care and education to children aged between 0 and 6 years of age. Opening hours are 8am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday. The service operates from a two-storey, purposely adapted building in Stillorgan, County Dublin. The premises comprises of eight care rooms, a sleep room and an outdoor area to the rear of the building. In addition, an afterschool service for school age children operates each afternoon.

Staffing

There are currently 25 adults employed to work in the preschool service including, the registered provider, the person in charge, a supervisor, an office administrator, 19 early years educators, a cook and a domestic assistant. On the day of the inspection there were 25 adults present including the registered provider, the person in charge, the supervisor, 19 early years educators, the cook, a domestic assistant and an adult employed to work in the school age 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, safety and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 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 Baby, Wobbler, Toddler, Bright Stars and Tweenies 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, 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,*

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived unannounced at the service. A review of the staff roster showed that a designated person was on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.

(c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2) Following a discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that nine adults commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 11 June 2025. Documentation required under Regulation 9 (2), (3), (4) was reviewed in respect of the nine adults as detailed below. The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) relating to Garda vetting were reviewed for 14 adults employed to work in the service.

(a) Eighteen written and verified references were available from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 14 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 was available in respect of nine adults who had lived outside of the State for a period longer than six months as adults.

(3) Documentation reviewed showed that the procedures specified above under Regulation 9(2) had been carried out before the nine adults commenced employment in the service.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the nine adults 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 equivalent by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

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.*
- (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) The number of adults present and working directly with the children on the day of the inspection was appropriate to support their needs.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained on the day of the inspection. There were 83 children present in the service, supervised by 19 adults. The person in charge was available to provide relief cover to the care rooms when required.
- (8) (a) The roster provided to the inspectors by the person in charge showed that a minimum of two staff members were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

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*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

Each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service as outlined below:

Staff reported that the service provides breakfast and a hot lunch and children bring a morning and afternoon snack from home. On the day of the inspection children were served mediterranean chicken for their lunch. Additional portions were available for children requesting more and staff reported that alternative food options were available should they be required. Mealtime was observed to be a relaxed, social experience. Children sat together in a family style setting on low level tables and chairs and engaged in conversation amongst themselves and with staff. Younger children ate their meals independently and staff were observant offering support where required. Older children were invited to take an active role in the preparation for mealtime by handing out water bottles and cutlery to their peers. Water stations were situated at the children's level in each room and children were observed to access their water independently throughout the day.

Staff reported that children's nappies were changed on a schedule and as needed. They were observed to engage in warm and nurturing interactions during this time, supporting the children to feel safe and secure. Older children were encouraged to use the toilet independently and staff remained close by to provide support if needed.

Younger children slept in accordance with their individual routine, while older children slept at a designated time after lunch. This was observed to be a smooth transition with staff providing children with advanced warning that rest time was approaching. Children in the Toddler room appeared to be familiar with the daily routine. They were observed moving from the lunch table to their assigned bed, independently remove their shoes and settle into bed. Areas with child size seating and rugs were available in each of the care rooms for children to rest during the day if required.

Play was child led and staff sat with children and engaged in playful conversations, sang songs and read stories, supporting the development of their linguistic and communication skills. Throughout the inspection the adult child interactions were observed to be warm, friendly and respectful. The play materials were stored on low level shelving in each of the care rooms, enabling choice and allowing children to be active agents in their own learning. Materials available included, home areas, small world materials, musical instruments, puzzles, construction play, books and mark making materials. Specialist Montessori equipment was available to the older children. The care rooms were print rich and storage boxes were labelled with photographs, allowing children to find and return items with ease. Children's sense of identity and belonging was supported through displays such as family and birthday walls. Some of the children were observed to spend time outside during the inspection. The outdoor space had a variety of play equipment to support sustained engagement such as a teepee, a sea saw, construction materials, balls, a kitchen with props and large play structures such as a boat, a train and a tractor.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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:

- There were care plans in place for children with serious medical conditions and staff caring for these children demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.
- The entrance doors to the service were adequately secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering and to ensure children could not exit unsupervised. Access was controlled through keypad entry systems for staff and parents/guardians, while visitors were required to be admitted by a staff member.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored on high shelves, safely out of children's reach.
- Medications were stored in their original containers and clearly labelled.
- All toys and equipment observed on the day of inspection were in good condition and free from pinch or crush points.
- The staircases were adequately lit, the floor covering was non-slip, and appropriate handrails were in place.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- The perishable items contained in the snacks provided by parents/guardians were stored in the fridge upon arrival and kept refrigerated until snack time, preventing them from spoiling.
- Children's bottles brought from home were appropriately stored in the fridge in the Baby room.
- The care rooms were visibly clean and well maintained. Cleaning schedules were available for review outlining cleaning tasks.
- Children's soothers were labelled and stored in individual containers and staff reported that they were sterilised daily and as required.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take to ensure medication is given safely if needed, including obtaining prior written parental/guardian consent and having a witness present.
- Administration of medication records were available for use if required.

Safe Sleep:

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes.
- A sleep log was available for review, detailing the breathing pattern, colour and position of the child.
- Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's ages.
- The temperature of the rooms where children slept were maintained at the required temperature range.

Fire Safety:

- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire.
- The designated fire escape routes were clearly marked and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The inspectors observed that two televisions positioned on a low-level shelving unit in the Tweenies room were not securely anchored to the surface. This posed a risk of the televisions tipping over and increases the risk of injury to a child.
2. Three cables in the Bright Stars room were not safely secured to the wall. A cable from an air conditioning unit, a clock and a thermometer were not safely secured and out of reach of children, posing a potential risk to their safety.

Infection Control:

3. Appropriate handwashing practices were not in place to prevent the spread of infection as follows:
 - A staff member was observed changing several children's nappies without washing either their own hands or the children's hands after each change. Additionally, the staff member used their hand to open the lid of the pedal bin when disposing of waste.
 - A staff member did not wash their hands immediately after changing a child's nappy. Prior to washing their hands, the adult was observed to take another child by the hand and lead them to the nappy room at which time they washed their hands. Additionally, the staff member used their hand to open the pedal operated bin and dispose of the waste.

The above practices pose a risk of the spread of infection and illness to a child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider stated that the tv has been removed and placed in the storeroom and that normally there are safety fences along that side of the room preventing children to gain access to the area. However, on the day of the inspection a staff member removed the fencing. Staff have been informed that if the tv is in use for the afterschool children in the afternoons, it must be returned to the storeroom.
2. The air purifier and cables have been removed from the care room. Staff have been made aware of the dangers of trailing cables and will ensure no cables are unsafe going forward.

Infection Control:

3. The staff member has been retrained in the nappy changing policy and has assured management that they are aware of the procedure. Management go through the policies with each staff member on a weekly basis, to ensure that all staff are aware of all procedures within the creche.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

No evidence submitted

Infection Control:

No evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliances. The effectiveness of the actions will be assessed on the next inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) There was evidence to show that three adults hold certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training, and all three were immediately available to the children for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and stored safely in easily accessible and prominent positions in the kitchen and the Tweenies room.

(b) The first aid boxes were observed to be readily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*
- (3) 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) The registered provider ensured that a record of the following was maintained:
- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill occurred on 29 May 2026.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises were up to date. Fire extinguishers were serviced on 30 November 2025 and smoke alarms were serviced on the 21 May 2026.
- (2)
- (c) The registered provider ensured that the required records were readily available and open to inspection by the inspectors.
- (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in the care rooms.