

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL318
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Name of Service:	Tigers Childcare
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Address of Service:	Neighbourhood CTigers Childcareentre, Ridgewood, Swords, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K67 D890
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Name of Registered Provider:	Therese Noonan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	46	PM	41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building, Blanchardstown Corporate Business Park, Ballycoolin, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Y Kelly & AM Coyle
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

Tigers Childcare has 31 early years services operated by the registered provider nationwide. This service provides full day care, part time and sessional care and is registered to operate from 7.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday. The service currently caters for pre-school children from 9 months to 6 years of age. School aged children are not accommodated in this service. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.00am to 12.00midday for 38 weeks each year. The service is conducted from a purpose-built 2-storey premises located beside a number of commercial units within a residential setting in Swords in North Co. Dublin. There were 4 care rooms in operation, with the Discoverers room and the Explorers room both located on the ground floor, and the Junior Active Cubs room and Active Cubs room both located on the first floor. A sleep room is accessed directly from the Discoverers room, and a fully enclosed outdoor play area is located to the side of the premises.

Staffing

A service manager is employed who oversees the operational management of this service, working with a team of 12 staff who work directly with the children including the deputy manager. There are 3 quality support managers, one of whom was present on the day. One staff member was employed in the service to reduce the adult to child ratio and if necessary to work with a child with additional needs, in a post which is funded by the minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme. A chef carries out cooking and catering duties. In addition, there were 2 agency staff members working directly with the children on the day of the inspection. The services operation manager was present in the service on the afternoon of inspection. The registered provider was not present in the service during the inspection, however joined the closing meeting in an online capacity, along with one of the quality support managers.

Methodology

Tusla 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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the regulations 9, 10, 11, 16, 19, 23, 27 and 32. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Explorers Room, Discoverers Room, Junior Active Cubs Room and Active Cubs Room. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16.

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.

Additional Information

The inspection was carried out following receipt of information to Tusla Early Years Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, management team, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN number: 1003	10/06/2026	IAN issued to the registered provider as international police vetting was not available for 1 staff member as required.
Status	Action was taken by the registered provider immediately following service of the Notice and the provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information

(1)(a) There is a designated person in charge for the service and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service at 09:00am and was present for the duration of the inspection.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection records and in discussion with the service manager, it was confirmed that 7 new staff members had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection which was carried out on the 29 October 2025. The full staff files for 9 adults were reviewed for 5 staff members who work directly with the children, 1 regional quality support manager, 1 chef and 2 agency staff. The following was recorded:

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

(b) References from a reputable source other than a past employer were not required as all references were from a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 9 adults whose files were reviewed. Garda vetting disclosures demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring the service to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International Police vetting was available for 4 adults who had lived outside of the state for a period of more than six months.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 8 adults whose files were reviewed and who may work directly with the children in 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.

(7)(a) The registered provider ensured that employees were supervised and provided with appropriate induction. In discussion with a recently commenced staff member, they were able to describe the induction process and the systems in place regarding the review of the service's policies and procedures. The services' Colleague Training Policy states that training is provided to colleagues in line with current regulations and the service ensures that colleagues are provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training in the policies, procedures and statements of the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) See Statutory Notice section in relation to the Immediate Action Notice IAN 1003 served.

(3) The procedures as outlined in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to adults working with or having access to children in the service, as evidenced by the following:

- International police vetting in relation to 1 adult prior to having access to and contact with the children.
This was at variance to the services 'Recruitment and Vetting Policy'.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(2)(d) The colleague was removed from the service and did not return until international police vetting was received and fully vetted by the HR team. Colleague obtained and sent a copy of international police vetting on 22nd June 2026 and returned to the service on 23rd June 2026.

(3) HR Team and Centre Managers were briefed on their roles and responsibilities when vetting candidates before commencing employment to ensure safeguarding and recruitment compliance requirements.

Preventive Action

(2)(d) HR and Centre management will work in conjunction to gather documents required for all colleagues. No candidate will commence employment until an authorisation to commence employment email has been sent from HR to Centre Management to ensure effective communication between departments.

(3) Human resource team responsible for the organisations new colleague onboarding programme have been briefed on the verification of Garda/Police Vetting clearance required before any staff member is permitted to commence duties on site. A memo has also been sent to all managers of the organisation to audit their own staff files.

A pre-start compliance checklist has been reinforced and must be signed off by management prior to employment.

HR and management teams have been reminded of Tusla safeguarding and recruitment compliance requirements.

Staff records will be audited across the organisations to ensure all mandatory documentation is in place and up to date.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Supporting documentation submitted

- Copy of letter given to colleague by HR.
- Copy of international police vetting.
- Copy of new authorisation to commence employment email from HR to all centre managers.
- Email sent to all centres.
- Pre-compliance checklist sent to all centres.
- Recruitment and Vetting policy.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances under Regulation 9 have been addressed.

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

The following policies relevant to this inspection were requested and reviewed.

- Recruitment policy
- Complaints policy
- Staff training policy
- Supervision of Staff policy

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced at the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In the Discoverers Room there were 5 children aged 9 months to 1 year 7 months being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In the Explorers Room there were 10 children aged 2 year 3 months to 3 years 3 months being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In the Junior Active Cubs Room there were 16 children aged 2 years 11 months to 4 years 5 months being cared for by 6 staff members including the Deputy Manager and 1 staff member employed as part of the Access and Inclusion Model.
- In the Active Cubs Room there were 15 children aged 4 years 1 month to 5 years 2 months being cared for by 2 staff members.

The service manager and quality support manager provided support across the care rooms on the day of inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present in the service at all times. This was confirmed by the staff roster.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there was a record kept in writing of the following information in relation to the service:

- (g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with regulation 10, these were provided in digital format in the service.
- (i) Details of staff rosters were kept on a daily basis and available for inspection.
- (k) Documentary evidence was available in the service to confirm that 8 accident/incident reports were recorded and shared with parents through an online digital application.

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*

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following demonstrated how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service.

Basic needs:

- Children's meals were provided by an external catering company following a four-week menu plan and reheated by the chef. There was a choice of two hot meals at dinner time, sausage casserole with potatoes, beans and vegetables and a pasta dish. Children bring a morning snack which consisted of crackers, cheese, fruit and yoghurt.
- Children's water bottles, jugs of water and cups were accessible in the care rooms throughout the day.
- Nappy changing occurred at scheduled times and more frequently as required throughout the day. Staff members engaged positively with the children during this time using it as an opportunity for one-to-one interactions with the children.
- The children in the Discovers room were placed to sleep when they exhibited signs of tiredness and slept in either of the sleep rooms adjacent to the care room and if their sleep times coincided with mealtimes the children were provided with their meals when they woke up. Five children from the Junior Active Cubs slept in stackable beds on the floor in the Junior Active Cubs room.
- There were cosy areas in the care rooms where children could select a book for reading and relaxation.
- The children attending all of the care rooms enjoyed time in the outdoor area on the day of inspection.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. Appropriate communication using soft tones was observed and children were provided with comfort when needed. This supported the development of relationships and a sense of belonging.
- During transition to sleep, staff were available to assist the children in getting ready and helping them to settle whilst going to sleep.
- Staff communicate with parents through use of a digital software application to share information about children's care needs. This included information about meals, nappy changing and sleep.
- Identity and belonging were promoted in the service. For example, there was a 'Family Tree' display with photographs of children's families. Children's artwork was displayed throughout the service.

Physical and material environment:

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- There was age-appropriate furniture with small child sized chairs and tables for children to sit whilst they played or for mealtimes.
- The care rooms were divided into different areas of interest which provided opportunities for a variety of spontaneous play experiences and choice for children. There were home corner and kitchen areas including cooking utensils, crockery, doll house and small world items which supported the children's imaginary and dramatic play experiences. There were transportation materials including wooden trains and train tracks and construction resources including plastic building bricks and hollow wooden blocks for construction play. There were tabletop materials such as jigsaws and matching activities to support early learning numeracy learning. A range of art materials were provided with the children's artwork displayed on the room walls. There was a selection of books provided in the book areas which supported children's language development.
- A fully enclosed outdoor area surfaced with an impact absorbing surface was located to the side of the premises. There was a large wooden play bus, wooden shop with pictures displayed for dramatic and pretend play, large plastic building blocks for construction play and a large wooden structure with slide and tunnel, ride on bikes, ride in car and scooters which promoted gross motor and fundamental movement skills.

Programme of Activities and its Implementation:

- The facilitation of smaller groups of children was observed during the inspection with staff dividing groups between indoor and outdoor play.

(3) No practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally, physically harmful or neglectful were observed during the inspection. Staff members were observed engaging with the children using a partnership approach and showed positive regard for the children at all times throughout the inspection.

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:

- On arrival to the service, the inspectors observed that the entrance doors leading into the premises was secure and monitored by staff to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The outdoor play area was fully enclosed and secured and was mainly surfaced with an impact absorbing surface.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water liquid hand soap and dispensed handtowels were available in the sanitary facilities.
- Pedal operated bins were available for waste and disposal of contaminated items.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.
- Children's health care plans were kept in the care rooms.

Safe Sleep:

- The inspectors observed that 10-minute sleep check observations were being performed and documented on sleeping children, noting each child's colour, position and breathing pattern at the time of each check.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were unobstructed in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that all children attending the service were supervised at all times. Children were observed being appropriately supervised whilst in the care rooms and in the outdoor area of the service and when accessing the sanitary facilities.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service had a complaints policy in place which detailed the procedure a person should follow in order to make a complaint in relation to the service.

(b) The process of making a complaint was outlined in the complaints policy, as was how the complaint would be dealt with by the service.

(c) The policy detailed how the complainant would be kept informed of the complaints procedure.