

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020GY006
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Name of Service:	Teddy House Creche
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Address of Service:	Leas Na Mara, Ballymoneen Road, Knocknacarra, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 X6WR
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carlie Healy
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	35
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A- (1st Floor-Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	F Nic Dhonnacha
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

This pre-school service is privately run and located in Knocknacarra on the west side of Galway city. The pre-school caters for children aged between 1 and 6 years, from Monday to Friday between 08.00 and 18.00. The pre-school offers full day-care, part-time care, an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) from 09.00 to 12.00 and a sessional care programme. This pre-school service consists of three childcare playrooms namely the Toddler room (age range of the children 1- 2 years of age), the Playgroup room (age range of the children was 2 years to 3 years) and the Montessori room (age range of the children was 3 years to 6 years). The service has one designated sleep room namely Sleep room 1 with 6 cots. Stackable beds are available for older children requiring sleep provision. Quiet rest areas are available in each of the playrooms for children to rest and relax. The service has its own kitchen, where children's meals and snacks are prepared, cooked and stored on site. A play based preschool curriculum focusing on emerging interests is provided in the preschool. A secure designated outdoor play area is available for all age groups of children to the side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider works between her services daily. There are 12 adults in total working in the preschool service this includes the registered provider. There is a manager and a named designated deputy. The staff have documentary evidence of on-going training and education. Eleven staff hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. Additionally, one cook was designated to kitchen duties, preparing, cooking and serving the service meals.

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, health, welfare and development of child and safety. 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 *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-

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- (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) The registered provider works between their four services. The manager is the designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.
- (b) The registered provider arrived on the premises mid-morning and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. The manager was onsite throughout the day to assist the early years inspector when necessary. Two relief staff members arrived to assist with breaks and cross cover in the playrooms.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service and the staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- On the day of inspection, 12 staff files were available for review which included the registered provider, the cook and 10 staff who provide direct care for the children. Five new staff members commenced employment since the previous inspection on the 12/02/2025. All files were reviewed on inspection.
- (2)(a) Nineteen written validated references were available on file from a past employer.
- (b) Five written validated references were available on file from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosure had been obtained for all 12 staff members working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years for all 12 staff working in the service.
- (d) Documentary evidence indicated that 7 members of staff who lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years, had the required police vetting on file. Translated police vetting was available where necessary.

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- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) had been carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) Eleven staff working directly with the children had evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 to Level 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) Documentary evidence indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. At all times during the period of the inspection, the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children attending the preschool service.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained. On the morning of the inspection there were 33 children present. All children were aged between 1 year and 5 years of age. There were 7 staff directly caring for the children. Additionally, two staff members arrived mid-morning to assist with breaks and cover in the playrooms where necessary. The registered provider and manager were available to provide relief cover and assist with the administration part of the inspection when necessary. The cook was in the kitchen preparing the snacks and meals for the children onsite.
 - 8 children were aged 1 to 2 years.
 - 10 children were aged between 2 to 3 years.
 - 15 children were aged 3 to 5 years.
 In the afternoon there were 35 preschool children present.

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Additionally, the registered provider and two relief staff members were available to provide cover when necessary.

- 8 children were aged 1 to 2 years.
- 10 children were aged between 2 to 3 years.
- 17 children were aged 3 to 5 years.

(8)(c) The registered provider ensured that there were two staff on the premises at all times while the pre-school was operating.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs

- Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snacks and meals without being rushed. The atmosphere during mealtimes was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and staff.
- The crockery, cutlery and drinking utensils used were suitable for the children's ages and stage of development.
- The staff responded to children's individual personalities, sensitivities and needs in relation to nappy changing and toileting.
- On the day of the inspection children from the Playgroup room required nappy changing and were changed in a sensitive manner while having their dignity and privacy maintained in the designated nappy changing areas.
- The older children had unrestricted access to the toilet and did not have to wait to use the toilet. Children were allowed to take their time during toileting. Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence and to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.

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- Children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.
- The children had the opportunity to play in the outdoor play area with appropriate clothing and footwear for the weather.

Supporting Relationships

- The staff were observed encouraging children to think critically, ask questions and respond to them in a way that promotes sustained shared thinking- nurturing and comforting children, using soft tones, the child's individual name, getting down to their level and making eye contact.
- Visual aids (picture and word reminders) and instructions were displayed and used with the children to support their learning throughout the preschool.
- The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried in all playrooms.
- The service provided parents and guardians with daily information, including events or activities involving their child, for example, verbal communication at drop-off and collection times, phone calls if necessary and via profile scrapbooks with pictures, artwork, themes and observations. The themes to date included Autumn, Halloween, space adventure, Christmas, five senses, emotions, valentines day, mother's day, Easter, summertime and many more.
- Staff adjusted the level of support provided to children depending on the child's abilities, allowing for children's partial participation and participation with support in games and learning.
- On the day of inspection, the children were observed to free play, at story time, at construction building, connecting, at pretend kitchen/house and sorting stacking materials. The children played games, puzzles, built blocks, made jigsaws and looked at books.
- On the day of inspection, in the outdoor area, the children were observed playing with sand, running/chasing, using three/four-wheeler cars, climbing and playing ball.
- Staff used positive strategies to support children's inclusion. For example, the inspector noted that the staff acknowledged a child's engagement in an activity 'that is great', 'well done' and used questions such as 'what should we do next?', 'is there any other way to do this?' to allow children to critically think and explore.

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Physical and Material Environment

- The space in the three playrooms was designed and arranged to maintain a space that was clean, organised and free of clutter.
- The environment was comfortable, inviting and laid out to accommodate the needs of all children and staff in the pre-school.
- The service had safe and comfortable spaces for infants, toddlers, or children not walking, to lie, roll, crawl and to be protected from children that were more mobile.
- Staff had a comfortable place to sit, to hold and feed infants and to read, interact and comfort children.
- The children had access to enough varied materials and equipment, which were rotated to suit the changing programme, to suit current and new interests.
- Materials and equipment were arranged so they were visible and readily accessible to promote independent access by children in all playrooms.
- Each playroom had visual aids, artwork, learning charts/posters, little helpers' system, curriculum planning, the children's emerging interests, daily routines and visual prompts on display throughout the service.
- The service had a designated sleep room with six cots in total and stackable beds for older children's sleep provision.
- Each playroom had designated cosy corners where the children could sit, relax and take a break if they choose to.

Outdoor play area

- The outdoor play area had a grass surface with concrete paths. The area was secure with fencing, walls and a secure gate. Toys and play equipment were available for the various age groups attending the service. Additional toys were in storage and rotated on a seasonal basis as advised by the staff on the day.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- There was a healthy eating policy and a weekly dinner menu available for parents and guardians to view if requested. The food observed on the day looked healthy and nutritious with a mixture of textures and colour.
- From 08.00 to 09.00 the children had the opportunity to have a selection of cereals, toast and milk.
- In the morning at approximately 10.00 the children had toast with bananas and milk or water to drink.
- At approximately 12 midday the main meal was served. This was made by the service cook. It consisted of curry rice and mixed vegetables with milk or water to drink. The service highlights the variety of dinners provided on a poster in the service kitchen.
- Between 14.30 and 15.00 the children had ham and cheese sandwiches with milk or water to drink. After 17.00 an additional snack was offered to any child if hungry- it consisted of rice cakes, fruit and yogurts.
- Drinking water was available on low tables and shelves for children to self-serve in each playroom and in the outdoor play area.

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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) Two staff had first aid responder (FAR) training and were available to the children during the operating hours of the service. It was acknowledged that the other staff members had training in first aid but were waiting on their completion certificates.
- (2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in readily identifiable area in the office.
- (b) The first aid box was available in the office for use by the adults in the event of an emergency. All content items were in date and a checklist was available which was signed and dated.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for 48 pre-school children in a full day care service. The policy was valid until the 29th of March 2027.