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**TÚSLA**

An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

**Children's Services  
Regulation**

# Early Years Inspectorate

Who we are and what we do



[www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)

# Who we are and what we do

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## Who we are

Tusla - Child and Family Agency has responsibility for promoting and monitoring the safety and quality of care and the support of children in early year's services.

Tusla is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland.

We do this by ensuring that Tusla registered early years services comply with the relevant laws and Regulations.

## What we do

We promote and monitor the safety and quality of care and support of the child in Tusla registered early years services in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 by:

- Assessing applications for registration
- Inspecting registered services

## Why do we inspect?

We carry out regulatory inspection to make sure that:

- Children are safe in the service.
- The health, welfare and development of each child is supported.
- The service is well managed.
- The premises are safe, suitable and appropriate for the care and education of children.

# Did you know that?

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**There are more than 4,300 early years services registered with Tusla in Ireland. Tusla also registers school age services.**

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Early years services can also be called preschool services.

There are more than 950 school age services registered with Tusla. More than 460 are part of an early years service and more than 490 are stand alone.

Early years services must be approved by Tusla before they can be registered and begin to operate.

All registered early years services are inspected by Tusla's Early Years inspectorate.

Tusla Inspections are nearly always unannounced (no advance notice given to provider).

## **What are services required to do?**

Tusla registered early years services are required to:

- Comply with early years legislation and regulations
- Safeguard the health, safety and welfare of each child
- Support the care, learning and development of each child.

# What is a preschool service?

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**A preschool service means any preschool, play group, day nursery, crèche, day care or any similar service that cares for children who are not yet attending a recognised\* school.**

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## **What do different types of early years services do?**

**Childminding Service:** One person cares for children single-handedly in the childminder's own home 2 hours or more per day.

**Sessional pre-school service:** offers a planned programme for not more than 3.5 hours a session.

**Part-time day care service:** offers a structured day care service for more than 3.5 hours but less than 5 hours a day.

**Full day care service:** offers a structured day care service for more than 5 hours a day.

**Pre-school service in a Drop-in-Centre:** offers day care which is only to be used now and again on a casual basis, and for not more than 2 hours while the parent or guardian is availing of a service or attending an event (for example going shopping).

**Temporary pre-school service:** offers day care only on a temporary basis. Examples include once off events such as a conference or a sports event.

**Overnight pre-school service:** pre-school children are taken care of for more than 2 hours between the hours of 7pm and 6am.

A childminder caring for a relative's children, caring for children from the same family or caring for up to 3 children from different families is not required to register with Tusla Early Years Inspectorate.

\* As defined by the Education Act 1998

# Further Information

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## Can I get a copy of a Tusla early years inspection report?

Yes. You can ask your service for a copy of its Tusla inspection reports, or you can view the reports on the Tusla website:

[www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/creche-inspection-reports](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/creche-inspection-reports)

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For further details on what the regulatory requirements look like in practice see Tusla's Quality and Regulatory Framework:

[www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework)

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## Can parents/guardians give feedback on their child's early years' service to Tusla early years Inspectorate?

Yes, we welcome feedback from parents/guardians on early years' services.

Feedback helps inform the inspection process and supports improvement in service provision. You can do this by completing our feedback form online:

[www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/parents-guardians/parents-feedback](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/parents-guardians/parents-feedback) and emailing it to:

[feedback.concerns@tusla.ie](mailto:feedback.concerns@tusla.ie)

## Who do I contact if I have a concern about a Tusla registered early years service?

If you are concerned about the quality of an early years service, you should first speak to the staff/manager or childminder.

If your concern cannot be resolved with the service, you can contact the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate by:

**Telephone:** +353 (61) 461700

**Email:** [feedback.concerns@tusla.ie](mailto:feedback.concerns@tusla.ie)

**Web:** download the 'concerns form' on the Tusla website at:

[www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/parents-guardians/parents-feedback](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/parents-guardians/parents-feedback)

This form can be emailed to:

[feedback.concerns@tusla.ie](mailto:feedback.concerns@tusla.ie)

or posted to:

**Tusla, Feedback and Concerns Team,  
Early Years Inspectorate, 2nd Floor,  
Estuary House, Henry Str., Limerick.**

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**Web:** [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)