

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC359				
Name of Service:	Scribbles Playschool				
Address of Service:	Allen's Bridge, Newmarket, Co. Cork				
Eircode:	P51 VF63				
Name of Registered Provider:	Margaret Dineen				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	16/05/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>4</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	4	PM	N/A
AM	4	PM	N/A		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	134, Bank Place, Mallow, Co. Cork.				
Inspection undertaken by:	F Collins				
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Scribbles playschool is a privately run sessional service providing a 3-hour sessional service daily between the hours of 09.30 and 12.30, Monday to Friday, for 38 weeks of the year and facilitates the Early Childhood Care and Education programme.

The service is located approximately four kilometres from Newmarket in North Cork in a rural area and is run mainly from the outdoor area and has access to an indoor premise. The premises consist of one large playroom with adjacent sanitary facilities for both staff and children.

The children spend extensive time outdoors in all weather conditions and the children are dressed for the weather as appropriate.

Staffing

The service is currently run by the registered provider singlehandedly. There is an adult named as an emergency contact person should the need arise for support.

The adult in the service holds an educational award at level 6 on the National Qualifications framework.

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/ premises and facilities. The inspections 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 and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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.

(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

- (2) Both staff files were assessed for appropriate vetting.
- (a) One of the four references required was available from a past employer, this reference was validated.
 - (b) Two references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) There was Garda Vetting on file for both staff who may have access to children in the service.
 - (d) Police vetting was not required for either staff member.
- (4) The registered provider held an appropriate qualification in childcare.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (a) / (b) One reference was not available from a past employer or source other than a past employer. Not having staff appropriately vetted may lead to inappropriate staff having access to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2) (a) The outstanding reference has been received from a past employer. This reference has been validated. All references will be sought prior to staff starting in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2) A copy of the reference has been received.

Summary Comment

Following receipt of the corrective and preventive actions and the evidence, the requirements for this Regulation have been met.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there were appropriate adults in the service to attend to the needs of the children.
- (2) The adult child ratio was adequate throughout the session. One adult was caring for the four children in attendance.

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;*
 - (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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The children's registration forms for all four children in attendance were assessed.
- (a) The name and date of birth were recorded for all four children.
 - (d) The parents/ guardians' details were recorded on all four files.
 - (f) The details of illness/disability were recorded on all four files.
 - (i) Consent for appropriate medical treatment if required was recorded on all files.
- (3) (c) The files as detailed on (1) above were available for inspection by an authorised person.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) Two of the four files assessed did not contain the dates on which the children first attended the service.
 - (c) No form had capacity to record when the child would cease to attend the service.
 - (d) No file had a record of who was authorised to collect the children.
 - (e) One file did not contain the details of the child's medical practitioner.
 - (f) One file did not have a record of any immunisations, if any, administered to the child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) (b) (c) (d) (e) & (f) The registered provider has indicated that the enrolment forms have been updated to include all of the information as outlined in the Regulation.

Supporting documentation submitted

The assurances received on the corrective and preventive action form are accepted as proof of completion.

Summary Comment

The requirements for this Regulation have been met and will be assessed on the next inspection.

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

BASIC NEEDS:

- The basic needs of the children were met for food and drinks. The theme of the day was 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and the registered provider made porridge which the children ate with honey and cream and a selection of fruit with water to drink. When a child requested additional food, this was given to them. The theme and the stories told enhanced the mealtime experience as the children ate and drank together.
- There was freely available drinking water in the service with water available to the children when they required same.
- The children were observed to toilet independently and staff helped and reminded the children when required with hand washing.
- There were rest areas indoors and outside. The children when the weather was good could rest and opt out in the hammock or in the large shed which had play equipment and matting. Indoors there was a day bed and a large comfortable chair which could be accessed by the children.
- The children had access to their coats and extra clothing when required outside. As the service was run outside wellingtons and wet weather clothing was available to all children.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The service was small and was run singlehandedly by the registered provider. A supportive relationship between the adult and children in the group was evident with the children noted to seek the support of the adult when required.
- The adult was observed to interact with the children and was on hand to support the children when required but was also observed to allow the children to play together individually or in small groups without interruption.
- The children were observed to seek support when needed.
- Communication with parents was daily at drop off and collection also by phone and text.

- The registered provider had a dog onsite, this dog was resting away from the children and interacted with them intermittently under the supervision of the registered provider.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The indoor play environment consisted of one playroom that had resources available to the children. There was a child height table with appropriate height chairs for the children. There was a rest area away from these tables and consisted of a day bed and had books available to the children, should the children require to rest and relax. The equipment and play activities were stored on low and accessible shelving and in storage boxes and were observed to be accessed by the children for use outside, this availability of resources and of where they used same allowed each child to have choice in their activity and how and where they played allowing for them to become independent thinkers.
- The outdoor play area consisted of a well-developed activity space. The ground covering was concrete, grass that was long or short, bark mulch and stones with paths throughout. Each area had planting of vegetables, flowers or shrubbery.
- At the base of the slides was bark mulch which allowed the children to use the slides and climbing frame in safety. There was climbing equipment and swing, that allowed for the gross motor development of the children. A shed that contained home equipment that promoted imaginary play. A stage area with musical instruments which allowed for the children to develop sensory awareness. A tunnel for the children to climb through and a hill where the children were observed to roll from and pick daisies to make daisy chains. There was also a car available where the back seats were removed and the children could play, house, driving cars or use this space as a shelter in poor weather. Adult and child seating was available. Ride on toys were available and were used for the development of balance and coordination. Arts and crafts equipment was accessible to the children at all times.

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

The registered provider provides the snack for the children daily. On the day of inspection, the food served was porridge with honey and cream, apples and grapes with drinks of water.

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 door at the side of the service was secured with a thumb turn lock and the main entrance was secured with a wooden gate with a running bolt as the door into the service was open at all times to allow for ease of use of both areas. This ensured that no child could leave unsupervised and no unauthorised adult could gain access into the building.
- The window openings were out of the reach of the children.
- All high units were secured and were not in danger of being pulled down.
- Hot drinks were not consumed in the service.
- There was no television or other wall mounted equipment that might fall in the service.
- All storage of cleaning products was out of reach of the children.
- The temperature of the hot water was recorded at 32.3°C, this allowed for effective hand washing and avoided the risk of a scald injury.
- The small arts and crafts equipment such as beads and buttons were stored on a high shelf and only accessible under the supervision of staff.

Infection Control:

- There was hot and cold running water available at all sinks inclusive of the outside sink. There was liquid hand soap and paper towels available at all sinks used by the children.
- The children were observed to wash hands before snack time, after petting the dog who was onsite and after messy play was observed.

Safe Sleep:

- Children do not sleep in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The electrical cable belonging to the printer was accessible to the children which may be a risk of strangulation.
2. The pedals of the tractors (four in total) were missing the plastic foot pedal leaving the bolts exposed. These exposed bolts were sharp and may injure a child should they fall against same.
3. In the area with high grass, there were large rocks, as the rocks could not be seen they posed a risk of tripping a child.
4. The fencing in two areas of the outdoor space was broken in patches and this allowed for the nails to be exposed and sticking out, this along with the bath where the wood had rotten exposed nails were evident. These protruding nails were at the height of a child and therefore pose a risk of causing damage to a child's eyes or skin should they fall against same.

Infection Control:

5. There was a cloth towel in the adult toilet. This multi-use towel poses a risk of contamination and cross infection.
6. The counter under the cooker was missing the seals on the chipboard, this exposed chipboard is not easily cleaned and allows for contamination and cross infection.
7. There was no records available to indicate that the service was cleaned on a daily and weekly basis. Not ensuring the service is appropriately cleaned may lead to cross infection.

Administration of Medication:

8. The emergency fever reducing medication available in the service was out of date. Not having a supply of this medication may hinder the care of a child should they need to have their temperature to be managed quickly.

Fire Safety:

9. The fire exit door was partially blocked by the printer for the computer, not ensuring unobstructed access to the outdoors in the event of a fire may delay safe evacuation. Of note the door to the outside via the lobby was open throughout the running of the service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The printer has been removed and is no longer accessible to the children.
2. The tractors with broken pedals have been removed.
3. The rocks in the long grass have been removed.
4. The bath has been removed and some of the fencing removed. Other areas of fencing have been repaired.

Infection Control:

5. The cloth towel has been removed and replaced with paper towels.
6. The countertop has been replaced with a sealed counter.
7. Cleaning logs and sign off sheets are now available.

Administration of Medication:

8. New emergency medication has been purchased.

Fire Safety:

9. The printer has been removed.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. A photograph of the fire exit door has been received which demonstrates that the printer and loose cables have been removed.
2. The assurances given on the corrective and preventive action form have been accepted as evidence that the broken tractor have been removed.
3. Photographic evidence of the rocks removed from the long grass have been received.
4. Photographs of the outdoor area with fencing removed or fixed and the old bath removed have been received.

Infection Control:

5. Photographs of the paper towels in the staff toilet have been received.
6. A photograph of the new countertop has been received.
7. Evidence of the cleaning logs have been received.

Administration of Medication:

8. Photographic evidence of new temperature reducing medication has been received.

Fire Safety:

9. Photographic evidence of clear access to the fire door has been received.

Summary Comment

Following receipt of the corrective and preventive action form and the evidence to support this, the requirements for this Regulation have been met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(3) (a) the registered provider ensured that the authorised person was signed into the service

(b) A record of all visitors to the service was maintained.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure the children were signed into the service. No child had been signed into the service in two weeks. Not ensuring children's attendance is recorded will in the event of an emergency not allow for full evacuation of the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The registered provider has ensured the sign in book is in a prominent position to ensure it is completed daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) The corrective and preventive actions and the evidence of the sign in book completed has been received.

Summary Comment

The requirements for this Regulation have been met and will be assessed on the next inspection.

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) The registered provider who runs the service singlehandedly has appropriate and up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2) (a) The first aid supplies were accessible to the children and stored on the shelf in the entrance lobby of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (b) The sterile supplies in the first aid box were out of date. Not having sterile dressing available in the event, they are required may delay the appropriate treatment of an open wound.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (b) The sterile supplies have been replaced.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2) Photographic evidence of the new supplies has been received.

Summary Comment

The requirements for this Regulation have been met.

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.
- (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

- (4) The notice to indicate what needs to be done in the event of a fire was displayed at the fire exit door.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The registered provider had not completed a fire drill this year. Monthly fire drills are required to ensure the children are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire in the service.
- (b) The firefighting equipment had not been serviced annually and the last service was in October 2020. The last service record for the smoke alarms was in October 2021. Not servicing the fire detection and fire fighting equipment may lead to them not functioning properly in the event of a fire in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) (a) The provider has carried out a fire drill on the 29.05.2023 and explained the need for these to the children.
- (b) The fire extinguishers and the fire alarm have been serviced.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) Photographic evidence of the fire drill record and the fire alarm service (29.05.2023) and the fire extinguisher servicing (19.06.2023) have been received.

Summary Comment

Following receipt of the corrective and preventive action and the evidence received the requirements for this Regulation have been met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured . The service was insured to operate as a sessional service with a maximum of 22 children.