

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE121
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Name of Service:	Scariff Playgroup
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Address of Service:	Scariff National School, Church Road, Fossabeg, Scariff, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V94 A9W3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Itty Knight
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	09/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare
Inspection undertaken by:	A.McCarthy
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

Description of service

Scariff Playgroup was established in 1984, as a private sessional service in Scariff, County Clare. The childcare facility is located in a prefabricated modular structure on the grounds of Scariff National School. The programme of care and education is facilitated Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 12:00 for children ranging in age from two to five years.

Staffing

Four adults are employed in the service. On the 09 September 2024, the registered provider operated the service assisted by two adults.

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 and safety. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. 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, the 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*

(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

(1)(a)

The registered provider was the person in charge and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The registered provider and a named person to deputise was available at all times during the inspection.

(2)

Four files were available and reviewed by the inspector. The findings included the following:

(a)

Three validated references from past employers in respect of adults working in the service were available.

(b)

Five validated references were available in respect adults working in the service from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the four adults working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Not applicable, international police vetting was not required for the adults working in the service.

(4)

Four adults work directly with the children and hold Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

- (1)
During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.
- (3)
On the 09 September 2024 the ratio of adults supervising children was maintained in each care room. Three adults supervised fifteen children in attendance.

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

(1)(a)

The children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment, having regard to the age and level of development of the children.

Basic Needs of the Infants & Children:

The children were treated with positive regard by the adults in the service. The adults interacted with the children in a kind and caring manner. The adults rotated in accordance with the children's preferences and needs. The children were encouraged to be independent whilst caring for their belongings during the activities and whilst using the toilet. The children and adults sat and ate together during mealtime and conversed amicably. Mealtime was observed to be unhurried and a sociable occasion. The programme of play based activities was led by the children. The adults offered praise and encouragement and the children were respected and supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities. The children were notified in advance of transitions in activities in the indoor and outdoor environment.

Physical & Material Environment:

The indoor environment was spacious and offered a range of developmentally appropriate and challenging experiences for the children. Low level seating and tables were provided for the children. The play materials and equipment were freely available and accessible to the children on low level shelving. The room was laid out with defined areas of interest that included an art area, a home corner, a construction area, sand and water play, a library area, and shelving units contained a range of manipulative, construction, creative and exploratory equipment and materials.

The outdoor play area was provided to the rear of the service. The play area consisted of a grass surface and a wooden shelter is available with child sized benches and a large sand box with utensils. A wooden play frame with a slide, a wooden seesaw and a mud kitchen with accessories, various transport vehicles, piping and water play, and chalk black boards and wooden playhouse. Weatherproof clothing and footwear were available for all the pre-school children.

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 service was secured to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility.
- The designated outdoor area was secured with fencing to protect the children within.
- The children in attendance were recorded on arrival and on departure from the service.
- Cleaning agents and storage areas were inaccessible to the children.
- All the toys and play equipment in the indoor and outdoor areas were maintained in good condition.

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in clean condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and pedal operated bins. Child friendly illustrations were located at the hand wash basins as prompts for the children to wash their hands.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after using the toilet, messy play and prior to mealtime.

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider stated that medication is not routinely administered in the service.
- An administration of medication policy was available to inform practice.

- Documentation was available should medication be required to be administered.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- Records of completed fire drills were available.
- A fire assembly point was available adjacent to the service.

Outing:

- An outing was not undertaken during the inspection.
- An outings policy was available to inform the practice of adults working in the service.

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 thirty-seven pre-school children. The policy is valid until the 27 March 2025.