

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CE124		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Scribbles Preschool/Montessori		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ballyveskill, Tiermaclane, Ennis, Co. Clare		
<b>Eircode:</b>	V95 AP8E		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Niamh Stackpoole		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Dates of Inspection:</b>	05/10/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A.McCarthy		
<b>Title:</b>	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

Scribbles Preschool/Montessori was established in 2015 as a privately operated sessional service in a rural area west of Ennis, County Clare. The service operates Monday to Friday and is currently open from 09:10 to 12:10. The play-based programme of care is facilitated in a large open plan room in a purpose-built, single-storey building. A large enclosed outdoor play area is located to the side and rear of the building.

### Staffing

During the inspection the registered provider and a staff member cared for the children in attendance. Both members of staff have an appropriate qualification in Early childhood Care and Education. The staff files demonstrated engagement in continuous professional development.

### 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 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. 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*

*(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 designated person in charge and a named staff member is available to deputise as required.

(b)

Both the designated person in charge and the person who is assigned as deputy were available throughout the inspection.

Two files were available in respect of the registered provider and the member of staff. The findings included the following:

(2)(a)

One written and validated past employer reference was available.

(b)

Three written and validated references from a source other than a past employer are available.

(c)

Garda Vetting disclosures were available and reviewed in respect of the registered provider and a member of staff.

(d)

International police vetting was not required as the staff, had not lived in another State for a period longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

The staff employed by the service held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications at Level 5 and Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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)  
An adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the service.
- (3)  
An adequate number of adults supervised the children at all times during the inspection. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2023 two staff cared for ten children during the sessional period.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)  
Fourteen completed forms were available for the number of children enrolled in the service. These forms were reviewed and detailed the required particulars outlined in (1) (a)-(i).

### 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)

##### Basic Needs of the Children:

The inspector observed the children's learning, development, and well-being to be supported by the members of staff. The staff interacted with the children in a kind and caring manner this was observed by the staff conversing with the children at their level in a respectful and caring manner and responding promptly to their cues for assistance. The staff used positive behavioural strategies to resolve situations that arose. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their age and level of development. The older children were encouraged to be independent while caring for their personal belongings, using the toilet, participation in tasks and tidy up time. A key person approach was observed, the staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the children's preferences, interests, and capabilities. The staff offered continuous praise and encouragement.

Upon the inspector's arrival, the children were fully engaged in table-top colouring activities, dress up and pretend play in the pizza restaurant and the veterinarian area. The children transitioned to sensory activities that included playing with leaves and the pumpkins that had been picked from the garden and making play dough together. The staff rotated around the room in accordance with the children's prompts for assistance supporting the children individually and as part of a group. Mealtime was observed to be unhurried and relaxed as the staff and children sat together. An audible book was played and the children listened to the story and conversed amicably with each other. Drinking water was available throughout the session for the children.

The indoor and outdoor environments offered an enriching and challenging experience for the children in attendance. The care room was bright and appropriately resourced for the age range and stage of development of the children. The transitions in the changes of activities were facilitated with ease, as staff notified the children in advance of any change in the programme of care and learning.

The indoor area included designated areas of interest with a large range of accessible supporting materials and equipment. The areas included an art station, a home corner/restaurant, a veterinarian surgery, two dolls' houses, a dress up area with a large range of costumes, a large box of building blocks, sensory tables and a large sensory lamp, two low level tables with a chalk and board and pegboards. Low level shelving, tables, chair and individual units were accessible to the children. The children were all dressed in weatherproof clothing and footwear prior to going out in the large outdoor area. Activities that the children engaged in included: cycling on bikes, chasing games, playing on the slides, with connect four games, in the mud kitchen and waterplay. The outdoor area had a large range of toys, play materials and equipment that included: cars, trucks, tractors, a large sand pit, seating and a fire station house. The children were observed to thoroughly enjoy the sessional period.

## 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 entrance to the service was secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering or unsupervised children exiting the building.
- The children’s arrival and departure times were recorded in a logbook and the children were supervised at all times.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor play area was adequately secured with a fence and gated access and the children were supervised at all times.

##### Infection Control:

- The service and the equipment and materials within were maintained in a clean condition.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals during the session.
- Running hot water was available at the wash hand basins, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lined, lidded pedal bins were available in the care room and the toilet facilities.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not administered by the staff during the inspection. Documentation was available in the event of that prescription or non-prescription medication was required.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- A clearly identifiable fire assembly was located in the service’s car park.
- The service conducts monthly fire drills to prepare the staff and children in the event of a fire.

##### Outing:

- The registered provider confirmed that outings do not take place.

## 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 had a record of up to date First Aid Responder training. The certificate was valid until the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2023.

(2)(a)  
A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in the care room and a second first aid box was available for use in the outdoor area.

(b)  
A first aid box was available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

## 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

(1)(a)

Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2023.

(b)

A record of the number, type and maintenance for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system were available. The most recent firefighting equipment and smoke alarm maintenance service took place respectively in July 2023 and in January 2023.

(4)

A fire action notice demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed 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 twenty-two pre-school children attending the service. The policy is valid until the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.