

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CN022		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Scallywags Childcare		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	3 Coppengagh, Virginia, Co. Cavan		
<b>Eircode:</b>	A82 CY66		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Catherine Keenan		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/06/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	42	PM 29
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre Commons Road Navan, Co. Meath		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D. Murray & AM. Cunningham		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors		

### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

Scallywags Childcare is one of three privately-owned Early Years services operated by the registered provider in Co. Meath and Cavan. The service caters for pre-school children from 0 to 6 years and also provides a school aged service. The service operates from 07:30am to 6pm weekdays and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The premises is a purpose built 2-storey building which is located adjacent to the registered provider's home. There are 5 care rooms an office, kitchen and sanitary facilities.

The rooms were as follows:

#### Downstairs:

The Cub room caters for children from 0 to 2 years attending on a full day care basis.

The Penguin room facilitates the care of children from 2 to 3 years attending on a full day care basis.

#### Upstairs:

The Wallaby and the Kangaroo rooms provide care and education to children from 3 to 6 years attending the service on a sessional/full day care basis.

The Koala room provide care and education to children from 3 to 6 years attending the service on a sessional basis. This room accommodates school aged children in the afternoon.

Enclosed outdoor play areas were located to the rear and side of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs a manager, 13 childcare staff and a cook. Present on the day of inspection were the manager, 10 childcare staff and a cook. The registered provider arrived when the inspection had commenced.

### 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. 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, manager, 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.

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

#### Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Sixteen staff files were reviewed.

Thirty-two validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 16 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for 3 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdictions for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All childcare staff had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6) (a) Two staff members was employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

### 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) On the morning of the inspection there was 1 manager and 10 adults working directly with the 42 children attending the service. The registered provider arrived after the inspection had commenced.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity:

- In the Cub room there were 7 children, aged 1 -2 years of age all attending on a full day care basis being cared for by 3 adults.
- In the Penguin room there were 12 children ranging in aged between 2-3 years, all attending on a full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults.

- In the Koala room there were 6 children ranging in age between 3 to 5 years all attending on a sessional basis being cared for by 1 adult.
- In the Wallaby room there were 7 children ranging in age between 3 to 5 years, five children were availing of the full day care service, 2 children were availing of the sessional service being cared for by 2 adults.
- In the Kangaroo room there were 10 children ranging in age from 3 to 5 years, five children were availing of the full day care service, 5 children were availing of the sessional service being cared for by 2 adults.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were always two adults on the premises when the service was in operation, as evidenced by the staff roster.

### 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) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service:

##### Basic needs:

- All children individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required.
- Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Older children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.
- Children were observed enjoying meaningful, sustained play with tabletop activities, art and crafts and free playing with lots of conversation and laughter observed. Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. Children upstairs moved freely between the three care rooms and were observed practising their songs for their upcoming graduation. In all care rooms the theme of the month was "Fathers Day" with the children's art work displayed to reflect this theme.

- The staff members sat and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required whilst encouraging conversation and extending interactions.
- In the Cubs and Penguin rooms children were placed to sleep for a scheduled period of rest at the service's designated sleep time.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning. Children were observed enjoying imaginative, energetic play with both their peers and staff members.
- Transitions were handled smoothly with children being given ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.

### **Supporting relationships around children:**

- The adults were observed promoting positive behaviour and supported children to find positive solutions when they experienced challenge in sharing play equipment and materials.
- Staff were observed to comfort children who were upset and interactions were warm and engaging.
- Children and parents were greeted at drop off and collection with friendly conversation overheard. A record was kept of all activities pertaining to the children in the Cubs and Penguin rooms which was shared with the parents. The "Our Family Photos" in the care rooms gave a sense of identity and belonging. Overall, the children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

### Compliance Information

- (1)(b) A cot room between the Cubs and the Penguin rooms had 8 standard cots for children under 2 years requiring sleep. Stackable beds are placed on the floor in the Penguin room if required for the older age group. Cosy areas consisting of mats and soft furnishings are available in each care room for children to take a break from activities if needed.
- (3)(a) The outdoor space is divided into 2 areas. The smaller area is for the Cubs room which has an artificial grass surface and is enclosed by fencing with a secured side gate. The larger outdoor space facilitates the remainder of the care rooms. The surface area consists of a low impact surface and cement paving with a secure side gate. A partially sheltered area permitted outdoor play in all types of weather.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

All the care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving at the children's height.

Equipment in the outdoor area for the Cubs room included push along toys, plastic playhouse and small slides, additional equipment was also brought out.

Equipment in the larger outdoor space included a wooden playhouse with a slide and a ladder, mud kitchen, sand and soil trays, building blocks, gutters on the fencing for pouring, ride on toys, basketball stand and a bug hotel.

### 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 service provided the main meal of the day which was prepared onsite by the resident cook. There was a 4-week menu plan available and the main meal on the day of inspection consisted of beef stew, mash potatoes and vegetables. Drinks are available in all care rooms throughout the day. The parents supply all the snacks.

## 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The main door to the service in the reception area was secured and the outdoor spaces were enclosed and had secure gates. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor space.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The play materials and equipment provided in the service were stored on stable-based low level shelving which reduced the risk of the furniture toppling over and causing injury to a child.
- The warm water temperature in the taps in the sanitary accommodation in the service was recorded between 29.6°C and 32.4°C on the day of inspection.

##### Infection Control:

- The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times. Liquid soap and hand paper towels were available in the sanitary facilities.
- A refrigerator was available to store perishable items contained in the children's snacks provided from home by the parents. This reduced the risk of bacteria growth in these food items.
- The premises was in a clean condition and up to date documented cleaning schedules were available in the service.
- Childrens pacifiers were placed in individual boxes and labelled.

##### Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- The temperature of the cot room was maintained between 16 to 20<sup>0</sup> C while children were sleeping.
- A sleep log recording the position, colour and breathing pattern was recorded at 10 minutes intervals on all sleeping children.
- The eight cots and mattresses were in good state of repair. A system was in place to manage sheets and blankets, all sheets noted on cots were clean.

### Fire Safety:

The following fire safety measures were observed:

- Fire drills were conducted on a monthly basis.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. In the large outdoor space there were thorny bushes growing through the fence panelling which were accessible to the children.

#### Infection Control:

2. In the nappy changing area, the following was observed:
  - The wooden frame under the nappy changing mat had chipped paint with visible dirt in the corners.
  - The wall over the nappy changing area was marked with paint chipped.
3. The area around the sinks upstairs was peeling leaving uneven surfaces.

These areas do not provide a smooth surface for adequate cleaning.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. These bushes have been cut back and regular checks for thorny bushes has been included on the service Risk Assessment tool.

#### Infection Control:

2. The wooden frame has been cleaned and repainted.

The wall over the nappy changing area has been tiled.

3. The area around the sinks upstairs has been replaced.

The registered provider will ensure that all areas are clean and have a smooth surface to ensure adequate cleaning.

## Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the following:

Thorny bushes removed and up dated Risk Assessment tool.

Wooden frame under nappy changing mat re-painted. The wall over nappy changing area tiled.

The area around sink upstairs replaced with an even surface.

## Summary Comment

The registered provider in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan has addressed the non-compliances for regulation 23, the response received has been reviewed and accepted.

## 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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available onsite at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

### 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) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 15/05/2024.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment was last serviced on the 27/05/2024. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 22/03/2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 58 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025.