

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN051
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Name of Service:	Scribbles
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Address of Service:	Drumheel, Virginia, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	A82 DH04
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Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Bosch
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18/02/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM	2
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray
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 is a privately owned service which has been in operation since 2003. The service caters for pre-school children from 2 to 6 years and also provides a school aged service. The service operates from 8am to 6pm weekdays and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The premises is a purpose-built extension to the registered provider's home. There are 2 care rooms: The Montessori room and the Playschool room.

There are 2 outdoor play areas to the side and rear of the premises which the children have access to.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 4 childcare staff all of whom work directly with the children.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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) Five staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)& (b) Ten validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 5 adults employed by the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as no staff member had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 5 adults employed to work with children, held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6A) One staff member 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) Present on the day of inspection was the registered provider and 4 childcare staff working directly with the 26 children attending the service.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection. The rooms were as follows:

The Montessori room had 3 staff members caring for 14 children ranging in age from 4 to 5 years.

The Play school room had 2 staff members caring for 12 children ranging in age from 3 to 4 years.

(8)(a) A review of the staff roster demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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

The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that the children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

Basic Needs

- The adult's demonstrated knowledge of the individual care needs of the children especially the children with additional needs. Children were comforted when they became upset with the staff adopting behavioural management strategies such as speaking to them softly, promoting turn taking and sharing and having a change of environment outdoors to support transitions. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together.
- Children were facilitated to make their own choices in selecting play equipment and activities that they wished to engage with. Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. The curriculum was child led incorporating the themes of the week/month which were "Pirates," "Dolls/Babies" and "Healthy Eating" with children's artwork displayed to reflect these themes.
- All 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.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning. The children in the Play-school room were observed enjoying imaginative, energetic outdoor play with both their peers and staff members.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The children all sat around in groups at lunch and mealtimes which created a positive atmosphere where children had the opportunity to interact and developing relationships.
- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed in the care rooms which gave a sense of identity and belonging. Children and parents were greeted at drop off and collection with friendly conversation overheard. 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) Cosy areas consisting of mats, cushions and soft toys were available in both care rooms should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. There were no sleeping children attending the service.

(3)(a) There were 2 suitable, safe and secure outdoor spaces. One adjacent to the Montessori room with a partially sheltered area and an additional space to the rear of the premises. The surface areas consisted of tarmac, cement and soft tiling.

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

- The care rooms had a range of play based natural/sensorial materials and Montessori equipment that offered stimulation, exploration and imagination. These were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving which nurtured independence, facilitated choices, encouraged curiosity, spontaneous play and movement.
- A range of developmentally appropriate equipment was available in the outdoor spaces. Equipment included a wooden activity unit with a ladder and slide, basketball stand and ball, ride on toys, mud kitchen and planting boxes. A shed was available for the storage of additional play equipment.

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

All snacks and main hot meals were provided by the parents and re-heated in the service. Water was available in the children's individual drink containers in the care rooms.

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 registered provider and staff members had a clear understanding of their role and range of responsibilities to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children. Both indoor and outdoor risk assessments tools were available and completed as required.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy was 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.
- Items of food in children's lunch boxes which required refrigeration were stored in a fridge. This reduced the risk of bacteria growth in these food items.
- The premises was in a clean condition with up-to-date documented cleaning schedules available.
- Pedal bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas.
- The sanitary areas were ventilated.
- Tables were cleaned prior to and after meals.

Fire Safety:

The following fire safety measures were observed:

- Fire drills were conducted on a monthly basis.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- The fire assembly point was at the wall in the adjacent car park.

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 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

- (a) A record of the fire drills that take place was available. The most recent fire drill was recorded on 02/01/2025.
- (b) The annual maintenance certificate for the fire extinguishers and the smoke alarms were dated 21/03/2024.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the entrance hallway which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

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 38 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2024 to the 27/03/2025.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated.

Non-Compliance Information

(c)The sanitary closets off the Play school room felt cold on the day of inspection with a temperature reading of 14.1°C . There was no means of heating available in the 2 sanitary closets.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c)Downward facing blow heaters have been installed in both toilet cubicles.
The registered provider will ensure that the heaters are maintained and used as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of two downward facing blow heaters.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.