

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CN055			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Small World Day Care			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Gortnashannon, Crossdoney, Co. Cavan			
<b>Eircode:</b>	H12 K718			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sharon Kilkenny			
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional			
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	24/02/2025			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	46	PM	20
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S Mc Kenna			
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector			
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>				
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			

### Description of service

Small World Day Care is a privately operated Early Years' Service located in a rural area in Co Cavan operating since 2003. The childcare service provides full day care, part time and a sessional service to a maximum of 54 children aged 1 to 6 years. The service operates from 8am to 5.30 pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The premises is comprised of 3 separate detached single storey purpose-built buildings, of which three care rooms were in operation on the day of inspection named Pre Toddler, Preschool 1 and Preschool 2. A large grass surfaced outdoor play area was located on the premises. Carparking is available outside the premises.

### Staffing

There are seven staff employed in the service, which includes the registered provider and two staff employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

### 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 may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding

Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 25 First Aid, Regulation 27 Supervision and Regulation 28 Insurance.

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, 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 service had a designated person in charge who is the registered provider, and a named person in charge to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the registered provider, and a review of the staff roster it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation the designated person in charge or the named person in charge were on the premises.

(c) A management structure was in place, which was clearly identifiable through the staff roster and through discussion with the staff team.

(2) The staff files for 7 staff were reviewed.

- (a) A total of 8 written and validated references from a previous employer were on file.
  - (b) A total of 6 written and validated references from a reputable source were on file.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 7 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all employed staff.
  - (d) A review of the employment history for the 7 staff, demonstrated that no staff had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, therefore police vetting was not required.
- (4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 7 staff 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.

### 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 day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult to child ratios were observed:  
One adult cared for 6 children aged 2 years 8 months to 3 years 1 month in the Pre-Toddler Room.

Three adults cared for 21 children aged 3 years 6 months to 5 years 1 month in Preschool 1 Room.

Three adults cared for 19 children aged 4 years 2 months to 4 years 10 months in Preschool 2 Room.

(8) A review of the staff rosters and the staff sign in and out records, demonstrated that there are at least 2 adults on the premises while the full day care service is in operation.

### 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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

#### 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

Healthy eating was promoted within the service. A weekly menu for hot meals, and a two-week snack menu was on display. The hot meal served on the day was a chicken pasta dish. The children's snacks taken in from home for morning snack time contained a variety of sandwiches, crackers, cereal bars, smoothies, cheeses, rice cakes, yogurts and fruits. The children's drinks were placed on low level shelves for them to access throughout their day. Snack and mealtimes were relaxed with staff observed to sit with the children at morning snack time, assisting younger children where needed and engaging in conversations with the children.

The children were observed to use the toilet independently, while also calling on the staff for supports where needed. Spare clothing was stored in the service, each child had their own individual cubby box labelled with their photo and name. Aprons were available for messy play activities and children had appropriate clothing including wellington boots to wear whilst outdoors.

##### Supporting Relationships

A key worker system was in place, which allows close relationships between staff children and their families to be formed. Individual folders to include children’s creative artwork and worksheets were compiled for each child. Minimal staff changeover was observed, the children demonstrated familiarity with all staff that worked in the service. The staff were observed to act as positive role models for the children, using praise and encouragement where positive interactions were observed with comments such as “well done” and “good girl/boy” used by the staff. The staff were observed to be aware of each child’s interest, by noticing where a child may not have any current interest to play in the set up play areas. The staff were observed to talk with the children to find out what they would like to do and then help them to get the relevant equipment or resources for them. The staff were observed to provide supports at the child’s level which included sitting on the floor with them while they built floor play jigsaws, played hairdresser role play and played with the dolls.

The staff team were observed to work well together, ensuring smooth transitions from play time to the familiar daily routines such as snack time.

### Physical And Material Environment

The care rooms were spacious and well laid out to allow free movement of children from one area to another. The indoor care rooms were laid out with similar interest areas. Some of the interest areas provided were well resourced home corners with dress up materials, shop areas with cardboard food boxes, cosy areas with books, construction areas, role play stations to include the bakers and the doctors, musical toys, areas with dolls and resources, tabletop areas with connecting and stacking toys and jigsaws. A well-resourced creative area was provided, and small world areas to included fire stations, playhouses, farms, garages with small world people animals and cars available for use.

Materials were freely available and accessible on low level shelves and in boxes at the children’s level. The children were observed to easily seek out toys of their choice. The display of children’s recent artwork to include hearts for Valentines Day, birthday charts and family photos were on display on the care room walls.

There was a large grassed outdoor play area which was secured by wooden fencing and lockable gates. A wooden bridge, a raised area, music wall, wooden teepee and a storage shed with additional play equipment was available in this area. A covered area was provided along with slides, rocking toys, push- a-long toys and ride on equipment. A long concrete area between the care rooms and the grassed area were observed in use by the children attending the Preschool 1 and Preschool 2 room on the day of inspection. Games with a coloured parachute and balls, bubbles, and chalk games was observed in use during the outdoor play time in this area.

## 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 observed on the day of inspection:

- Upon the inspectors arrival the premises were appropriately secured to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. The outdoor areas were surrounded by wooden fencing and gates.
- The toys and equipment in use by the children on the day of inspection were observed to be maintained in good repair.
- Daily risk assessments and management checklists were completed and available for review,
- The kitchen is in another building therefore was inaccessible to the children. Storage areas were inaccessible to the children, and the cleaning materials were stored up high out of the reach of children.

##### Infection Control:

The inspector observed the following infection control measures in practice within the service:

- Warm running water, hand soap, pedal operated bins and paper towels were available for handwashing. The children were observed to wash their hands before morning snack, after snack time, after using the toilet and following outdoor play time.
- Sanitary areas were ventilated by openable windows.
- Cleaning schedules were in place and completed up to date. The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic manner throughout.
- A pest control servicing contract was in place with recent records available for review.

##### Safe Sleep:

- At present no child aged under 2 years is attending the service.
- Sleep facilities for children aged over 2 years were available in the form of stackable beds with individual bedding if required.
- Staff advised the inspector that currently no child takes a sleep while attending the service, therefore no sleep records were available for review.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire drills are carried out monthly, demonstrated by written records available for review.
- Fire exits remained clear from obstruction during the inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. A metal gate which led on to the front car parking area had a low-level unsecured handle easily accessible to the children. Additionally, there was a gap between the double metal gate and the wooden fencing, which was not adequately secured in order to prevent the risk of a child exiting this area unsupervised.

#### Infection Control:

2. The food items taken in from home for the children attending the Pre-Toddler Room were observed to contain perishable items such as cheese and yogurts. These food items were stored in baskets within the care rooms and not in a refrigerator at the recommended storage of 5°C or below.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. Boths gates at the side of the building now have locks on them. As the double gate is never open that lock will always remain locked, as for the single gate when all staff has reported to work, the single gate will be locked, and safety checks will be carried out before the children go outside.

#### Infection Control:

2. A fridge has been placed into the pre- toddler room. Fridge temperatures will be taken and recorded on placed on file.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

Photographic evidence of the locked gates, and a wooden panel fitted to fill the gap between the fence and the gate.

#### Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of countertop fridge in place in the Pre-Toddler with record checks.

### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 23.

### 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 ensured that a person who held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. Six staff held in-date FAR training certificates.

(2)(a) & (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available in each of the three care rooms in operation on the day of inspection, and were stored in accessible and conspicuous locations, out of the reach of children.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

On the day of the inspection the inspector observed the staff members appropriately supervising the children in attendance.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for 54 pre-school children attending the service on a Full Day Care basis. The policy showed that the service had insurance in place from 28/03/2024 to 27/03/2025.