

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL264			
Name of Service:	Scope to Grow			
Address of Service:	Castleknock Rise, Laurel Lodge, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin			
Eircode:	D15 HD35			
Name of Registered Provider:	Catherine Hinkson			
Service type:	Full Day			
Date of Inspection:	19/02/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	49	PM	32
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K			
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Nelson			
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

Scope to Grow is a full day care service located in a residential setting in Dublin 15. The service is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 56 children aged 0 to 6 years, is open from Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.00pm and participates in the Early Childhood Education and Care Programme (ECCE) which is delivered from 9.00am to 12.00 noon. Scope to Grow is one of two services operated by the registered provider.

The service operates from a purpose-built single-story building with six care rooms to include the Nursery Room (6 months to 20 months), Toddler Room (20 months to 3 years) and Preschool Rooms 1, 2, 3 and 4 each catering for children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 5 years. The preschool rooms cater for children on a full day care and sessional basis from 9.00am to 12.00pm and in the afternoon the full day care children move into Preschool rooms 2 and 3 and Preschool 1 and 4 provides school age childcare. Sanitary facilities are located directly off the Nursery and Toddler rooms and sanitary facilities for the four preschool rooms are available. Other facilities include two cot rooms located off the Nursery Room, a staff room, staff sanitary facilities, an office and a kitchen. A fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the front of the premises.

Staffing

There are currently eleven staff employed by the service including the person in charge, a cook and nine childcare staff who work directly with the children. The registered provider does not work in the service. The person in charge and the cook can provide cover across the rooms where needed.

There were twelve adults present on the day of the inspection including the registered provider, a manager and relief staff member from the other service operated by the registered provider, the cook, the person in charge and seven staff to who worked 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9(1),(2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4) Management and Recruitment
- Regulation 11(1),(4),(8) Staffing Levels
- Regulation 16(1)(h)(i)(j)(k) Records in relation to Children
- Regulation 19(1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of child
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Child
- Regulation 29 Premises.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation:

- Regulation 16(1)(h)(i)(j)(k) Records in relation to Children
- Regulation 19(1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of child
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Child
- Regulation 29 Premises.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Nursery, Toddler and Preschool Room 4 and did not include Preschool rooms 1, 2 and 3. Regulation 11 was inspected in all rooms.

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 and named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The person in charge was present during the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place the details of which were displayed in the entrance hallway of the service.
- (2) Thirteen staff files were reviewed, including the eleven staff members and the two visiting staff members from the other service operated by the registered provider. The following checks had been completed:
- (a),(b) Twenty six validated references written references from a past employer or source other than a previous employer were available for the thirteen staff members who's files were reviewed.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all thirteen staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) A review of documentary evidence showed that five adults had lived outside of the state for six months or more, and police vetting was available from that state.
- (4) The thirteen staff who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

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.*
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and*
 - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

(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 were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service to meet their basic care needs. There were thirteen staff available to the 49 children.

(4) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection.

Eight staff were allocated to work directly with the 49 children who were present on the morning of the inspection with a breakdown as follows:

- Nursery room - 2 adults to 5 children aged between 11 months-1 year and eight months old.
- Toddler room - 2 adults to 11 children aged between 1-3 years old.
- Preschool room 1- 1 adult to 8 children aged between 2 years 8 months -5 years old.
- Preschool room 2- 1 adult to 8 children aged between 2 years 8 months -5 years old.
- Preschool room 3- 1 adult to 9 children aged between 2 years 8 months -5 years old.
- Preschool room 4- 1 adult to 8 children aged between 2 years 8 months -5 years old.

Six staff were allocated to work directly with the 32 children who were present on the afternoon of the inspection with a breakdown as follows:

- Nursery room - 2 adults to 6 children aged between 11 months-1 year and eight months old.
- Toddler room - 2 adults to 10 children aged between 1-3 years old.
- Preschool room 2- 1 adult to 8 children aged between 2 years 8 months -5 years old.
- Preschool room 3- 1 adult to 8 children aged between 2 years 8 months -5 years old.

(8)(a) The staff roster provided for a minimum of two adults to be on the premises at all times of opening.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured the following:

- (h) Attendance records detailing the arrival and departure of the children on a daily basis were maintained.
- (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure the following:

- (j) A full record in writing was not maintained for the administration of medication. The record keeping system available did not allow for the signature of the parent acknowledging the child had received the medication.
- (k) The registered provider did not ensure a full record in writing was consistently maintained for accident and incidents. Four of the twenty-two forms reviewed did not have parents' signatures recorded.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(1)(j) The medication form on the software application has been amended to include a space for parents to sign acknowledgement that their child has received the medication each time the medication is administered by a staff member. The policy and procedure regarding administration of medication has been updated shared with all relevant stakeholders.

Preventive action

Management will ensure to check medication forms have been signed by parents daily.

(k) Corrective action:

Accident/Incident records have been reviewed and signatures have been obtained from parents. A communication has been sent to all parents to remind them to sign and date accident reports upon collection. Staff have also refreshed their training on the accident/incident policy and procedures.

Preventive action:

Management will ensure to check accident/incident forms have been signed by parents daily. The accident and incident policy and procedures will be shared with all new families and new staff when joining the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

(j) Evidence of updated form.

Evidence of updated policy.

Evidence of staff training on medication administration policy.

Evidence of communication to parents.

(k) Evidence of communication to parents.

Evidence of staff training on accident and incident policy.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 16 have been adequately addressed.

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 service ensured the child's learning, development and wellbeing was facilitated by the following examples:

- Staff were observed to attend to the personal comfort needs of the children. For example, children were provided with bibs for mealtimes to protect their clothing, shoes and heavy clothing was removed for sleep, and a child's hair was clipped back for their comfort during a play activity.
- Unacceptable behaviour was addressed immediately, with staff giving clear instruction to the children to use kind hands, and a child was comforted immediately after a minor incident. This was in line with the service policy on behaviour.
- Children were observed to move freely throughout their care rooms and independently chose activities. Staff were observed to engage with them in their play choice, using strategies such as questioning, mirroring the child's play and following the child's lead. These strategies promote the child as an equal participant in their daily life.
- Furniture was a suitable size for the children attending the rooms. Equipment was laid out on shelving that was visible and accessible to the children, and grouped in themes such as home area, construction area, small world play, sensory play and mark-making. This equipment provided a range of play experiences which facilitated imagination, language skills, fine and gross motor development.
- Images of the children were displayed throughout the rooms promoting a sense of welcoming and belonging. Displays of recent art activities were visible throughout the rooms and hallway. These were reflective of short and long-term planning available.

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:

- Blinds cords were observed to be secured and out of reach of children.
- Food such as grapes were observed to be cut in half, in appropriate bite size for the children.
- The kitchen was observed to be inaccessible to the children on the day of the inspection.
- Cleaning products were observed to be stored up high out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Snuffle stations were available in the care rooms, where children were respectfully supported to clean their noses.
- Liquid soap, thermostatically controlled warm water and single use hand towels were available at all wash hand basins used by the children and the staff members.
- Individual labelled cups were available throughout the care rooms.
- Childrens were supplied with individual bed linen which was stored appropriately.
- Snacks provided by parents were appropriately refrigerated.
- Lidded, foot pedal operated bins were available throughout the care rooms and sanitary accommodation.

Safe Sleep:

- Appropriate cots and mattresses were observed to be in use, in line with safe sleep guidance.
- A log was maintained where the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children was checked every 10 minutes.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits and walkways throughout the premises were observed to be unobstructed.
- Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in each of the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The finger protector at the door into the Nursery room from the hallway was cracked and broken and posed a pinch risk to children.

Infection Control:

The following increased the potential risk of infection:

2. The nappy changing mat in one of the nappy changing areas was visibly soiled and there was a build-up of dust and debris under the mat. This increased the risk of cross contamination.
3. The cleaning record for one of the care rooms had been pre-filled for the month in advance. Adequate and regular cleaning could not be determined from the record.
4. Items of clothing were stored in an open box in the nappy changing unit. Only items for use in the sanitary accommodation area should be stored there.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General safety:

1. **Corrective Action:** The finger protector on the Nursery door has been replaced with a new one and a risk assessment was completed.

Preventive Action: Management will ensure there are risk assessments carried out on all doors in the setting and any damaged equipment will be removed and replaced immediately.

Infection Control:

Corrective Action:

2. The changing area has been deep cleaned and staff have received further training on our cleaning policy and procedures. Signage has also been displayed to remind staff to ensure the changing area is always kept clean.
3. The cleaning records have been updated to reflect real time procedures. Staff have been retrained on our cleaning policy and procedures.
4. The open box has been removed from the changing room facility. Signage has been displayed to remind staff that only items for the use in the sanitary area should be stored there.

Preventive Action:

2. Management will monitor the changing area throughout the day and ensure all staff members follow the correct cleaning procedures.
3. Management will ensure to monitor and sign cleaning sheets daily to ensure they reflect real time information.
4. Staff members will no longer store items in open boxes. All items will be stored in sealed boxes in the cupboards.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence.
Updated risk assessment.

Infection Control:

- 2 to 4. Evidence of staff training on cleaning and infection control.
Evidence of new signage
Photographic evidence of sanitary accommodation

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required,*

Compliance Information

(b) The following was observed to ensure the service was safe and secure:

- The service had an electronic door release system which was managed by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The outdoor area to the front of the premises was fully enclosed with fencing, and the gate to the grounds of the premises was observed to be secured.

(d) The flooring throughout the premises had been recently replaced and was observed to be suitable and of a material which allowed for adequate and effective cleaning.

Non-Compliance Information

(c) The premises was not adequately ventilated. The temperature of a room while children slept exceeded the recommended ambient temperature of 18-22°C for children over one year old. This makes an uncomfortable environment for children to sleep in. The inspector recorded the following temperatures:

Room	Time	Temperature in °C	Required Temperature °C
Cot Room 1	12.36pm	23.4°C	18-22°C
Cot Room 2	10.03am	23.3°C	
	11.11am	23.9°C	
Toddler Room	12.01pm	23°C	

It is acknowledged steps were made to reduce the room temperatures when brought to the attention of the person in charge. The underfloor heating was turned off and windows and doors were opened.

(d) The service was not maintained as required. The wooden skirting in the sanitary accommodation of the Toddler room was in poor condition with chipped flaking paint and there were gaps visible between the skirting and the wall. This limited effective cleaning.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) **Corrective Action:** The underfloor heating temperature has been lowered and the timer has been adjusted to ensure the correct temperature of 18 – 22 degrees is maintained within the setting.

Preventive Action: Staff members will ensure to monitor the room temperatures and report to management if the room temperature is not within the recommended temperature of 18-22 degrees for sleeping children. Management will alter the temperature of the heating and adjust the timer when required.

(d) **Corrective Action:** The wooden skirting in the toddler room changing facility is scheduled to be replaced on 31/03/2024.

Preventive Action: Management will ensure there are risk assessments carried out on all skirting in the setting and any damaged skirting will be fixed or replaced immediately.

Supporting documentation submitted

(c) Photographic evidence of appropriate temperatures maintained in the rooms.

Photographic evidence of the thermostat maintained.

(d) No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 29(c) has been addressed. The non-compliance under 29(d) remains outstanding until the work is completed.