

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015MH173 |
|--------------------------|-------------|

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Name of Service: | Skryne Hill Pre-School |
|-------------------------|------------------------|

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Address of Service: | Skryne, Tara, Co. Meath |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Eircode: | C15 HFX6 |
|-----------------|----------|

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Name of Registered Provider: | Alison King |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Service type: | Sessional |
|----------------------|-----------|

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Date of Inspection: | 19/09/2025 |
|----------------------------|------------|

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 17 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

| | |
|---|---|
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath |
| Inspection undertaken by: | AM Cunningham |
| 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

Skyrne Hill preschool is operating a sessional service. The service can accommodate up to 22 pre-school children attending at any one time. The operating hours are 09.00am to 12.30pm. The age range catered for is 2 years to 6 years. The service consists of a care room and sanitary accommodation. The outdoor area is available to the side of the premises.

Staffing

There are three staff members employed in the service which includes the registered provider.

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, 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 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.
- (c) A clear management structure that identified specific roles of each employee was displayed in the reception area.
- (2)(a)(b) Three staff files were reviewed.
- Six validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for all adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) Staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 and 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.*
- (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) On the day of inspection there were 3 adults working directly with 17 pre-school children attending the service.
- (3) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity on the day of inspection:

Three adults cared for 17 children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 4 years.

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 children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the children.

Basic Needs of Children:

The adults treated the children in a kind and caring manner and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults conversed with the children in a sensitive and respectful manner, used soft tones of voice, engaged with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance and comfort. The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings and using the toilet. The adults offered praise and encouragement, and children were respected and supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities. The children were offered a range of developmentally challenging play and learning activities and the children were observed to be fully engaged and included in all activities in the indoor and outdoor environments. The children transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor area for play based activities.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

Staff demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge of the children's preferences, interests, and individual capabilities. All children get the opportunity to be a "little helper" throughout the year which's helps promote children's sense of responsibility, cooperation, and independence in young learners. The theme for the week included "all about me" as staff get to know the children and the children get to know each other. During activities the adults followed the children's lead and the children were supported in individual and group play. The room accommodated visual routine displays demonstrating photographic illustrations to support and include all children in the programme of care. The children were notified and consulted in advance of changes in the

activities. The transitions in the programme of care were completed cohesively in a calm manner in the room. The adults worked effectively together to facilitate the programme of care and education. The adults communicated informally with parents/guardians on messaging system and during collection periods.

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 room had well defined and supported areas of interest which included library areas beside rest areas, wooden puzzles and building blocks, home area, art and craft materials and montessori equipment. Additional equipment was available and rotated throughout the year. The room was bright and airy, and children had lots of room to work on the tables or the floor if they wished. Children’s artwork was displayed on the walls in a way that respects and acknowledges all the children’s efforts.

The outdoor area was available to the side of the building with grass and a hard surface area, children used the ride on toys predominately in the hard surface area available. The outdoor area equipment included a mud kitchen, ride on toys, sand table, plastic house, and cars and trucks, slide and water 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 in place on the day of inspection:

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The main door to the service was secured and the outdoor spaces were enclosed with fencing, walls and gates. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- All play materials were placed on stable based shelving units. Play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children present in the service.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

Infection Control:

The inspector viewed the following infection control measures undertaken in the service to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children.

- The service was visibly clean and up to date documented cleaning schedules were on display.
- Foot-operated pedal waste bins were available in the service which facilitated the hygienic disposal of waste.
- The children's packed lunches, supplied from home, were refrigerated on arrival to the service which reduced the risk of bacteria growth in perishable food items.
- Child had individual place mats for their lunch which assisted the children to place their lunch on a suitable surface.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for the three staff members. However, the vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Garda vetting has been sought for the three staff members.

The registered provider will seek garda vetting prior to the three-year timeframe.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Garda vetting has been received in the early years office for one of the staff members.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the non compliance with evidence that the renewed garda vetting has been applied for.

However, this regulation remains outstanding as two of the three garda vetting's have not been received by the early years inspectorate.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

Compliance Information

(1)A record was kept of each child's time of arrival and departure on a daily basis by the staff members.

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

- (1)(a) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 19th June 2025.
- (b) A record was maintained of the firefighting equipment which were last serviced on the 17th June 2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises

Non-Compliance Information

- (b) A record of maintenance was not available for the smoke alarm system in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The smoke alarm system was serviced on 01/10/2025.

The smoke alarm will be regularly serviced.

Supporting documentation submitted

Records of maintenance were submitted to the early year's inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 26.

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 22 children at any one time attending a sessional service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28th March 2025 to the 27th March 2026.