

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015OY046		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Scallywags		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	GAA Centre, Ballykilmurray, Ballinamere, Tullamore, Co. Offaly		
<b>Eircode:</b>	R35 D7P1		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Yvonne Gleeson		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	29/04/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	T. Duignan		
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

Little Scallywags is registered as a sessional service catering for up to 22 children. The age range of children enrolled in the service is 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates a morning session between the hours of 9:00 am - 12:00 hrs. The service is part of a multiple operated by an independent provider.

The Early Years' Service is located in a room in the local Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) centre in Ballinamere, Tullamore Co. Offaly. Children have access to the community playground adjacent to the service for outdoor play.

### Staffing

Four staff members including the registered provider were present during the inspection. All staff were working directly with children and held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

- Regulation 9 (1), (2), (4), (7) - Management and Recruitment.
- Regulation 10 – Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-School Service.

- Regulation 11 (1), (3) - Staffing levels.
- Regulation 15 (1)(f) – Record of pre-school child.
- Regulation 16 (1)(c), (h), (i), (k) – Record in Relation to Pre-School Service.
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child (General Safety).
- Regulation 24 – Checking in and out and record of attendance.
- Regulation 27 – Supervision.
- Regulation 28 – Insurance.
- Regulation 31 – Notification of Incidents.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

## Additional Information

1. The inspection was triggered by following information received to the inspectorate from the service.
2. An inspection was attempted on 14 April 2025 however the pre-school was closed due to easter holidays.

## 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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5.
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) There was a designated person in charge.
- (b) The named person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) All the staff members were aware of the management structure, the lines of authority and their roles within the service.
- Four staff records were reviewed.
- (2)
- (a) Two written and verified past employer references were available in respect of one adult and one written and verified past employer references was available in respect three staff members whose records were reviewed.
- (b) One written and verified reference from a reputable source was available in respect of two staff members whose records was reviewed.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for four staff members. 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 in place for one adult employed who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) Four adults working directly with the children held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (7)
- (a) There was documentary evidence available of the following:
- There was evidence that 3 monthly team meetings were held in the service.
  - The registered provider stated that an induction is completed with all staff on commencement in the service. Documentary evidence was available that the staff members had signed as having read and understood the policies and procedures of the service as part of the induction process.
- (b), (c)
- Documentary evidence was available that the staff members had signed as having read and understood Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and regulations.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) One written and verified past employer references was not available in respect of one adult whose record was reviewed.
- (7)
- (a)
1. With the exception of the staff signing the policies and procedures for the service there no evidence that service wide training undertaken in any specific policies and procedures. This does not align to the induction policy which states that “overall accountability for staff development and training rests with Management.”
  2. There was no evidence that individual staff supervision was completed between the registered provider and each staff member on a regular basis. This does not align to the induction policy which states that “Formal processes – induction, supervision, appraisal and training needs analyses – are used at the individual level and planning for staff development and training is carried out by the Line Managers in consultation with staff members at both individual and team levels.”
- (b),(c)
3. With the exception of the staff signing a document, there was no evidence of service wide staff training undertaken in the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) The management have located the missing verified reference, and this has been added the staff file. Management will ensure that all staff files are up to date and ready for inspection.

(7)(a)

1. The management have reviewed and now attached the Induction Policy
2. The management have attached the minutes of the latest staff meeting and going forward will include training as a standing item on the agenda to support learning in the Policies and Procedures. We have added Polices to our Staff development needs / Self Evaluation template in order to keep training up to date.

The management will now record the individual staff supervision meetings and appraisals as per our induction policy. Management have sourced an individual support and supervision record template and will use these to record same along with appraisals twice a year instead of yearly. This will be highlighted in our updated induction policy.

(b),(c)

3. A copy of the childcare regulations is available on the premises. The staff have completed the e learning QRF training and will ensure to include the Childcare regulations as part of the staff meetings and training

### Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a) Reference

(7)(a) Induction policy / staff meeting minutes / supervision template.

(b), (c) E-learning training certificates for staff members.

### Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and the requirement for regulatory compliance is met for regulation 9. This area will be reviewed at the next inspection.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

### Compliance Information

The content of the following policies was reviewed and met the requirement of the regulations:

- Supervision of children including management of transitions in the service.
- Staff training and induction policy.
- Missing child policy.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. **The policy on accident and incidents** did not include the following details:
  - The risk assessment procedures to be taken following an incident/ accident occurring in the service.
  - The timeline for notification of incidents to be informed to the Early Years Inspectorate.
  - The address for submitting notification of incidents was incorrect.
  - The policy included information regarding first aid / emergency care plans /procedures for the management of anaphylaxis which was not relevant to this policy.
  - The policy did not include the retention period for the records.
2. **The Risk Management policy** did not include how long the risk management records should be stored for.
3. **The critical incident policy** did not provide details of the response required in an immediate emergency e.g. missing child.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The management have updated the accident and incident policy. The policies and procedures have been updated and will be reviewed before the start of each term
2. The management have updated the risk management policy to include the missing details. The policies and procedures have been updated and will be reviewed before the start of each term
3. The management have updated the critical incident policy. The policy now includes details of the response required in an immediate emergency.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Three revised policies.

#### Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and the requirement for regulatory compliance is met for regulation 10.

### 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) There were eighteen children attending the service being supervised directly by four staff members during the inspection.

(3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to on the day of the inspection.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

*(f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(f)

The registered provider did not ensure that a health care plan in writing was available on the day of the inspection in respect of a pre-school child who required the provision of special care and attention.

Following the inspection, a written individual care plan was submitted by the registered provider, however there was no evidence that this was completed in partnership with parents as there was no parental signature on the plan.

There was no risk assessment completed by the registered provider in respect of a significant risk stated in the written individual care plan.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(f)

The parents have now signed the care plan and in conjunction with the parents a risk assessment was completed and signed.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Document.

### Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and the requirement for regulatory compliance is met for regulation 15(1)(f).

## 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:

(c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service.

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis.

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(c) A record was available which provided details of the adult child ratio in the care room.

(h) A written attendance record was maintained in the service.

(i) A written staff roster was maintained in the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(k)

The registered provider did not ensure that a completed written record was maintained to record details of any accident, injury or incident involving a child attending the service.

A record relating to a recent incident was available on the day of the inspection however it was completed in the first names of the two staff members.

It was not clear if the written accident incident record was shared with the parents as there was no parental signature. This did not align to the Missing Child policy which stated that “an accident/incident form will be completed and appropriately signed.”

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(k)

The accident and incident form has been fully completed.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Document.

### Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and the requirement for regulatory compliance is met for regulation 16(1)(k).

### 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 front doors and side door entrances / exits were secured. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. There was evidence that a daily risk assessment of the indoor environments was completed.

The entrance double doors to the building were secured by a key lock which was kept in a designated place. A wooden low fence was placed at the entrance to the lobby outside the pre-school room and two free standing high partition dividers providers were place behind the wooden fence to provide further layer of security to prevent unsupervised exit from the service. A thumb turn lock secured the side door in the preschool room.

A bungee tie is used to secure the gate in the community playground adjacent to the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. There was no documentary evidence available that a written risk assessment had been completed by the registered provider following a recent incident that occurred. This did not align to the Missing Child policy which stated that “a full and thorough review of procedures and practices will take place to determine how the incident occurred, and changes will be made if appropriate.”
2. The main door at the font of the building continues to be used for entry and exit from the preschool in the absence of a risk assessment completed. The building is located very close to a busy rural road and while there is a perimeter wall, the entrance and exit points to the car park outside the building accommodating Little Scallywags do not have gates or any other barrier. The second door in the care room is located at the rear of the building and would provide a safer option.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. The management have reviewed the procedures and practices post the incident to determine how the incident occurred and have made changes to some relevant policies including transitions, incident and accident, Staff Induction and Supervision of children. These changes are highlighted in the documents.
2. The management have reviewed our practices and procedures and established that more care and diligence was required after the morning am session. Children leaving the premises at the home time transition needed to be reviewed and updated to ensure the children's safety. We have identified that too many children in this area poses a risk and going forward Only One child / siblings will now go to the lobby area supervised by one staff member who will pass them safely onto the authorized person. The remaining staff members will remain in the locked preschool with the rest of the children until they are called to go home.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

Document / revised supervision of children indoors and outdoors policy.

## Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. The corrective and preventive actions taken has been accepted and will meet the regulatory requirement for Regulation 23. This area of practice will be reviewed at the next inspection.

### 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.*
- (2) Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.*
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) no person other than-*
    - (i) pre-school child attending the service,*
    - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*
    - (iii) an employee, or*
    - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*
  - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in each care room.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a),(b) The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained. The inspectors' visit to the service was documented in the visitor's log
- (4) The registered provider confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

### 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

Children were observed being supervised at all times throughout the inspection by the staff caring for them both indoors in their care rooms, in the sanitary areas and in the outdoor play area.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2026. The insurance provided cover for 22 children.

### Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

#### Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

*A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:*

*(e) an incident in respect of which a pre-school child attending the service goes missing while attending the service.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(e)  
The registered provider did not inform the inspectorate within 3 working days regarding an incident that occurred which required statutory notification to Tusla . The statutory notification was received outside the 3 working days' time frame.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(e)  
The manager is now aware that the 3 days include the day of the incident.

## Supporting documentation submitted

N/A

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive action taken has been accepted and will meet the regulatory requirement for Regulation 31.