

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY046
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Name of Service:	Little Scallywags
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Address of Service:	GAA Centre, Ballykilmurray, Ballinamere, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
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Eircode:	R35 D7P1
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Name of Registered Provider:	Yvonne Gleeson
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	27/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Little Scallywags 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

Five adults including the registered provider are employed in the service. Two 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, health, welfare and development of child and safety. 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 -

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

(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

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined that two adults had been employed since the previous inspection.

Two staff records were reviewed.

(2)

(a) Two written and verified past employer references were available in respect of two adults available in respect two staff members whose records were reviewed.

(b) Not applicable, as all references were from past employers.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for two staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. An in date garda vetting disclosure was available for one staff member which required renewal since the last inspection on 29 April 2025.

(d) Not applicable, as no adult had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) Two adults working directly with the children held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 fourteen children attending the service being supervised directly by three 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;*

Compliance Information

- (1)(f) There was no child attending the service who required a plan of care. The registered provider demonstrated understanding of this requirement.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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:

(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)

(i) A staff roster was in place outlining the staffing information on a daily basis.

(k) The accident and incident book for 2025 / 2026 was reviewed and noted to be completed correctly.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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-

(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

(1)(b)

The adults working with the children spoke and interacted with them to in a kind and respectful manner. Their first names were used; appropriate eye contact and gentle vocal tones were observed being used during all interactions.

The adults were familiar with each child and their personality.

Healthy eating was encouraged and the service had a healthy eating policy. The staff members sat with the children at snack time and encouraged social interaction and conversations. Children's drinks were placed in easy reach for each child to access if they felt thirsty.

The children were encouraged to be independent as they managed their personal belongings and got dressed for outdoor play assisted by adults as needed.

Children's toileting was managed in a sensitive and positive manner. Independence was encouraged and assistance was given when needed.

The care room was well resourced to promote choice and enable the children to enjoy child led experiences. Children's emerging interests were observed and incorporated into the short term curriculum. Artwork, songs, music and reading materials were used to support and extend the children's learning about their expressed emergent interests.

Transitions were well managed by the staff members in the service. There was a predictability to the children's morning, and the routine was relaxed, unhurried and paced to suit the needs of the children. The children responded positively to this. The children are provided with outdoor play every morning.

Information was shared with parents and guardians at the drop off and collection times. Face to face meetings can be arranged for parents/guardians as necessary and email and telephone contact are used as an alternative method of contact.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 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 were placed 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.

The staff members were aware of the potential choking risks that grapes posed when asked by the inspector. They advised they were very observant of any food provided that had the potential risk of choking and immediately removed or cut the food into smaller pieces. They also advised the inspector they would remove any beaded necklace if they observed that a child was wearing one.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. There was documentary evidence available that indoor, sanitary area and outdoor risk assessments were completed daily to ensure a safe play and work environment for the children and staff. The service had a system in place to manage maintenance issues.

Infection Control:

The staff members supervised the children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Thermostatically controlled running warm water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying.

Children's lunches were refrigerated on arrival at the service.

Cleaning schedules were recorded for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medicine was not given at the time of the inspection. The staff members were familiar with the required practices when administering medication in the service. Medication was safely stored.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Safe Sleep:

A comfortable rest area was available to the children in the care room if they wished to take a break from activities.

Fire Safety:

The staff members were familiar with the fire evacuation procedures from the service. Fire exits were not obstructed.

Outing:

The registered provider stated that outings are not conducted in the service.

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 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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 firefighting 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 fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 5 March 2026
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The firefighting equipment was serviced on 8 January 2026, and the smoke alarm was serviced on 1 April 2026.
- (4) Notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service.

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 2027. The insurance provided cover for 22 children.