

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD045
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Name of Service:	Little Scribblers Pre-school
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Address of Service:	Leamybrien, Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford
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Eircode:	X42 K667
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rosemary Barry
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	28/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Waterford Community Services, Cork Road, Waterford
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Inspection undertaken by:	M.Ryan.
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Title:	Early Years Inspector.
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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
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Description of service

Little Scribblers is located on the outskirts of the village of Leamybrien Co Waterford. The childcare facility is a purpose-built single-story building on approximately one acre of land. The service has three childcare rooms, a sensory room, a full catering kitchen, storage rooms and toilet facilities. The outdoor play area is located at the rear of the premises. The age range of children catered for in Little Scribblers are 2 years 8 months to 5 years of age. The service currently caters for 22 children. The opening hours are 9.00am to 12.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Staffing

The registered provider is the owner/manager and works in the service with the children. The service employs one other childcare staff member.

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.

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels.

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 25 - First aid.

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures.

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*

(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-

- (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*

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge. The service also had a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was part of the staff compliment and available throughout the inspection.

(2)

There was no change in the staff since the last inspection.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in the last 36 months on behalf of staff working directly with the children.

(4)

There was evidence that all staff employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. There was evidence of continuous professional development and qualification certificates on file.

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, the staff: child ratios met the requirement for the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

(3)

There were 13 children from 3 to 5 years of age being cared for by 2 childcare workers.

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:

(a) the name and date of birth of the child;

(b) the date on which the child first attended the service;

(c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;

(d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;

(e) authorisation for the collection of the child;

(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;

(g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;

(h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;

(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency

Compliance Information

(1)
There was evidence on the day of the inspection that all child records required under Regulation 15 1 (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g) (h) (i) were available in respect of each child attending the service. These were recorded on template record sheets. On sampling three of these records, it was observed that all sections of the forms were completed. Each of the children's records had written parental consent from parents or guardians for appropriate medical treatment in the event of an emergency.

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

(1)(a) Regulation 19 was assessed through direct observation, review of records and discussion with staff. The following was observed in relation to meeting children's care and programme of activities.

The service was a mile outside the village of Leamybrien and provided pre-school for a large rural catchment area. The setting was child centred and homely, and children were observed to be happy in this well-resourced, play rich environment. The inspector was warmly greeted by staff and children as the day of the inspection was the last day of the ECCE scheme and children were excited regarding their pending holidays.

On arrival children were eating their morning snack in the large indoor/outdoor room. The registered provider explained how valuable this room erected in the Covid period was used daily throughout the year due to its south facing aspect. This space had outdoor tables and chairs, a place for the storage of children's wellingtons and outdoor wet gear. This area also supported large sand trays observed being used on the day. The children were observed watering growing boxes with pride, these had tomato plants and spring onions.

Indoors, children used the large preschool room that was bright with lots of room to move about, explore and engage in activities, with zoned spaces with well-defined designated activity areas. There was also a sensory room, off the pre-school room which was used by the children for quiet time and small group activities.

The service had a documented play-based curriculum and the registered provider spoke of the importance of children developing at their own pace through their emerging interests. Little Scribblers encouraged creativity through the variety of activities and crafts available. Some examples were rugs completed with finger loop yarns. The staff explained that some of the children showed a particular interest and quickly picked up this technique.

The children were excited as it was the last day and the registered provider had organised some sports day events such as egg and spoon races and an obstacle course (set up by the children themselves). The course was observed to be constructed with various items of outdoor equipment like a large tractor tyre was the starting point with slides, rockers and wheelbarrows lined up for the track. The entire session was spent outdoors, and staff were observed to be vigilant, and attentive to the children's needs for example each child had their own sunscreen and ensured that all children had sun hats.

While many of the children were scheduled to return for the summer camp in mid-July. The registered provider marked the day with medals and tee shirts that had the little scribbler's logo. These were presented to all the children along with a gift pack containing small items such as skipping ropes and bubbles. As the session was about to end children sat in a circle outdoors for the anticipated final treats each child got a colourfully decorated iced bun. It was observed that this was an occasion of delight and pleasure for the children before being collected. A warm community spirit was evident between the staff and children and parents on the final day of the pre-school year as the parents expressed gratitude and encouraged children to do so too.

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)

Two staff employed to work in the service were currently First Aid Responder trained. The registered provider ensured that at all times there was a member of the trained staff available on the premises.

(2)

(a) There were first aid boxes in all the pre-school rooms.

(b) These first aid boxes were suitably equipped, well stocked and available at all times.

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 recording system was provided to ensure a monthly record was maintained of fire drills as conducted and it was noted that the last fire drill took place on the premises on the 14 June 2024.
 - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was maintained. It was recorded that fire equipment was last serviced in May 2023 and smoke alarms were last serviced on 9 May 2024.
- (4)
- The fire evacuation procedure was displayed on the notice board in the main hall which contained details of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.