

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD069
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Scallywags Playschool
-------------------------	-----------------------

Address of Service:	The Scout Hall, Ballygunner, Waterford City, Co. Waterford
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	X91 X5KD
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Finn Fitzgerald
-------------------------------------	-----------------

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

Date of Inspection:	15/04/2024
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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

This service is operated from a scout hall situated on the outskirts of Waterford city. The service has the sole use of the premises and grounds while the service is in operation. The premises is a detached single storey building with one large preschool room. There is an entrance hallway, toilets, a kitchenette, storage and an extensively resourced outdoor area. A service is provided to children aged 2 to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 9.15am and 12.45pm for 38 weeks per year. The service is registered to provide an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme to 18 children. The service is operated as an outdoor service but continues to have use of the scout hall as required.

Staffing

There were two staff employed in the service including the registered provider who also works directly with the children. Both staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),
Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),
Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child (1) (a),
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,
Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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

(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) (b)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Following a discussion with the registered provider and on review of documentation, it was established that there were two staff employed in the service, including the registered provider. Both files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)(b)

There were two written and validated reference available on file from past employers for the staff member. There were two written references available on file for the registered provider which did not require to be validated.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for both staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Both staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the preschool service for the duration of the inspection.

(3)

There were 10 children aged 2 to 6 years of age in the care of 2 staff.

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 registered provider ensured that each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of appropriate activities during the inspection including eating together and enjoying free play in the outdoor area. Interactions between children were well managed by the staff who were caring for them. The registered provider stated the service operated predominately outside. Parents were made aware of this in the services information handbook issued when the children started in the service. The inspector noted the children were dressed appropriately to be outdoors. The children were wearing all weather coats, trousers, wellies, and warm hats.

Children were encouraged to be independent appropriate to their age and stage of development, for example, by tidying up and putting away their lunch boxes. During activities staff used opportunities to extend children's learning and development. Staff were constantly engaged with the children, encouraging them to explore and enjoy their free play in the outdoor area.

Children were observed enjoying a variety of healthy snacks which were provided by parents, staff sat with the children making it a sociable and relaxed time for them.

There were three distinct areas in the outdoor area, one of which was the outdoor classroom. This consisted of a sheltered area to the side of the service. There was a roof and side panels to provide shelter for the children. The area was well resourced with play equipment for the use of the children. For example, there was art equipment, boxes of dinosaurs, small world animals and plastic building blocks. There was a mud kitchen which was well resourced with utensils. There was also a small shed with cosy cushions for children to rest in if required. There was a grassed play area which contained a stage area, wigwam, a wooden climbing frame and a small wooden car for children to sit in. There were raised beds for children to dig in.

There was a rope swing with a tyre, there were also tough trays with sand to facilitate imaginative play. There was a camping shower extended from one of the trees in the garden which was used to supply water to the children who enjoyed messy play to make mud cakes.

The third area available was the concrete area in front of the service where children could play with the ride on toys available to them. The preschool room in the scout hall was available to the children if required however staff who spoke to the inspector said the children spend most of their time in the outdoor area of the service.

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

The registered provider took the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the preschool children attending the service:

General Safety

The entrance gate was locked to prevent children leaving unaccompanied and unauthorised people gaining access to the service. The outdoor areas were observed to be safe, suitable and secure. All cleaning agents were stored in a safe and secure area which was inaccessible to children.

Infection Control

The inspector observed good handwashing practice on the day of inspection. Children were encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet. Warm water to support handwashing, individual towelling cloths which were washed daily by the provider and liquid soap were provided by 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)

There was a person trained in a first aid responder course available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance in place for the children attending the service on the day of inspection.