

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD070		
Name of Service:	Sallywags Lismore Community Childcare Centre Ltd.		
Address of Service:	Bothar Mochuda, Lismore, Waterford.		
Eircode:	P51 TP97		
Name of Registered Provider:	Brid Kiely		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	16/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM 24
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Community Care Centre HSE Buildings Cork Road Waterford		
Inspection undertaken by:	Monica Ryan, Norma Thornton.		
Title:	Early Years Inspector, Interim Inspection & Registration Manager.		
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

Scallywags Lismore Community Childcare Centre Ltd. is a community-based childcare service. The service is located on the outskirts of Lismore town, in west county Waterford. Scallywags Lismore Community Childcare Centre Ltd. is governed by a management committee and offers full day care for children aged from 6 months to 5 years, from 08:00 to 18:00 hours, Monday to Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) from 09:00 to 12:00 hours as well as the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme. The service has a breakfast club in the morning from 08:00 to 09:00 hours and school aged childcare from 14:00 to 18:00 hours in the afternoons.

Staffing

Scallywags Lismore Community Childcare Centre Ltd. employs a manager, three childcare supervisors and eight childcare workers. The service has a full-time cook, a part time kitchen support staff person and a maintenance person.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,10,11, and 19.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the co-operation 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
- (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) On the day of the inspection the manager was on leave and there was a named deputy designated person in charge.

(b) The deputy designated person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c) There was documentation that demonstrated the management structure for the service which identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service. In January 2023, the service engaged with a private human resource company to reflect and review the structures and governance of the service. From this review the deputy manager explained that organised structured meetings had commenced on a monthly and fortnightly basis for the voluntary management committee and for the staff.

The last documented management committee meeting was recorded as having taken place on 31 May 2023. The service was observed to be well managed, and this was reflected in the managers extensive working knowledge of all aspects of the service.

(2) On review of the staff files it was evident that six new staff members were employed to work in the service since the last inspection on the 19 October 2022. The following were observed on the staff members file:

- (a) There were eight written validated references from past employers.
 - (b) Four written references were available from reputable sources in the case of persons for whom past employee references were not available.
 - (c) There was evidence of a completed Garda vetting disclosure certificate from An Garda Síochána for each of all the new staff members.
 - (d) Not applicable as the staff members had not resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) Staff working directly with the children had at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or higher as well as current First Aid Training.

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 policies, procedures and statements as specified in Schedule 5 of the CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) REGULATIONS were available for inspection. Since the last inspection on 19 October 2022, the following policies were updated and reviewed for the service in consultation with the staff.

Safe Sleep Policy

The policy outlined the importance of sleep and rest for children while attending the service, with a commitment to working with families on sleep and rest patterns that work in the best interest of the child.

The policy covered in detail the hygiene and safety practices for use of cots and beds in the sleep room, with clear and concise details for the protocols for the rotational use of cots in the service. There were documented procedures for the monitoring of sleeping children in line with best practice guidelines for safe sleep.

Outdoor play Policy

This policy outlined Scallywags commitment to the provision of an outdoor environment that provided opportunities for children to explore and play with natural and active gross motor play materials. The policy described the extent and range of outdoor play facilities available on and adjacent to the service's premises. The safety protocols for the outdoor play space were well documented and explained.

Inclusion Policy

This policy indicated the services commitment to developing and supporting an inclusive environment in the service for the children and their families and guidelines for staff to deal with discriminatory incidents. The policy included details of the newly appointed inclusion co-ordinator's role and function within the service.

Staff training policy

A new staff handbook was devised since the last inspection that included information on staff code of conduct, and policies on bullying and harassment.

Staff Supervision policy

This policy documented the purpose, role and practices for support and supervision meetings. The policy outlined the frequency and duration of sessions as well as protocols for dealing with human resource difficulties.

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.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) The designated person in charge ensured that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children throughout the operational hours of the service.

(2) On the morning of the inspection there were 23 early years children directly supervised by 9 staff members. In the Butterfly room there were 8 children, aged 2 to 3 years, directly cared for by 3 staff members.

In the Caterpillar room there were 7 children under 2 years directly cared for by 3 staff members.

In the Preschool room there were 8 children aged 4 to 6 years of age, directly cared for by 3 staff members.

During the afternoon, there were 24 early years children directly supervised by 8 staff members. The numbers were as follows:

In the Butterfly room there were 11 children, aged 2 to 3 years directly cared for by 3 staff members.

In the Caterpillar room there were 6 children (1 aged less than 1 years, 5 aged 1 to 2 years) directly cared for by 3 staff members.

In the Preschool room there were 7 children aged 4 to 6 years of age directly cared for by 3 staff members.

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

(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

The following observations were made on the day of inspection through direct observation of the process of the service, in discussion with staff and on review of documentation.

There were 3 early years classrooms in operation on the day of inspection, the "Caterpillar room" caring for children aged from 6 months to 18-24 months, the "Butterfly room" caring for children aged 2 to 5 years and the "Playschool room" caring for children aged 4 to 6 years. In all three rooms, the physical environment had been carefully planned and presented appropriate to the needs of the children in attendance.

In the playschool room the children were observed playing in the adjacent outdoor play area, some of the children were engaged in water play on a tuff tray, mixing colours into the water and blowing bubbles. Other areas of interest that the children were engaged with, included a sand table, construction area, hopscotch, a small world treasure tuff tray and clear space for the children to ride bikes and for soft ball play. Staff were observed and overheard supporting the children's engagement in activities through their extension of conversations with the children, for example a staff asked a child playing with sand "Are you burying all this? Did it hold its shape?" which encouraged the child to keep working on the project.

Staff reinforced children's work with praise during play with conversations such as "you've done a great job". One staff member was observed to promptly respond to a child who accidentally got hit, by a flying beanbag. The staff member knelt by the child, hugging, and comforting the child, all the while assessing the slightly red area that had appeared on the side of the child's face, from the bean bag. A cooling icepack was applied to the area, while the child cuddled the staff member, and they chatted about the fun things that they would do next. Within minutes, the little child assured and happy wished to go back playing again.

The staff member then demonstrated to the inspector how she completed an accident and incident report regarding the incident, which would later be shared with the child's parent, in line with the service's accident and incident policy.

As the children neared home time, towards the end of the ECCE session, they moved indoors where they sat in a group with the staff, each taking an opportunity to share some news, for example where they were going on holidays or who they were going to visit after school. Other interest areas within the classroom included a cosy area, home corner, water area, handwriting and hand skills area, and the children's drinks station.

In the butterfly room children were observed to happily paint pictures of seasonal flowers and butterflies while others engaged in a choice of activities such as playing in the kitchen home area, building with the manipulative blocks and connectors, or engaging in sensory play in the sand tuff tray. Staff were observed engaged in imaginative play with the children, with one staff member posing as a client in the hairdresser's while the children brushed and styled her hair.

At 12:25 hours the children were observed preparing for their main meal. The children had already informed the inspector that they had had bagels and cheese for their morning snack provided by the service. One child who did not like what was on the menu had a yogurt and banana as an alternative option.

In the caterpillar room the inspector observed that there was a large clear space for the young children to move independently. Staff clearly demonstrated to the inspector their awareness and response to the varying development stages of the children in attendance. Most of the children were transitioning from the crawling to walking phase. It was obvious that staff had adapted the physical environment of the room to cater for the children's ever changing physical needs, ensuring there was clear and safe space for the children to toddle through, secured equipment such as the play kitchen, that the children were able to pull to stand from and a large soft play floor area where they could take time out from all their physical activity and rest.

Staff were observed to sit on the floor with the children hugging and responding to the children as they demonstrated the need. The two staff were observed to communicate effectively with each other, which created a seamless process of caring for and responding to the children's needs. The staff continually engaged in conversation with the young children asking if they had liked their dinner, asking if they were finished with their

spoon and if they could take it, asking if it was ok to go ahead and wipe their faces and wash their hands after dinner and after nappy changing. The staff offered the children opportunities to wipe their own faces and helped where required. This demonstrated the staff's awareness of children's needs, the respect that they had for each child's developing independence and demonstrated how engaging in conversation with the children, throughout everyday activities such as mealtimes and care activities, enhanced and stimulated the development of the children's speech, communication skills and promoted independence.

As each child at different times demonstrated cues of tiredness, they were responded to promptly, again with conversation preparing the child for what was to follow, for example staff said to the child "would you like me to take off your shoes, if you are getting tired and would like a nap?". The staff followed with "would you like me to change your nappy?", at which time the little child stood up, taking the staff member's hand and led her to the nappy changing room. Subsequently after the children had their nappy changed, they would exit the nappy changing area in the arms of the staff member, wave happily to the other staff member and inspector and happily go into their cot in the sleep room. The inspector observed from the children's confident and relaxed nature that they had formed trusting relationships with the staff looking after them.