

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016TY015		
Name of Service:	Little Scholars Carrick Playschool Ltd		
Address of Service:	40 New Street, Carrick-on-Suir, Co Tipperary		
Eircode:	E32 YT53		
Name of Registered Provider:	Ruth Raggett		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	22/09/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y		
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher		
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	N/A		

Description of service

Little Scholars Carrick Playschool Ltd is operating out of the ground floor of a terrace building in the town of Carrick-on-Suir. The service operates from 09:15 to 12:15 Monday to Friday and is currently catering for up to 33 children in a sessional care provision. The service operates the early childhood care and education (ECCE) scheme for 38 weeks of the year. The service is currently operating out of two care rooms. There were also children and adult sanitary accommodations and an outdoor play area onsite. The service caters for children aged 2-6 years.

Staffing

The service currently has seven adults employed in the service, including the registered provider who is service based but was not working on the day of the inspection. There was also one student present on the day of inspection.

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-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 children, person in charge and staff 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) The registered provider was the person in charge and there was a named deputy in the service that could deputise as required.
- (b) The deputy was on duty at the service when the inspector arrived and the staff roster indicated that either the registered provider or the deputy was on duty at all times during the hours of operation.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to seven adults who were employed in the early years service, including the registered provider and one student were the subject of inspection.
- (a) Of the 16 required references, 7 were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the 16 required references, 9 were from a source other than a previous employer with required records of validation on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were obtained and were on file for the seven staff. The student who was on a transition year placement was under 18 years old and did not require Garda vetting. The person in charge was aware of the re-vetting timeframes outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was required and available for two of the seven adults as they lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months. The student who was on a transition year placement was under 18 years old and did not require police vetting.
- (4) All seven adults who worked directly with the early years children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 6 to level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The student who was on a transition year placement did not require qualifications.

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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at the time.

(2) The service maintained the minimum adult to child ratio required as per regulation. The ratio was as follows:

- The Sunshine Room, there were two adults caring for eight children.
- The Rainbow Room, there was 4 adults caring for 17 children.

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.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) The service has 31 early years children registered and all records were available. A sample of 10 records were reviewed. They were found to contain the required information as listed (a) through to (i).

(3)

(c) The records, as identified above, were made available to the inspector for review.

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;

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

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

Compliance Information

(1) The following records were reviewed:

(i) The staff roster for the week of inspection was available for assessment on the notice board. The roster was in keeping with the staff working in the service on the day of inspection.

(k) One record of medication administration was available and reviewed since the last inspection. The person in charge informed the inspector that no medicine had being administered to a child in the service recently. A medication administration book was available on site for use if needed.

Non-Compliance Information

(j) A sample of 12 accident and incident records were reviewed from the date of the last inspection 07 November 2022 to the inspection date. Five of the records did not have parental signatures on the forms. Without signatures on the document the inspector was unable to determine that the parents were informed of the incident. This posed a possible risk to the child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Parents are notified of accidents and incidents on a digital application. The team will ensure that parental signatures are obtained on the accident and incident forms.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of digital applications sent and completed accident and incident forms.

Summary Comment

The action taken by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 16(k).

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

At the time of the inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation, review of documents and in conversation with staff members:

Basic needs:

(1)(a)

- The layout of the care room supported the children to move freely within their environment and to engage in their chosen tasks.
- Food was prepared by parents and guardians and consisted of sandwiches, fruit, crackers and yogurt. The food was stored in the refrigerator and was observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- The staff were observed helping and assisting the children where necessary at snack time.
- Drinking water was available to the children throughout the morning.
- Appropriate seating was used in the form of low-level tables and chairs.
- The children were observed accessing the toilet independently with staff available to provide assistance should it be required.
- Children were observed washing their hands before snack time and after using the toilets.

- A quiet space was incorporated into the care room which allowed children to rest if needed. Children who wished to rest while they attended the service could avail of a couch area or floor mats.
- Children's personal items were stored in individually named storage cupboards in the hallway.
- There was an outdoor play area at the back of the premises which the person in charge informed the inspector was used on a daily basis. Outdoor play was promoted and observed at the time of inspection with staff observing and assisting children during play.

Supporting relationships:

- During mealtimes, the staff sat with the children in a relaxed environment, affording sufficient time for children to enjoy their food. Staff discussed topics of interest with the children during mealtimes.
- Throughout the morning, staff in both care rooms were heard engaging in social conversation with the children, which helped to promote a relaxed and happy atmosphere.
- The children were encouraged to tidy up after snack time, which promoted a sense of responsibility.
- Interactions between staff and children in the care rooms was observed to be warm and sensitive. Examples included staff members communicating positively with children in soft and gentle tones, offering reassurance by sitting near children and lowering to their level.
- Staff were seen to sit at floor level with the children reading to them, singing, building puzzles and promoting conversation for example looking in the mirror and discussing hair colour in a group which supported positive relationships with the children and language development.
- One child celebrated their birthday, which promoted a friendship bond between the children.
- The high adult to child ratio observed on the day of inspection meant children received a lot of interaction from staff and appeared happy and content in their surroundings. This was observed through the staff playing doctors, changing baby dolls, spiderman games and doing puzzles with the children.
- Various methods of communication were used to link with parents and guardians such as messaging through digital application, email and communication at collection and drop off.

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 entrance door was secured. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed was in good condition.
- The outdoor area was safe and secure with a timber fencing and a gate. This prevented children from gaining unsupervised access to unsafe areas.
- The equipment assessed in the outdoor area was in good condition.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- The blind cord on the door was in a restrictor device.

Infection control:

- Hand washing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap, paper towels and an air dryer.
- Children were observed to wash their hand before meals.
- The temperature of the hot water was within the appropriate range throughout the sanitary accommodations and was recorded between 19.3°C and 35°C.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste in the sanitary areas and care rooms.
- Children's bags were stored off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available in the Sunshine Room for the storage of perishable foods.

Fire safety:

- All fire extinguishers observed were wall mounted.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

On the day of inspection, the staff toilet was observed to be used as a storage area and contained children's toys not in use, plastic plates and a jug. This posed an infection control risk.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection control:

The items have been removed from the bathroom area. There is a plan for a carpenter to partition off an area for storage.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection control:

Photographic evidence was received of the bathroom area cleared.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 23.

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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The attendance record was available on digital application in which the inspector observed that all of the children present on the day had their check in and out times completed for the duration of inspection.

(3)

(b) Visitor's records were kept in writing of any person entering the premises and the inspector was asked to sign in and out of the premises

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)

Up to date records of First Aid Response (FAR) certification were in place for six of the adults working in the service.

(2)

(a) There were one sufficiently stocked first aid box available in the service, which was safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) The first aid supplies were always accessible, should they be required.