

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2020KE008

**Name of Service:** Early Scholars Preschool

**Address of Service:** Ballyshannon National School, Ballyshannon, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare

**Eircode:** R56 FF60

**Name of Registered Provider:** Suzanne Fleming

**Service type:** Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 10/02/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	11	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency Suite 7 Vista Primary Care Centre Ballymore Eustace Road Naas Co. Kildare W91 X38W
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F. Maher
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

This private sessional service is located in a rural setting and operates from part of the local community hall adjacent to Ballyshannon national school outside Kilcullen. It is one of four services operated by the registered provider in Laois and Kildare.

The sessional service is provided to children from 2-6 years of age and opens Monday to Friday from 08:45am-12:15pm for 38 weeks of the pre-school year. One large pre-school room and a smaller room leading from the main room are provided. An outdoor play area is available to the side of the premises. The service is registered to provide school age care.

### Staffing

There were three adults employed in the service. Two adults were present in the service and working directly with the children on the day of inspection, this included the area manager.

### 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 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 person in charge, area manager 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)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

The records of four staff members employed and/or present in the service were reviewed.

### (2)(a)(b)

Eight written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source, in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of four adults whose files were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all employed staff members.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

### (4)

Four members of staff employed and who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education 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 were 11 children attending the service being supervised directly by 2 staff members during the morning.
- (3)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the inspection as specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6.

### 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)(a)-(i)

Ten child records were assessed and contained the relevant written details outlined in (a)-(i) of the regulation.

(3)(c)

All child records were available for inspection.

## 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:*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child 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

(h)

The daily attendance record was available and completed in real time for each child's arrival and departure from the service.

(j)

A sample of one medicine administration record, recorded since the beginning of the pre-school year was inspected and contained the relevant information and details.

(k)

The accident and incident record book was reviewed.

A sample of ten recorded incidents, between 22/04/2024 – 06/01/2025, were inspected and contained the relevant information and details.

### 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 main entrance door to the service was secure and controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school service.

Daily indoor and outdoor risk assessments were completed to ensure safe environments for the children and staff.

The person in charge advised they supervise the children during snack time and immediately cut/halve any foods that have the potential risk of choking.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

##### Infection Control:

Children washed their hands on arrival to the service in the morning and hand washing routines were well established throughout the session, for example before sitting to eat snack, after using the toilet, messy and outdoor play. Thermostatically controlled hot water was available and paper hand towel and liquid soap were available for hygienic hand washing/drying practices. Foot pedal operated bins were in place for the hygienic disposal of used paper towel, tissues and any waste. Cleaning schedules were completed daily for the sanitary and pre-school room environments.

##### Administration of Medication:

Medication was not administered during the inspection. A system was in place to safely administer medication should it be required.

##### Fire Safety:

The fire exit was unobstructed and regular monthly fire drills were practiced; this was confirmed by the written record available for inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Infection Control:

The roll of paper towel was observed placed on the windowsill in the sanitary area and not hygienically dispensed from the wall mounted unit; this posed a risk of cross infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Infection Control:

The correct hand paper towel has now been purchased and placed into the hand paper towel dispenser. The correct hand paper towel will be purchased with the monthly cleaning supplies.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Infection Control:

Photograph X 1

#### Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 23 has been met.

### 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 members present were trained in in first aid response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)

The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the pre-school.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

## 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 fire fighting 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 record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last recorded fire drill was dated 10 January 2025.

(b)

There were records available detailing the maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke/fire detection system in the service dated 26 September 2024 and 2 August 2024 respectively.

(4)

Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.