

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025KE002
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Name of Service:	Scoil Beag Playschool
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Address of Service:	Oldtown Road, Celbridge, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W23 RK80
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Name of Registered Provider:	Shauna Kennedy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	19/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Level 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham D08X01F
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Inspection undertaken by:	R Phillips
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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	N/A
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Description of service

Scoil Beag Playschool provides sessional childcare for preschool children from 2 years and 8 months to 6 years. The service operates from 09:30 -12:30, Monday to Friday 38 weeks of the year. The service offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. Scoil Beag playschool consists of a new purpose-built demountable building, with a large open plan care room, sanitary facilities and two distinct large outdoor areas, one with tarmacadam, and one with natural grass and two climbing structures and a tunnel available to the children. It is situated in an urban area on the outskirts of Celbridge Co. Kildare.

Staffing

The service employs three staff including the registered provider, who manages the service and works directly with the children. One of the adults is employed in the role of early years support staff through Kare: Promoting Inclusion for People with Intellectual Disabilities.

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 announced 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

- 9 (1)(2)(3)(4) Management and recruitment,
- 11(1)(3) Staffing levels,
- 19 (1)(a) (b) Health Welfare and Development of the child,

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
- (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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The service manager and deputy person in charge were on the premises during the inspection.
- (c) The employees in the service demonstrated an awareness of the lines of authority and accountability within the service.

(2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of all three staff and met regulatory requirements as follows:

- (a)(b) There were six validated references, from previous employers available in respect of the three staff files.

- (c) Garda Vetting had been sourced for all adults.
- (d) Records of police vetting were not required as none of the staff lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph 2 were carried out prior to the adult's commencing employment in the service for all staff files inspected.
- (4) A record was available evidencing that in respect of the three staff files inspected, all adults working directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or equivalent.

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) The adult to child ratio surpassed the minimum requirement in the service. There were three adults working directly with the twelve children in attendance.

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 registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(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

Basic Needs:

Healthy eating was promoted in the service. The children brought a packed lunch, which they had put in the fridge on arrival, and the lunch leaders distributed to the other children at lunchtime.

The children's drinks were available at their level throughout the inspection.

Transitions were made smoother as the adults let the children know what to expect.

The children's independence was encouraged when handwashing or using the sanitary area, independently with supervision.

With this promotion of independence, the children demonstrated a sense of pride when the staff praised their efforts and achievements.

Supporting Relationships:

There was a family wall of photos of the children's families, to provide a connection from the service to home and promote a sense of belonging. There was also a collage of photos at the children's eye level displayed, showing the various activities the children had participated in since the school opened, depicting their new friendships.

The staff displayed warmth and sensitivity in their interactions and promoted inclusivity. They were observed explaining feelings using a calm approach at children's eye level.

Teamwork was evident as the inspector observed the staff handing over information regarding children's individual needs.

The staff communicate with parents via a messaging application. The staff had a lot of knowledge regarding children's individual needs evidencing a partnership approach with parents.

Physical and Material Environment:

There were ample play materials on open shelving accessible to the children. Fine motor development was promoted using puzzles, jigsaws and arts and crafts materials.

Children were observed happily engaged in the home area kitchen and playing with real world items, which supported interactive imaginative play and conversations.

The children were observed enjoying multisensory experiences with a variety of materials, including water play.

Programme of Activities:

Ongoing observations and assessments were documented which helped form a complete picture of each child.

Staff observations informed the curriculum planning, in accordance with the children's emerging interests, needs and preferences.

Children's language was supported, through one-to-one interactions, group discussions songs and storytelling.