



Inspection Report

Note: To be completed by Inspector

Name of Service:	Little Scholars
Address of Service:	Coolmona, Moydrum, Athlone, Co Westmeath
Tusla Identifier:	Tu2015WH006
Name of Registered Provider:	Deirdre Healy
Area(s) of focus on Inspection:	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Inspection Date:	4.12.19
Previous Inspection Date(s):	9.5.18
Number of children in the service on the day of inspection:	39

Note: For office use only, to be completed by Registration Panel

Registration Status:	Registered
Conditions Attached to Registration:	Not Applicable
Date of Registration:	28 th April 2020

This report was based on an inspection which focused on the area of **Health, Welfare and Development of the Child**. This inspection aimed to determine the extent to which the service supported the care and education of children in accordance with the following regulations as outlined in the Quality and Regulatory Framework.

- Regulation 19: Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
- Regulation 20: Facilities for Rest and Play
- Regulation 22: Food and Drink

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (Inspectorate) is the independent statutory regulator of Early Years Services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the responsibility of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children. The 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. The Early Years Inspectorate is managed within Tusla's Children's Services Regulation division.

The regulatory requirements set out in this report are detailed within Tusla's Quality and Regulatory Framework (QRF). <https://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework>. This is a child centred evidence based document focused on the quality and safety of the care provided directly to children using early years services. This QRF sets out an interpretation of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 in a transparent way. <https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/20160510ChildCareActEarlyYrsRegs2016SI221of2016.pdf>.

This inspection has focused on the area of Health Welfare and Development of the Child. Inspections of registered early years services are planned based on the following: Inspections may also focus on other areas such as Safety, Governance and Premises and Facilities as required.

- 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

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 regulatory requirements are identified as not being met the registered provider must demonstrate how they have met the regulatory requirements and will prevent them from re occurring. The suitability and approval of the Corrective Action and Preventive Action (CAPA) submission will be used to inform the registration decision.

Where the registered provider fails to meet the regulatory requirements an escalation process

may be invoked. The draft report which incorporates the response of the registered provider is presented to the registration panel of the Inspectorate for consideration of a decision in relation to the service receiving continued registration. 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.

The Inspector C O' Connor Hughes wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Description of Service

This part time service is located in a rural setting. There were 39 children present on the day of inspection. A service is provided to children aged between 2 years 8 months to 5 years. The service is registered to open from Monday to Friday between 08.30 and 13.00 hours including a sessional service from 09.15 to 12.15 hours for 38 weeks of the year. The premises is a purpose built single storey building with two pre-school rooms.

There were 5 adults present on the day of inspection working directly with the children including the registered provider.

5 adults working hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent at levels 5 to 6 on the national framework of qualifications and the adults engage in on-going professional development.

Summary of Findings

The regulatory requirements in respect of Health Welfare and Development of the Children were met by the registered provider and staff present on the 4.12.19.

Regulation 19: Regulation 19: (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4) (a)(b)(c)
Health, Welfare and Development of Child

Purpose

As the registered provider, you must ensure the health, welfare and development of the child. You achieve this through implementing an appropriate programme and care practices that support the learning, development and wellbeing of each child, taking their individual interests and needs into consideration.

Regulatory requirements met

There was a calm and happy atmosphere in both the Superstars and Brightsparks pre-school rooms. Children's basic needs were supported by staff members who assisted them as needed in handwashing, going to the toilet, caring for their belongings and dressing in appropriate clothing for outdoor play. A little helper system was observed as named children handed out lunches to their friends. Staff members sat with children at snack time and positive conversation and interactions were observed and a child's interest was followed as a discussion was held about a cow on his farm.

The indoor and outdoor environments were well laid out in defined areas of interest that included a home area, construction corner, sand play, dress up with mirror and a rest area with library including Christmas reading books. A plentiful supply of toys and materials that supported imaginative, manipulative and creative play were available. Children's art work was noted with colourful displays.

Children were happily engaged in the programme of care and decided on what play activities interested them and moved freely from one play experience to the next both indoors and outdoors supported by staff. The child's learning journal showcasing their work is shared with parents.

Good team work was observed as staff worked seamlessly together supported by the registered provider. Smooth transitions from one activity to another by the use of verbal and musical cues were observed. The children were given five minutes to finish their activity, tidy up and move on to the next activity in a timely manner. Upon discussion with staff the service ensured good transitions from home to pre-school and pre-school to national school were in place. An open inclusive ethos was noted in the service's inclusion policy and observed as a child with additional needs was supported in the service by kind and caring staff using positive tones and eye contact.

The child was introduced to the inspector and happily talked about his brothers going to national school. Displays supporting inclusion and diversity were noted in Superstars pre-school room. The registered provider is the leadership in inclusion co-ordinator in the service.

Partnership with parents was observed through a verbal handover by staff with parents on collection, a parents notice board, newsletter and the Registered Provider discussed the upcoming Christmas concert with a tea party for parents in the service.

The service demonstrated community collaboration by inviting in the local principal and junior infant's teacher of the national school to talk to the children. The Gardaí, fire fighters, dentist, a marathon runner and the local football team have visited the children.

Positive behaviour management strategies outlined in the service's behaviour management policy were evident as staff praised children on completion of tasks. Both adults and children were respectful towards each other. A comprehensive policy on managing children's challenging behaviour was available.

An appropriate policy was reviewed for the use of the internet and photographic devices in the service.

Regulation 20: (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(4)(5)

Facilities for Rest and Play

Purpose

As a registered provider, you must provide appropriate, safe facilities to meet children's needs for rest and sleep. You must recognise that appropriate indoor and outdoor facilities within services are important for the developmental, health and wellbeing of children. These facilities should be organised so that they engage every child in the learning environment, and promote safe physical play and activity for children of different age groups and capabilities.

Regulatory requirement met

The indoor environment is bright, child friendly and safe. It is laid out with designated play areas, toys, equipment and materials to meet the developmental needs of all children attending the service.

The outdoor environment adjacent to the service is surrounded by fencing and is safe and secure. Rostered play is in place for Superstars and Brightsparks rooms and staff supervise children at play. The outdoor play policy stated the play opportunities available that include challenge and risky play. Suitable outdoor toys and equipment are available in the outdoor play area. Children were observed enjoying outdoor play.

Comfortable couches are available in both pre-school rooms for children to rest or relax. Mats, two low level beds and blankets are available for children who wish to rest or sleep attending the service on a part time basis.

Regulation 22: Food and Drink

Purpose

As the registered provider, you must ensure that a nutritious and varied diet is available to all children attending the service taking their individual needs and preferences into consideration.

Regulatory requirements met:

The service has two meal times for children attending on a part time basis at 10.30 and 12.30. Children ate healthy snacks of sandwiches, fruit, vegetables, crackers and cheese with milk or water to drink which is underpinned by the service's healthy eating policy. Two staff members have trained in the Healthy Ireland Smart Start and the programme is implemented in the service. The quantity of food given was sufficient and it was nutritious. Parents provide the snacks for children attending the service which are stored in the fridge. Extra food is available if a child is still hungry. A jug of water and beakers are available and accessible to children in each pre-school room whenever they wish to have a drink. A nut free zone was observed in the service to meet the needs of a child with a defined medical condition.