

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD070
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Name of Service:	Sallywags Lismore Community Childcare Centre Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Bothar Mochuda, Lismore, Co. Waterford
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Eircode:	P51 TP97
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lisa O'Brien
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	11/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM	24
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Community Care Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City X91 VX09
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Bradshaw
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).

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Description of service

Scallywags Lismore Community Childcare Centre is a community-run service based in Lismore. It is in a purposely built premises with an outdoor area. There are four care rooms, the three rooms in operation on the day were called the Caterpillar room, the Butterfly room and the Ladybird room. The rooms have sanitary areas adjacent to each one. The Caterpillar room and the Butterfly room have sleeping areas adjacent to the rooms. The service has a kitchen, staff room and office facilities.

The service offers sessional, part-time and full-time care for up to 60 children aged 0 to 6 years. It operates from 8:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday.

Staffing

The service employs a total of 14 staff members, including the registered provider, the person in charge and two auxiliary staff (the chef and the maintenance person). On the day of the inspection, 6 staff members were working directly with 26 children. The registered provider does not work with the children.

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/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9(1)(2)(4)(7) – Management and Recruitment;

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Regulation 11(1)(2) – Staffing Levels;
Regulation 19(1) – Health Welfare and Development of Child;
Regulation 22 – Food and Drink;
Regulation 25 – First Aid;
Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures;
Regulation 30 (1)(2) – Minimum Space Requirements.

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, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.*

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

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Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)

The service had a designated person in charge and a person to deputise if required. Information outlining the line management structure, including the Voluntary Management Committee (VMC), was displayed in the main hallway.

(2)

Following a review of previous inspection details, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, the inspector reviewed three staff files which had not been previously reviewed.

(a)(b) Validated references were available to the inspector.

(c) Garda vetting was available for all staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d) Documents reviewed demonstrated that police vetting was not required for these staff.

(4)

On review of the staff files, evidence was available to demonstrate that staff working with preschool children had achieved 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.

(7)

Though discussion with management and staff and a review of documents available, evidence demonstrated that the management supervised and supported the staff team. Staff described how they had regular team meetings and they share information informally. They described how the service had closed for in-service mandatory training days where the team comes together and are upskilled. They stated that the most recent training was Fire Safety training and manual handling. Staff described how continual professional development training opportunities are shared on an online messaging application and staff are encouraged to complete training which they may be interested in or is pertinent to their role.

Evidence demonstrated that policies are reviewed and updated if required. These are signed off by the VMC and are shared with the team. The VMC have agreed action plans including effective room leadership training and scheduling formal supervision.

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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)(2)

There were an adequate number of staff working with children throughout the day. On the inspector's arrival at 10:00 there were 26 children in the care of 6 staff and at 14:00 there were 24 children in the care of 6 staff. The person in charge was available to cover breaks and to assist across the rooms if required.

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

The inspector noted the following:

During the inspection all the children accessed the outdoor area during the day. Each care room had double doors leading directly to the outdoor space. The Ladybird room (3 to 5 years old) used the space as extension of outdoor play during the day, and children were observed to bring toys to the garden to extend their play. Staff were noted to facilitate younger children's play in the Caterpillar Room and Butterfly room by bringing out dolls for the buggies and additional play materials. This supported the children in the use of their imagination, and they engaged in the games for longer.

The children's activities were celebrated by displaying photographs of the children engaged in various activities during the day. Each room displayed photographs of recent activities at the door of each room. For examples the

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displays included a bubble dance party and a displayed titled 'Hip Hip Hooray its water play'. Each room also had a scrap book with activities throughout the years captured- each activity was linked to Aistear framework.

The staff were observed to engage with children in a friendly manner and though discussion they demonstrated that they were familiar with children's specific needs. A child who had returned to the service having been absent for the previous 3 weeks was given extra attention and cuddles as it was recognised that the child needed extra reassurance.

Children's learning and development was supported. For example, a child in the Caterpillar room was observed to practice new motor skills; the equipment was strong and stable to support this new skill. Staff, although engaged with other children kept a watchful eye in case, they were needed to support the child.

Children's basic needs were attended too. Staff ensured that sun cream was applied regularly and some children from the Butterfly room who resisted wearing sun hats were encouraged to play in the shade.

Children were familiar with the routine of the day, which supported their sense of belonging. The children, after playing outside washed their hands before eating and sat at their places at the table for their dinner to be served.

The room layout and display also reflected the children's identity. Children's photographs were used to identify their cubby's, coat hooks, and containers with their belongings. In the Ladybird room each child had an individual book which had been made with their extended family photographs.

Positive communication between staff was evident during the day. They were observed to check in with each other, discuss the changes in plans for the day and updating each other on children's sleep habits. These positive exchanges were role modelling opportunities for the children who also demonstrated positive exchanges with each other. A child in the Ladybird room was noted to help a younger child to clean their face after eating, when finished they both checked their handiwork in the mirror.

Staff were observed to encourage two-way communication with the children, extending their conversations by repeating the child's comments and then asking probing questions and waiting for the answers.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The person in charge confirmed that the service provided the food for the children. Food was cooked on site daily by the chef. An example of the monthly menu was displayed with allergens highlighted. The daily menu was updated each morning to reflect the snacks and dinner being served. In addition, a photograph of the food was displayed to include children when sharing information. On the day of the inspection, the morning snack was buttered brown bread and sliced strawberries and halved grapes. Dinner served was chilli con carne with rice and sweetcorn. Second portion were available if children requested and when serving, children were asked if they would like bigger portions and if they wanted sweetcorn on the side.

Children's allergies and food preferences were accommodated with alternate menus offered where required. Water was available to the children throughout the day. The older children's drinks were accessible on low shelving, and the staff regularly served the younger children their drinks during the day and were noted to bring them to the garden when playing outside.

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) The registered provider had ensured a person trained in first aid was available to the children. Three staff members were trained to First Aid Responder standard.
- (2) Each room had a first aid box stored in an accessible cupboard which was easily identified with signage.

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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) The registered provider had ensured fire drills were carried out. Record reviewed demonstrated that fire drills were carried out monthly and the last fire drill was carried out in June 2026. The firefighting equipment was last serviced in June 2026 and the smoke alarms tested in May 26.
- (4) Evacuation notices were displayed in each room and on the public notice boards.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(2) The registered provider ensured adequate floor space was available for the children attending the service on the day of inspection.

The following measurements were taken on the day:

The Caterpillar room: 31.11 sq. meters

The Butterfly room: 44.47 sq. meters (including the space used for sleep)

The Ladybird room: 36.17 sq. metres

The additional room that was not in use: 41.98 sq. metres