

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC281		
Name of Service:	Na Seoda Óga		
Address of Service:	Community Centre, Station Road, Ballincollig, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P31 V242		
Name of Registered Provider:	Jean Murphy		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	05/10/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM n/a
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Admin Building, St Marys Health Campus, Cork, T23x440		
Inspection undertaken by:	C Stokes		
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

This sessional service has been in operation since 2013 and is located for the past 6 years in the Community Centre in Ballincollig, Cork. It has two care rooms and an enclosed outdoor area. The service operates as a Naíonra with an emphasis on the Irish language. The service operates a morning session daily from Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. The setting also has a registered school aged service.

Staffing

The registered provider is service based and operates the service with 5 other adults plus a student. These 6 adults were suitably qualified with a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at a minimum level 5, the 7th adult was a student of a recognised qualification in Early Years Care and Education.

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.

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, person in charge, 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*
- (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 ensured there was a named person in charge (PIC) of operating the service.
- (b) In addition, there was a named deputy person in charge (DPIC). The person in charge was present on the day of inspection and stated that the PIC or DPIC are always on the premises.
- (2) The staff recruitment files were examined as part of this inspection.
- (a) When the recruitment files of all 7 adults was reviewed two written and appropriately validated references were available in respect of 11 past employers references.
- (b) Two written and appropriately validated references were available in respect of 3 sources other than past employers.
- (c) A completed record of Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau was available for the 7 adults.
- (d) Police vetting was required and available for 1 adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period exceeding 6 months.
- (4) A certificate of a major award in Early Childhood care and education at QQI level 5 to 8 on the National Qualification framework was on file for 5 adults. The 6th adult had a letter of eligibility to practice dated 7 April 2023 and the 7th adult did not require this as they were on a student placement.

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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children.
- (3) The care rooms met the adult/child ratio of 1 to 11. Room 1 had 11 children and 3 adults present on the day of inspection. Room 2 had 20 children and 3 adults and 1 student. The student was supernumerary and not included in the staffing levels.

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

Basic Needs

- The morning snacks were served at 11.25 and 11.35am in both rooms.
- The snack was provided by parents/guardians was observed to be enjoyed by the children.
- A helper system and placemats were observed in place at snack time. Staff were helpful in assisting the children as required.
- Staff were observed to sit and interact with the children during snack times to make it a social occasion with music playing in the background.
- Drinks were readily available to children at snack and outside of snack time.

- Most children in the preschool room were independent using the toilet and staff supported these children appropriately, with gentle reminders for handwashing. Staff were sensitive to the needs of the children who were not fully trained and supported these children as necessary.
- A quiet area in the preschool rooms was available for downtime.
- Children were observed to have a high energy musical chairs activity for mobility on the day of inspection as due to inclement weather outdoor play was not feasible.
- There was a calm and engaging atmosphere in the rooms. Staff were observed to interact in a caring manner with the children building their sense of safety and security in the setting.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The registered provider advised the inspector that the service operated in partnership with parents, with communication in person with parents at handover times. The setting had an online group for communicating with parents and gave monthly updates in a book for parents to sign in respect of their child.
- The registered provider stated meetings may be held with parents formally when a child requires such support.
- An interest board in each room, lists the interests of the children gathered by adults speaking individually with the children. This and the regular observations on the children contributed to the emergent curriculum based around the children's expressed interests. These interests link in with and inform the activities and themes of the month.
- The adults were observed to show positive regard for the children on the day of inspection, with encouragement and praise for specific tasks in a warm and caring manner for example during tidy up/transition times where nurturing and enthusiastic interactions were observed.
- The setting is integrated with the local community particularly the adjacent school communities.

Physical and Material Environment

- The indoor environment was child friendly, bright, and spacious and laid out in special interest areas with materials accessible to the children.
- Interest areas included a soft area with sofa and rug; home corner with kitchen and food; construction area with blocks, bricks; imaginative area with dress up; tool bench, transport, dolls, and prams; and a library.

- Childrens artwork and pictures of family and themselves, ‘mé féin’, were at children’s eye level.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available.
- The outdoor area had interest areas and equipment including tuft trays, canopy area, playhouse, and materials such as tennis rackets, balls, chalk etc.

Programme of Activities

- The service offered a play-based curriculum and playful opportunities were supported throughout the early learning and care programme with a gentle focus on the using the Irish language.
- The service has a predictable and established daily routine for children, with opportunities for child led activities and large group games.
- ‘Mo Scéal’ records were completed by the setting to assist with the children’s transition to primary school.
- Songs, flashcards, and games were observed to promote Irish language development. The roll was called in a playful manner in the Irish language and potential reasons for absence were recited in Irish.
- Children were observed to be supported appropriately and to have their choices respected in the language rich playful environment.
- Playdough, painting, musical chairs, and free play were observed to be richly enjoyed on the day of inspection by the children.

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:

- Internal and external doors were secured on the day of inspection.
- Emergency exit doors were unobstructed and fire extinguishers safely tethered.
- No cables were within reach of children on the day of inspection.
- The outdoor area was observed to be free of safety concerns or hazards.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing with thermostatically controlled hot water, soap and paper towels for drying was observed on the day of inspection.
- Lidded pedal operated bins were available in the children's toilets for paper towel disposal.

Administration of Medication:

- The administration of medication was not observed at the time of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- This service is a sessional service, with a quiet area for rest rather than sleep facilities.

Fire Safety:

- No fire safety issues were observed on the day of inspection. Fire doors were not obstructed.

Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. On the day of inspection, the radiator in the larger playroom had a surface temperature of 56 degrees Celsius which may be a burn risk to a child. The surface temperature of a radiator must not exceed 50 degrees Celsius for safety.

Infection Control:

2. Storage in the adult toilet was observed, including toys, play materials and cleaning equipment which may lead to cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. The registered provider responded to state that the surface temperature is being checked daily and recorded to ensure that the temperature does not go above 50 degrees Celsius on its surface. This daily record was submitted as evidence.

Infection Control:

2. The storage in the adult toilet has been removed pending its relocation to an outdoor shed. Photographic evidence was submitted of the clear adult toilet.

Summary Comment

The response and supporting evidence have been assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

(e) An adequate ratio of toilets and sinks was in place for children as a 1 to 11 ratio was in place with 4 children's toilets and sinks. For adults there was 1 adult toilet and sink, with a 1 to 8 ratio in place. This was sufficient for the 31 children and 7 adults present on the day of inspection.