

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE017
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Name of Service:	Cairde Nua
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Address of Service:	Scoil Magh, Magh, Lahinch, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 KV09
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sue Garrahy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E
Inspection undertaken by:	A. McCarthy
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

Cairde Nua is a childcare facility located in a rural setting, in Scoil Magh, Magh, Lahinch, County Clare. A programme of care and education is facilitated Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 12:00 for thirty-eight weeks for children ranging in age from two to six years through the medium of both the Irish and English language. The service is located in a room to the rear of the school. The children have access to the school hall, two outdoor areas at the front and side of the building and an all-weather surface area to the rear of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider and a second adult were present and worked directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider works directly with the children and provides an administrative role.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (3)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 - First aid (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures (1)(a)(b)(4)

Regulation 28- Insurance

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. 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, the staff member 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,*
- (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 was the person in charge and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The registered provider and the deputy were available during the inspection.

(2)

Two files were available in respect of the registered provider and the adult working in the service. The findings included the following:

(a)

Four written and validated references from past employers in respect of the adults working in the service were available.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the adults employed by the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was not required in respect of the adults working in the service as they had not lived in another state for a period longer than six months.

(4)

The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 the children attending the pre-school service were supervised at all times.
- (3)
On the 10 June 2025 the ratio of adults caring for the children was maintained at all times. Two adults cared for the eight children attending the sessional programme of care and education.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a)
The children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities and interactions having regard to the age and developmental level of the children. One care room was in operation during the inspection.

Basic Needs of Children:

The adults treated the children in a caring and respectful manner. Positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults praised the children, listened attentively, used soft tones of voice and responded promptly to the children's cues for assistance. The children were encouraged to be independent during all the play and learning activities. The adults supervised and treated the children in a sensitive manner during toileting. Children were supported individually and as part of a group. The adults demonstrated a good understanding of the children's personal interests, preferences and capabilities.

The children engaged in a range of developmentally, challenging play and learning activities. The children transitioned from watching and conversing about a local farmer cutting silage in a nearby field to open ended play-based activities. In the indoor environment the children engaged in play with the following equipment and materials: tractors, trucks, helicopters, cars, small animals, dolls, blocks, jigsaws and pretend play in the home and shop areas. Open ended discussion and songs took place using the English and Irish language. Mealtime was observed to be a relaxed and sociable occasion whereby the children conversed amicably with their peers and the adults. Parents provided healthy and nutritious food and beverages for the children. After mealtime the children transitioned to the outdoor environment to engage in gross motor activities and played on the ride on vehicles in the artificial tuft court. The children were observed to enjoy all the morning activities.

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 entrance to the sessional service was secured to monitor the entry of unauthorised persons to the childcare facility.
- The children were signed in and out on arrival and departure to the service and were supervised at all times during the inspection.
- Medication was stored in a secured cabinet out of reach of the children.
- Storage facilities were secured and inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- The childcare facility was maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facility was equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined pedal operated bins. Photographic illustrations of hand hygiene techniques were displayed over the wash hand basins to prompt children to wash their hands.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, after using the toilet and on return from outdoor play and before mealtime.
- The children's personal belongings were stored individually on rails.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not administered during the inspection.
- The registered provider demonstrated an understanding of the administration of medication policy.
- Documentation was available for the adults to use should medication be administered in the service.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The fire assembly point and fire exit routes were readily identifiable. A fire action notice was displayed at the fire exit points in the building.
- The service demonstrated evidence of completing monthly fire drills to prepare the service to respond in the event of fire.

Outing:

- The registered provider stated that only one outing is undertaken every year. A risk assessment and an outings checklist are completed for every outing.
- The registered provider demonstrated an awareness of the service's outings policy and procedure.

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 adults had a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training and a record indicated that an adult with First Aid Responder (FAR) training was available in the service at all times.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in an accessible and conspicuous area in the service.

(b)

The first aid box was available in the service for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

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)

Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out by the service. The last fire drill took place on the 10 June 2025.

(b)
Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system took place on the 06 December 2024.

(4)
A fire action notice was displayed demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for eleven pre-school children. The insurance policy for the sessional service is valid until the 27 March 2026.