

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE107		
Name of Service:	Naíonra Ui Choimin		
Address of Service:	Gael Scoil Ui Choimin, Kilrush, Co. Clare		
Eircode:	V15 KT32		
Name of Registered Provider:	Sinead O'Gorman		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	07/12/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	6	PM N/A
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

Description of service

Naíonra Ui Choimin was notified to Tusla in 2011, as a privately operated service, which is located in Gael Scoil Ui Choimin, in the town of Kilrush, County Clare. The service accommodates children ranging in age from two to six years, Monday to Friday from 09:15 to 12:30. Care and learning are facilitated in one room within the school in a prefabricated structure. The children can access the outdoor play area to the front of the structure.

Staffing

On the 7th of December 2023, the registered provider and a member of staff worked directly with the children in attendance. The registered provider is the owner and manager of the service. Both adults working at the service held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood 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. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. 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.

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 member of 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 was the designated person in charge and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The registered provider was available throughout the inspection.

(2)

Two files were available and reviewed by the inspector. The findings included the following:

(a)

Three written and verified past employer references were available.

(b)

One written and verified reference was obtained from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the two adults employed by the service.

(d)

International police vetting was not required as the adults present had not lived in another state for a period longer than six months.

(4)

The adults working directly with the children held qualification at level 5 and level 7 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 7th of December 2023 the minimum ratio of adults caring for the children was maintained at all times. Two adults worked directly with the six 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

Compliance Information

- (1)(a)
Basic Needs of Children:
- The inspector observed the children's learning, development and well-being to be supported by the members of staff. The registered provider and the member of staff treated the children with positive regard and cared for the children in a kind and respectful manner.

This was observed by the staff members use of soft, gentle tones of voice, positive language and offering praise and encouragement consistently during the sessional programme. Positive behavioural strategies were used during all individual and group interactions. The programme of care and learning was facilitated in a relaxed and calm manner and the activities were guided by the children's preferences and capabilities. The children were notified in advance of transitions in the programme, the changes in activities were completed with ease. Children were encouraged to be independent during play based activities, caring for their personal belongings, while having their lunches and drinks and while using the toilet. The children's individual cues for assistance were responded to promptly and in a sensitive manner. Mealtime was observed to be a sociable and unhurried occasion and the children conversed amicably together.

Physical and Material Environment:

The indoor area was bright and well planned with distinct interest areas that offered a space for various types of play and learning activities. On arrival the children were fully engaged in extended play-based activities. The children transitioned through a variety of play and learning activities that included pretend play in the home corner, drawing designs on the blackboard, constructive and imaginative play through the use of magnetic tiles, shape boards and sensory play at the water table. After mealtime, the children sang and repeated nursery rhymes with actions through the use of the Irish and English languages. The children chose their individual activities and included their peers in all activities. The staff responded promptly to the children's cues for assistance.

The room was furnished with low level tables and chairs for tabletop activities and for dining at mealtime. The areas of interest included a rest and library area. This area was stocked with a range of reading materials and soft furnishings. This area provided a relaxing space for the children. The room was laid out with a home corner, a dress up area, shelving with a large range of Montessori and play based materials and equipment. The designated areas of interest were suitably resourced with developmentally appropriate resources and were accessible to the children. The outdoor area offered a space for the children to play, explore and move freely daily.

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:

- Both internal and external access to the service were appropriately secured. The outdoor areas were secured by fencing and a gate.
- The children’s arrival and departure times were recorded in a logbook.
- Cleaning agents required for use in the service were secured out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- The facilities and equipment within the service was maintained in a clean condition.
- Running warm water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded bins were available in the sanitary facility.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals during the sessional programme.

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider confirmed that medications are not administered routinely.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The service completed monthly fire drills to prepare for evacuation of the service in the event of a fire.

Outing:

- The registered provider confirmed that outings are undertaken by the service. A service policy was available to inform practice.

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 and staff member had a record of up to date First Aid Response training.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in an accessible position in the service.

(b)

A first aid box was available 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 firefighting 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 in the service. The last fire drill took place on the 17th of November 2023.

(b)
Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment took place on the 1st of February 2023.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)
An up-to-date record for the number, type and maintenance service for the smoke alarm system was not available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(1)(b)
Corrective and Preventive Action
A service of the smoke alarm system was undertaken on the 11th of January 2024. A service will take place as directed by the company going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted
A copy of the maintenance service certificate.

Summary Comment

Based on the corrective actions and supplementary information provided by the registered provider the areas of non-compliance under Regulation 26 (1)(b) are addressed.

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 twenty-two children attending the sessional service. The policy is valid until the 27th of March 2024.