

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CW031
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Name of Service:	Naoínra Arás na nÓg
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Address of Service:	Éire Óg, O'Brien Road, Carlow, Co. Carlow
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Eircode:	R93 Y020
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Name of Registered Provider:	Bríde De Róiste
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	06/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child & Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow.
Inspection undertaken by:	Norma Thornton
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

Naoínra Arás na nÓg is a sessional early years service which operates from a designated department within the Éire Óg GAA club facility, located in the centre of Carlow town. The service provides an early childhood care and education (ECCE) session for children aged 3 to 6 years between the hours of 09:00 to 12:00 hours, Monday to Friday, from September to June, as per the school calendar.

The service contains two early years classrooms, with integrated children's toilets, a designated kitchen area, office, and a designated early years playground. The service also has access to the walking path which surrounds the GAA pitches and to the pitches themselves for outdoor play and outings.

Staffing

There were 10 staff employed in the service. All staff members working directly with the children held a qualification at the minimum Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under some regulations. The following were inspected:

- 9(1)(2)(3)(4)(7)-Management and Recruitment,
- 10-Policies, Procedures etc.-of a preschool service,
- 11(1)(3)-Staffing Levels,
- 16(1)(a) to (k)-Record in relation to preschool service,
- 23-Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of child,
- 25-First Aid,
- 26- Fire Safety Measures,
- 28-Insurance.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included both classrooms, and the designated outdoor area.

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.

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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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.

(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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) There was a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) Both the designated person in charge and deputy designated person in charge were onsite during the inspection.

(c) The lines of accountability, authority and the roles and responsibilities of each staff member were clearly observed in practice on the day of inspection and were in line with the visual display of staff structure that was displayed on the notice board in the service for parents.

(2) Staff files for 10 staff members employed to work directly with the children as part of their role, in the service were reviewed by the inspector and the following observations found.

(a)(b) There were two validated references available in each staff member's file from either a past employer or reputable source, in the case of a person who had no past employers.

(c) Garda Vetting certificates were available on file for each staff member working directly with the children.

(d) No staff member employed to work directly with the children had lived outside of the State for a period of six months or longer.

(3) On review of staff files and the required documentation, the inspector was assured that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to any staff member commencing employment in the service.

(4) Certificates of accredited qualifications were available in each of the 10 staff members' files demonstrating that each staff member held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the national framework of qualifications.

(7) Each staff file held a record demonstrating that on commencement of employment in the service, each staff member received induction training and were informed of the service's policies, procedures and statements.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

On review of documentation the inspector observed that the written policies, procedures, and statements required under schedule 5 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 were available in the service and open for inspection. The service policies were specific to the service and their contents adequate.

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) There was an adequate number of staff members directly caring for the children throughout the inspection, there were 25 early years children present with 4 staff members directly supervising them, and the designated person in charge also present.
- (3) The following adult to child ratios were maintained in each classroom.
- In Seomra 1 there were 7 children aged 2 years and 8 months to 3 years and 8 months directly cared for by 2 staff members.
- In Seomra 2 there were 18 children aged 3 years 8 months to 5 years directly cared for by 2 staff members.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (k). The inspector observed that that the registered provider developed, maintained and appropriately stored the following relevant documents and records required in the service: (a) staff records, (b) the type of service and the age profile of the children, that the service is registered to provide, (c) details of the adult: child ratios in each classroom within the service, (d) the programme of care provided in the service, (e) the facilities available, (f) the opening hours and fees of the service, (g) the policies, procedures, and statements that the service is required under Regulation 10, (h) each child's daily attendance details, (i) staff rosters, (j) administration of medication records and (k) accident and incident records, involving ant early years children attending the service. A sample of records reviewed by the inspector were observed to be completed in full, with the relevant details recorded.

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 service had a separate, independent entrance from the GAA facilities. A large carpark was available at the front of the building. Access to the early years service could only be permitted by a staff member, upon answering a keypad call system. No unauthorised persons could gain access to the service and no child or children could leave the service unsupervised. The boundary of the outdoor pitches and walkway were secured with a high metal fence on a wall base, and thick natural hedging on one side. The service's designated outdoor play area was separated and secured from the other outdoor areas by a high 10-foot metal fencing.

The designated person in charge was able to demonstrate that a daily risk assessment of the outdoor play area and play equipment was carried out daily and outcomes recorded to ensure the physical environments were safe for the children.

Infection Control:

Both Seomraí had enough children's toilets and handwash basins available within the classrooms. Hand wash basins were supplied with liquid hand soap and paper towel dispensers which were easy for the children to use independently. Pedal operated rubbish bins were available in the toilets and classrooms for the safe disposal of tissues and towelling.

Children were observed to use the toilet and hand washing facilities with ease, ensuring they washed their hands correctly after using the toilet, after messy and outdoor play and before snack and mealtimes.

The staff were observed to monitor handwashing ensuring children were prompted on occasions of forgetfulness and staff demonstrated to the children how they frequently washed their hands after similar tasks.

Administration of Medication:

On the day of inspection, there was no child in attendance at the service, that required prescribed or emergency medication. The inspector observed that child centred plans had been created for individual children requiring specific emergency medication. Staff demonstrated to the inspector that they were trained in administration of

emergency medication and were knowledgeable about each child's specific procedure plan in line with the service's administration of medication policy.

On review of past administration of medication records maintained by the service, records were completed appropriately, in line with the service's administration of medication policy.

Outing:

While the service did not tend to operate outings away from the service due to the facilities available to them onsite, there was an adequate outings policy available specific to the service.

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 roster demonstrated that there were two first aid responder trained staff present in the service during the hours of operation. Two staff members held the required accredited first aid responder (FAR) certificates on file. One staff member was due to participate in upcoming refresher FAR training. It is acknowledged that all other staff members held current basic paediatric first aid training.

(2)(a) A large fully stocked first aid box was available in Seomra 2 and a smaller one available in Seomra 1.

(b) Both first aid boxes were present and observed to be fully stocked with adequate supplies, which available records demonstrated were checked monthly. The inspector observed that when the children went outside for a walk or to play in the outdoor play area, a travel first aid pack was taken with the group by one of the qualified Far trained staff.

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) The designated person in charge demonstrated that a record of any fire drills carried out in the service was maintained. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on the 21 September 2023.
- (b) Records of the maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms were maintained in the service. The last date of the annual service for the firefighting equipment was recorded as having taken place on the 22 August 2023, and for the smoke alarms was recorded as having taken place on the 01 August 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in each of the classrooms, and in the entrance hall. A fire assembly point was clearly signposted in a safe area of the facility's carpark.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

On review of the service's current insurance certificate, clearly displayed on the notice board in the entrance hall, the inspector observed that insurance certificate detailed cover for a sessional childcare service for 33 children.