

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR022		
Name of Service:	Naíonra Naithí		
Address of Service:	Scoil Naithí Bóthar Atha Leathan Baile an tSaoir Baile Átha Cliath 16		
Eircode:	D16EK63		
Name of Registered Provider:	Aidan Dundon		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	12/03/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM 13
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Brunel Building Heuston South Quarter Saint John's Road West Dublin 8. D08 X01F		
Inspection undertaken by:	R Duff G Kavanagh		
Title:	Early Years Inspectors		

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).

Description of service

Naíonra Naithí is a limited company and registered charity managed by a board of management. The sessional service operates from a purpose-built unit within the grounds of Scoil Naithí in a residential area of south county Dublin. The children have access to a grassed area on the school grounds for outdoor play.

Early education and care is provided on a sessional basis to children through the Irish language. The service caters for children aged three to six years of age and operates two sessions each day; 8:30am – 11:30am and 11:30am – 2.30pm Monday to Friday.

Staffing

There are a total of 4 staff members employed in the service. The registered provider is not employed in the service. On the day of the inspection, there were 4 staff caring for 13 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2) and (4)-Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(3) Staffing levels.

Regulation 15 Record of a pre-school child

Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of child.

Regulation 25 First aid

Regulation 28-Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, 19 and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection focused on the preschool room.

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 inspectors wish 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*
- (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.*

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
- (b) The deputy designated person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived to the service.
- (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.
- (2) The files of the registered provider and four staff who work in the service were reviewed.
- (a) Six written and verified references were available from past employers.
- (b) Four written and verified references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and four staff members. The service also 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 as there was evidence to show that no staff member had resided outside of the jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that 4 adults who worked directly with the children in the service held 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.

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 there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (3) During the Inspection, there were 4 adults caring for 13 children aged 3-5 years old.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

- (1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*
- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
 - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
 - (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
 - (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
 - (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
 - (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
 - (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
 - (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1) The records of 10 children who were attending the service were reviewed and contained the following particulars:

(a) The name and date of birth of each child.

(b) The date on which each child first attended the service.

(c) There was an area on the registration form where the date when a child would cease to attend the service will be recorded.

(d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service were also available.

(e) Names and contact details of other adults who were authorised to collect children were available.

(f) The documentation available supported the recording of specific illnesses, allergies, disabilities and dietary preferences for children.

(g) The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner was available;

(h) Parents had indicated which immunisations their children had received.

(i) There was written parental consent for medical treatment of children in the event of an emergency.

(4) The registered provider was aware that the records referred to above must be retained for a period of two years after the child leaves the service.

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

The inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

A calm and welcoming atmosphere was evident on arrival at the service. Four staff members and thirteen children were engaged in a range of activities, for example sand play, colouring, painting and watching tadpoles and comparing them to life span pictures. Staff members were attentive and responsive to the needs of the children and were observed to respond to children in a calm and relaxed manner throughout the inspection. Language used by the four staff members was observed to be encouraging, supportive and informative. For example, adults used Irish language when speaking to children and repeated words and phrases to support children's use and understanding of the Irish language.

Identity and belonging were promoted in the classroom with children's family photos, and artwork displayed on the walls of the care room and visible to children. Engagement with families and parents is facilitated by the daily sharing of information on the child's day. This is shared through conversations at drop off and collection and by electronic means. On the day of inspection transitions from preschool to home were observed to be friendly and informative to parents or guardians collecting children.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to new activity and for lunch time. Children brought lunch from home. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment.

Child sized tables and chairs allowed the children to eat and engage in tabletop activities. There was evidence that equipment and materials provided were based on the children's individual needs and emergent interests. Suitable toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and accessible to children. The care room was also equipped with a conservatory called "teachin spraoi" and a tree house called "aileir". Both areas gave children the opportunity to remove themselves to a quieter area if desired.

The outdoor area was well equipped with a range of toys and materials to support play experiences.

Children enjoyed freedom of movement in the outdoor play area and were observed to engage in a range of activities, this supports their social, cognitive, gross and fine motor development.

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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorized persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Toys and equipment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Radiators in the care room were fitted with protective covers.
- The outdoor area was observed to be suitable, safe and secure with domestic bins stored out of children's reach and all outdoor play materials maintained and in good condition free from hazards.

Infection Control:

- Both the indoor and outdoor environment were maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facility was equipped with warm water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and pedal operated bins.
- The children and adults washed their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, it was observed that all emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Cleaning agents were observed to be stored in an unlocked press under the sink in the sand and painting area used by children.
2. Grapes in one child's lunch boxes were observed to be whole and not cut into appropriate bite sized pieces. This posed a risk of choking.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

1. Cleaning agents have been moved to a wall press, out of reach of the children. The registered provider has informed all staff that cleaning agents must be stored in the new location. This information will be shared with any new staff during induction training.
2. Parents have been reminded that grapes must be cut lengthwise to prevent a choking hazard. A link to the HSE website - Food choking risks for babies and children. An image has also been shared with parents, reminding them of how to chop appropriately. Staff will check all lunchboxes to ensure there are no whole grapes or other choking hazards are present. Staff will be reminded of the above at refresher training. A poster displaying cut fruit and vegetables will be displayed in the Naíonra.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

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 service provided evidence that an adult trained in First Aid Response was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the sessional service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for 25 children and an expiry date of 27 March 2025.