

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR115
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Name of Service:	Tir Na Nog Creche & Montessori
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Address of Service:	4 Marine Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	A96 W659
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Name of Registered Provider:	Patricia Keane
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	30/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	24
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Early O'Brien & H. Bourke
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).

Conditions if applicable	N/A
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Description of service

Tír Na Nóg Creche & Montessori is registered as a Full Day Care service and is privately operated. The early years' service is situated in a two-storey terraced house owned by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and is located on Marine Road in Dun Laoghaire. Care of children attending the service is facilitated across five care rooms, named the Baby Room, Wobbler Room, Toddler Room, Pre-Montessori Room and Montessori Room. A separate sleep room is available for children under two years of age. An outdoor play area is available to the rear of the premises. The service operates from Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 17:00 and caters for children aged 0-6 years.

Staffing

There are ten staff employed to work in the service including the registered provider and a cook. On the day of inspection, eight staff were present, and working directly with the children. The registerer provider arrived after the inspection had commenced.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9(1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4) - Management and recruitment
Regulation 11(1)(2)(8) - Staffing levels
Regulation 19(1)(a)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child
Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child
Regulation 24(1)(4) – Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance
Regulation 25 – First Aid
Regulation 26(1)(4) – Fire Safety Measures
Regulation 28 – Insurance
Regulation 29(c)(d) - Premises

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, 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.

(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 is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.
- (b) The service manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived at 10:55 on the morning of the inspection and was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

The files of ten adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. This included files of five staff members who had commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 11 December 2023.

Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

- (a)(b) Of the ten validated, written references that were required, nine were available from a past employer and one from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were on file and had been obtained for all ten staff members, demonstrating that the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was required and available for three staff members who had lived outside of the State for a period of more than six months as an adult.

(4)

Records were available demonstrating that all adults employed in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework

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.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twenty five children attending the service being supervised by eight adults on the morning of inspection and twenty four children being supervised by eight adults in the afternoon.

8(a)

There was a minimum of two adults on the premises at all times during the inspection. This was confirmed on review of the staff roster.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly on the day of inspection. Staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including cleaning up after their play and meals.

Healthy eating was promoted in the service and staff reported that all meals are provided by the service for children attending on a full-day care basis. On the day of inspection, the children were observed to be eating a dinner of mashed potato, chicken, broccoli and gravy. Staff advised that alternatives were available, and food preferences were catered for on the day of inspection. Children were offered a jelly desert and milk to drink. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported children who needed assistance. Children appeared happy and content within the care room.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly, offering comfort and support when needed. Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Staff encouraged and praised the children when promoting positive behaviour. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's choice and independence during play and mealtimes.

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 door leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- Visitors to the premises were required to sign in on arrival to the premises.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor play environments were safe and free from hazards.
- Medication was stored safely and out of the reach of children.
- Storage facilities for hazardous cleaning materials were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing in adjoining sanitary accommodation for all care rooms.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers and mouthed toys.
- Individual bed linen was provided for children. Staff stated that bed linen is laundered weekly.
- Cleaning schedules were available in all care rooms and the service appeared clean.
- Good hand washing practices were observed after toileting, before eating and when returning indoors from play.

Administration of Medication:

- There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of prescribed medication and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required.
- Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication if required.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were documented every ten minutes in a hardback notebook. Discussion with staff demonstrated that they were familiar with safe sleep guidelines.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, all emergency exits were observed to be clearly identifiable and were not obstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Care plans for two children attending the service who require emergency medication were reviewed. While these plans were detailed, and parents had given prior consent for administration of medication, for one of the children, there was no parent signature recorded on the dates that this medication had been administered. This poses a risk to the health and safety of the child.

Infection Control:

- On the day of inspection, a staff member was observed carrying out nappy changes. The adult failed to wash their hands before applying their gloves at the start of the nappy changes, failed to remove their apron having completed the nappy changes and prior to re-dressing each child. They cleaned the mat and surface with the same paper towel. They then removed their apron after completing this process and, while they ensured that the children's hands were washed, they didn't wash their own hands before commencing the next nappy change. The nappy changing procedure of the service was reviewed and was found to not be robust enough for effective infection control purposes.

Strict care practices around nappy changing procedures are essential for infection control purposes.

This non-compliance was also observed on the previous inspection on 11 December 2023 and the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have not addressed this.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider has advised that the parent has now signed for medication administered on dates observed on inspection. A new administration of medication consent form will be implemented to prevent this non-compliance from reoccurring in the future and staff have been reminded that this form must be signed daily.

Infection Control:

A new nappy changing procedure has been shared with all staff and displayed locally within the service. One to one training has been carried out with staff members to prevent this non-compliance from re-occurring in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Evidence of the parent signature has been submitted in addition to copy of the new consent form for administration of medication.

Infection Control:

The registered provider has submitted an updated nappy changing policy and procedure.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance and will inform the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)
On the day of inspection, a handwritten record was available detailing the arrival and departure time of each child on a daily basis.

(4)
Records detailing the arrival and departure time of all visitors to the service was available and upon review by the inspectors on their arrival, this information had been retained for the previous year.

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)

A person trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a)(b)

A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available and safely stored on the premises.

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)

There was evidence of regular fire drills having taken place within the service. The last fire drill took place on the 17 September 2025.

(b)

There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the premises dated April 2025 and July 2025 respectively.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the pre-school rooms

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a valid certificate of insurance which expires on 27 March 2026 for a full-day care service which covers a maximum of 43 children

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required,

Non-Compliance Information

(c)

The sanitary area for the Toddler and Wobbler Room did not have effective ventilation to prevent malodorous smells from spreading throughout the ground floor of the service. This was observed following a nappy change. While it is acknowledged that the fan in the area was working, it was too small and too high-up to have an effective impact on filtering the air in the sanitary area.

(d)

The service was not maintained as required as evidenced by the following:

In the Sleep Room/Cot room

- There was evidence of a leak in the ceiling. This was also observed on the last inspection on 11 December 2023. The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider following that inspection has not prevented a re-occurrence.
- In the window, paint was observed to have blistered.

In the Toddler Room

- Paint had flaked off the walls on both sides of the entrance door to the Wobbler room with plaster exposed in places.
- The lamination on the doors of the storage press underneath the sink in the Toddler Room had worn off.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) The property owner has been informed of the outcome of inspection in relation to ventilation and the registered provider awaits further review. It may take six months for an update.

(d) The property owner has been informed of the outcome of the inspection in relation to a leak in the ceiling and window of the cot room. In the interim the wall at the window area has been sealed and repainted.

The walls in the toddler room were also filled and repainted following inspection.

The press door in the Toddler room was resealed following inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider has submitted photographic evidence of the works carried out in the Cot room and Toddler room.

A copy of an email sent by the registered provider to the property owner in relation to non-compliance has been received seeking an update on works to be carried out in the building and a timeline for completion.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance and will inform the next inspection.