

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS005
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Name of Service:	Grian na nÓg
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Address of Service:	Grian na nÓg, Greenogue, Rathcoole, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24 F430
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Name of Registered Provider:	Davina Forde, Rachel Blake
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	05/08/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM	23
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 X38W
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern and R. Phillips
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

Grian na nÓg is a privately operated full-day, part-time and sessional early years service located in Rathcoole, Dublin 24. The service operates from a one-storey, purposely built premises and includes seven child-care rooms, a sensory room and a large outdoor area. The service is registered to accommodate a maximum of 82 children aged 1 - 6 years and a school-aged service is also provided. It operates from 07:30 to 18:00 providing a sessional service in the mornings during term time.

All children were aged over two years on the day of inspection. Children aged two years were accommodated in the Toddler room. Children aged over three years were accommodated in three groups named Summer Groups 1, 2 and 3 and spent most of the time outdoors.

Staffing

There are 16 staff employed to work in the service including the registered providers, two chefs and a staff member who works with school aged children. Eleven staff are employed to work directly with the pre-school 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.

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*

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The service had a named person in charge and a person who could deputise in their absence.

(b) The person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived and remained on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or named deputy to be present at all times of opening.

(2)(a) & (b) References had been appropriately sourced and verified for 15 staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 16 staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) International police vetting disclosures had been sourced for any adult whom it was required.

(4) All staff members employed to work directly with pre-school children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Minister.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) & (b) References had not been sourced for one adult who was employed on a temporary basis. This regulation was non-compliant on the previous inspection dated 17 April 2023. The adult had been recruited after this date. The actions which had been submitted following that inspection had not prevented the non-compliance from recurring.

(3) The procedures specified in regulation 9(2)(a) and (b) had not been carried out prior to employment of one adult as outlined above.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) & (b) & (3) Two valid references have been received and two reference checks completed. All future staff will be required to provide at least two references, including one from a previous employer, as part of the initial hiring process. An employee documentation checklist is in place which will be completed prior to the new staff member commencing employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of outstanding references with record of reference checks.

Copy of pre-employment documentation checklist.

Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed to appropriately address the non-compliance.

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 with the children. There were 4 staff members working directly with 23 children. The service manager was available to assist as needed.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement for the age of children and type of service provided was always maintained.
- (8)(a) There were at least two staff members on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two staff to be on the premises at all times of opening.

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

Basic Needs

The adults supported the children to meet their needs throughout the inspection. Drinks were always available to the children. Meals and snacks were provided by the service at regular intervals. The children sat together in a dining area at this time. The adults engaged the children in conversation and provided help when needed. Children were afforded plenty of time to eat. Staff were observed applying sun protectant lotion to children's skin prior to outdoor play and at regular intervals throughout the day appropriate to the weather.

Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times and used the toilet independently when they needed. Younger children's nappies were changed routinely. Children who had recently undergone toilet training in the Toddler room were reminded to use the toilet and supported towards independence. Spare clothing was available for use if needed. One child who required a nap in the Toddler room was accommodated to sleep in the adjoining sleep room after dinner.

Supporting Relationships around Children

The adults were attentive to the children and always engaged warmly with them. They discussed the children's individual preferences and needs. They provided comfort when children became upset and supported them to resolve conflicts gently during play. The children were regularly observed laughing and engaging in conversations with the adults and each other. Pictures of the children's families were displayed on the wall to support the connection between the service and home. Children attending the Toddler room had individual record books with daily information including food, nappy changes, toilet visits and sleeps. A section was available for staff/parents/guardians to include a daily note. Staff reported these are sent home with the children daily. Staff also reported they communicate with children's guardians/parents at drop off and collection.

Physical and Material Environment

The indoor areas were laid out with designated interest areas including home corners, construction areas and arts and crafts areas. These were resourced with props and equipment to support creative and imaginative play and learning. Play equipment and materials were visible and accessible to the children and included small world toys, puzzles and books. Children engaged freely with the environment and participated in activities of their choice.

Areas were available where children could rest and take a break from activities. All children spent time outside with the children over three years of age spending most of their time outdoors. The outdoor area was spacious and allowed the children to engage in various forms of physical, sensory and imaginative play. It was divided into various sections with different interest areas and included a lot of natural elements. Children had access to a variety of play equipment including climbing frames, ride on toys, sand and water. A sensory room was also available for use.

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:

Measures were taken to ensure the children's safety. This included securing the entrance and exits to prevent unauthorised access and children leaving unsupervised. Toys and equipment were in good working order. Cleaning products or items that could pose a hazard were stored out of children's reach. Emergency exits were kept clear to facilitate a timely evacuation in the event of a fire. Records were available demonstrating fire drills were carried out monthly and staff were familiar with the service's fire evacuation procedures.

Infection Control:

The premises, materials and equipment appeared clean and well maintained. Staff discussed cleaning schedules which included regular laundering of fabric items and bed linen. The sanitary facilities were equipped to support handwashing. The inspector observed children washing their hands at required times including before eating, after outdoor play and after using the toilet. Children's nappies were changed in a manner that reduced the risk of spreading germs. Waste was properly managed using pedal-operated bins, to facilitate hands-free disposal.

Administration of Medication:

No children received medicine during the inspection. Medications were stored safely out of reach of children. Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to administer medicine safely if required. This included obtaining written parent/guardian consent, ensuring a second staff member was present to cross check and keeping a detailed record.

Safe Sleep:

All children were aged over two years of age on the day of inspection. One child required sleep and slept in a cot appropriate to their age and stage of development. Staff checked the child at regular intervals and made a record of the checks.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for all staff. However, the vetting disclosure for one staff member was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The Garda vetting renewal for the staff member has been completed and filed. Scheduled emails have been created to send a notification to both managers when each individual Garda vetting is due for renewal. As a secondary measure all Garda vetting renewal dates have been scheduled in the calendar giving a notification four weeks prior to the Garda vetting expiring.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Outstanding Garda vetting disclosure dated 8 September 2025.
Garda vetting renewal schedule.

Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed to appropriately address the non-compliance.

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 for children was available to the children throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for a person trained in first aid to be available to the children at all times of opening.

(2) (a) & (b) An appropriately equipped first aid box was stored in a conspicuous position and was available at all times.

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) A written record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had been carried out in the service. The most recent fire drill record was dated 31 July 2025.

(b) Records were available in relation to the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system. The most recent dates of maintenance recorded were 11 September 2024 and 5 June 2025 respectively.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in prominent positions throughout the premises.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The children were appropriately supervised at all times during the inspection. This included when playing indoors and outdoors, when using the sanitary facilities and when eating and sleeping.