

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS085
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Name of Service:	Naíonra Santain Teoranta
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Address of Service:	Scoil Santain, Avonmore Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24 TW35
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Name of Registered Provider:	Doireann Ní Neill
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	01/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	7
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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
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

Naíonra Santain Teoranta is a sessional early years service for children aged 2 - 6 years. It operates from a prefabricated building on the grounds of Scoil Santain, Tallaght. There are two pre-school rooms called Blue room and Red room. Each room has a separate entrance and separate sanitary facilities. There is a kitchen adjacent to the Blue room and an office adjacent to the Red room. A designated outdoor area is available to the rear of the building which has been divided into two areas with low fencing. The service operates Monday to Friday with a morning session from 08:30 to 11:30 and an afternoon session from 12:00 to 15:00.

Staffing

There are seven adults employed to work in the service. Five adults were present during the inspection, one of whom is the registered provider.

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

Regulation 9 (1)(a) & (b), (2)(a), (b), (c) & (d) & (4) - Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1) & (3) – Staffing levels

Regulation 19 (1)(b) Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 - First aid

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

However, on inspection additional non-compliance was identified under the following regulations:

Regulation 8 (1) & (3) – Notification of change in circumstances

Regulation 9 (7) (c) – Management and recruitment.

Regulation 16 (1) (j) – Record in relation to pre-school service

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.

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, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) & (3) The registered provider did not notify the Agency of a change made to the person in charge.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

We have completed a change of circumstances form to Tusla which has been accepted. We will ensure any further change of circumstances are applied for.

Supporting documentation submitted

Confirmation of change in circumstance application and approval.

Summary Comment

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

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.

(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:

- (c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) The service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise.
- (b) The person in charge and deputy were on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

(a) & (b) No new staff had been employed since this regulation was inspected on 22 November 2023.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. 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) No new staff had been employed since this regulation was inspected on 22 November 2023.

(4) No new staff had been employed since this regulation was inspected on 22 November 2023.

Non-Compliance Information

9 (7) (c) It was not evident that the person in charge and staff had received appropriate information and training in relation to regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. A significant number of issues were identified as posing a risk to the safety of children during the inspection. The registered provider reported that formal supervision is not provided. It is acknowledged that the registered provider agreed to avail of external supports to assist in addressing the non-compliance in relation to training, supervision and safety.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

We have linked with a quality development service for early learning and care. We intend to work with this service and follow their advice.

Supporting documentation submitted

Acknowledgment of application from quality development service dated 15 December 2025.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted should 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.

(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) An adequate number of adults were working with the children. There were 5 adults working directly with 16 children in the morning and 4 adults working with 7 children in the afternoon.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement for the age of children and type of service provided was always maintained.

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:

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (j) The person in charge reported that medicine had been administered to a child on a number of days within the past two weeks. There was no written parent consent available. The medicine record did not include the child's name or identifying information and was signed only with the staff member's first name.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

We have updated our administration of medication policy. We will ensure to get written parental consent in the future and ensure all staff know the medication procedures.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photograph of book titled 'Administration of Medication Record Book' developed by an early years sector membership organisation.
- Updated administration of medication policy dated 3 December 2025 including information on obtaining written parent consent and medication record requirements.
- Copy of medication administration consent template

Summary Comment

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

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

Staff were observed to be attentive to the children's care needs throughout the inspection. They demonstrated an awareness of the children's likes, dislikes and individual needs. The children brought food and drinks from home and sat together with the adults when eating. They wore coats when playing outside appropriate to the weather. They used the toilet when needed with staff providing an appropriate balance of supervision while promoting independence. An area was available in each room where children could rest or take a break from activities.

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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:

Some measures had been taken to safeguard the children from harm including, heavy furniture being secured to prevent tipping, and accurate recording of children's attendance to facilitate roll calls in the event of an emergency.

Infection Control:

Some measures were taken to control the spread of infection. These included handwashing at appropriate times and cleaning of tables before lunch.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Appropriate measures had not been taken to safeguard children as outlined:

1. A child in the Red pre-school room was observed with whole grapes in her lunchbox at lunch time. Three staff reported they were aware the child had these. One staff member told the inspector they were aware this was a choking hazard and they had asked parents to chop them on a number of occasions. However, the staff did not remove or cut the grapes until prompted by the inspector.
2. The door to the kitchen was open directly onto the Blue preschool room throughout the inspection. The kitchen contained kitchen knives, loose cables and a large quantity of cleaning products which posed a risk of injury to the children if they were to access the area unsupervised. The staff member did not secure the door until prompted by the inspector.
3. The rear emergency exit door from the Red pre-school room was fitted with a slide latch that prevented the push-bar mechanism from opening the door unless the latch was manually released first. The door was also covered with a fabric screen that had been tacked to the walls requiring it to be pulled apart in the centre to exit. This created a three-step process to exit, instead of one. In addition, the door was catching on the step when

opened outwards, restricting it from opening fully. Both issues could delay the evacuation of children in an emergency and do not meet fire-safety requirements. It is acknowledged there was a second escape route from this room.

4. An insect bait box labelled with “toxic” and “keep out of reach of children”, was observed on the floor in the Red preschool room within children’s reach, posing a hazard. This was removed when prompted by the inspector.

5. The guard rail for the storage heater in the Red preschool room, which the registered provider stated had been recommended by a fire officer, had come away from the wall. This posed a risk of a burn injury to the children as the heater surface temperature measured 58°C.

6. The gate leading from the car park to the outdoor area used by the Blue preschool room was unsecured. Although it was unlikely a child could open it from inside because it was catching in the ground, it could be opened by an adult from outside, posing a risk of unauthorised access.

Infection Control:

7. The premises were not maintained in a clean manner as outlined below. Staff reported there was no person assigned for specific cleaning duties and no cleaning schedules were in place. This posed an increased risk of infection spreading within the service.

(a) A build-up of dust and debris was observed on some of the play equipment, rest area and shelves in the preschool rooms.

(b) A build-up of dead insects, dust, and debris was observed at the edges of rooms where the floor met the wall in the preschool rooms and the sanitary facilities.

(c) There was litter on the ground in the outdoor area. Two pieces of play equipment were broken with pieces discarded on the ground. The sand table had not been covered and had a build-up of rainwater which staff reported was from the previous week. A staff member was observed telling a child not to touch it as it was not clean. Another child was observed handling it after this.

8. There were no working, pedal operated, lidded bins throughout the service. All waste was disposed of in open bins posing a risk of children touching the contents and increasing the risk of infection.

9. Toilet paper was not stored appropriately for infection control. The toilet paper for one of the cubicles used by the Blue room was stored on the water heater outside the cubicle. The toilet paper for one of the cubicles used by the Red room was stored on a holder made of string which could not be cleaned.

10. Facial tissues were used for hand drying instead of paper towels. These are more likely to tear and leave residue, increasing the risk of cross contamination and the spread of germs among children.

11. Perishable foods brought from home were not stored at the required temperature below 5°C. These were stored in children's bags within the pre-school rooms which can increase the risk of foodborne illness for children.

Administration of Medication:

12. No children received medication on the day of inspection. However, it was not evident that appropriate safeguards were in place for administering medication as evidenced by records. This information is documented under regulation 16 (1) (j) above.

Outings:

13. Staff informed the inspector that children are taken on outings annually. It was evident from documents and discussions with staff that parental consent was sought prior to outings. However, staff reported that they do not undertake risk assessments or complete a checklist prior to outings contrary to the service's outings policy. In addition, the policy did not include comprehensive procedures for managing a critical incident on an outing, particularly a missing child. This could compromise the safety of children when taken off the premises and delay appropriate actions should a critical incident arise.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. We can assure that grapes are routinely cut before being given to children. This practice has been consistently followed. During the inspection, staff were momentarily unsure and awaited the inspector's direction before acting. In future, staff will continue to follow our established procedure at all times and will act immediately, as we normally do, without waiting for further guidance.

2. All staff have been informed that the kitchen door must be closed at all times even if they are using it. The door must be bolted when not in use.

3. The fire exit door has been removed and shaved for easier opening, and the protective netting has been removed. A sign has been added to remind staff that the latch must only be used at home time for break-in security.

4. An insect bait box was removed on the day of inspection. We will not use this product in the future.

5. The guard rail for the storage heater in the Red preschool room and all other guards have been secured to the wall using longer/stronger screws for more security. We will be more vigilant with checks to ensure no movement of the covers and get them replaced immediately.

6. The gate leading from the car park to the outdoor area used by the Blue preschool has been removed, shaved and replaced and now locks easily. Gates will be checked regularly for swelling in case further adjustments are needed.

Infection Control:

7.

(a) The build-up of dust and debris has been cleaned and removed. Both rooms have been deep cleaned.

(b) The build-up of insects has been cleaned.

(c) The outdoor area has been cleaned, all leaves have been removed, broken toys have been put in the bin. The sand pit has been cleaned, and a cover has been purchased.

A new cleaning schedule has been created and will be filled in on a daily/weekly basis.

8. Pedal operated bins have been purchased for both preschool rooms and all bathrooms. When new bins are needed we will ensure to buy pedal bins in the future.

9. Toilet paper has been delivered and has been placed into wall mounted holders. We will ensure to keep timely deliveries of the appropriate toilet rolls and paper towels.

10. Paper towels are being used in all the hand towel dispensers.

11. Perishable foods / children's lunches are being stored in the fridge. We will ensure that lunches are stored in the fridge and that lunchboxes are clearly labelled in case of allergies.

Administration of Medication:

12. Our administration medication policy has been updated to include parental consent form. We will ensure all medication consent forms are completed, and that all staff are aware of our policy.

Outing:

13. Our outings policy has been updated to include a risk assessment, a checklist and procedures for managing a critical incident on an outing, particularly a missing child. We will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out by the person in charge prior to any outing and we will complete a checklist prior to leaving.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photograph's illustrating actions 2, 3, 5 and 6 as stated.

Infection Control:

- Photograph's illustrating actions 7 – 11 as stated.
- Cleaning schedules

Administration of Medication:

- Documents submitted as per regulation 16

Outing:

- Updated outings policy dated 4 December 2025

Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliances.

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 with a recognised first aid certificate was immediately available to the children throughout the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) & (b) Although first aid boxes were stored in conspicuous positions in the pre-school rooms, the contents had significantly expired which could compromise their effectiveness.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) & (b) New first aid kits have been purchased for both rooms. We have created a first aid kit checklist and usage log which will be checked and restocked after every use.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Images of first aid boxes with contents expiry date of February 2028
- Copy of first aid kit checklist

Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliance.

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) Records were available of fire drills carried out. The most recent fire drill record was dated 14 November 2025.
 - (b) Records were available in relation to the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system. Certificates of maintenance were available dated 2 December 2025 and 10 November 2025 respectively.

Non-Compliance Information

- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was not displayed anywhere on the premises, posing a risk to the safe evacuation of children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (4) There was notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire on the door, but it was written in Irish and was overlooked. We have now printed an English version to accompany it in case of visitors to the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Copy of notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire

Summary Comment

The notice displayed on inspection was directed at children – outlining the actions they should take in the event of a fire. The notice subsequently submitted outlines the procedures for adults to take to safely evacuate children from the building and includes procedures for contacting emergency services. This notice has been deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.