

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY149				
Name of Service:	Naíonra Uí Earcáin				
Address of Service:	WFTRA Hall, Mellows Road, Finglas West, Dublin 11.				
Eircode:	D09 K4P6				
Name of Registered Provider:	Julie Brady				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	27/03/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>21</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	21	PM	N/A
AM	21	PM	N/A		

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	<p>Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K</p>
Inspection undertaken by:	C Kerrigan
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

Description of service

Naíonra Uí Earcáin is located in a single storey premises beside the WFTRA Hall. The service offers sessional childcare and education for children aged 2-6 years old. The service has two care rooms: Seomra 1 and Seomra 2. The registered opening hours of the service are 8:30 to 12:00, currently the opening hours of the service are 08:30 until 12:00, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education.

Staffing

The registered provider employs three staff and also works in the service. On the day of inspection, the registered provider, the deputy person in charge and two staff members were present providing direct care to the 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 area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 (j), (k)-Record in Relation to a Preschool Service.

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, 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

(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 designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
 - (b) A review of the roster and conversation with staff showed that the named person in charge or the deputy person in charge is rostered on the premises during the service opening hours.
- (2) On the day of inspection four files were reviewed; these included the registered provider, and the three adults present on the day of inspection.
- (a) The registered provider ensured that six written and validated references from a previous employer were available for the adults working within the service.

- (b) The registered provider ensured that two written and validated references from a source other than a previous employer were available for the adults working within the service.
 - (c) The registered provider ensured that garda vetting disclosures were obtained for all four adults working within the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early years Regulatory notice, requiring services to renew garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) The registered provider ensured that police vetting checks were available for a staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that all references for four adults and garda vetting procedures for three adults working within the service were completed prior to these adults having access or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that all adults working directly with the children attending 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.

Non-Compliance Information

- (3) A review of documentation available indicated that one adult working within the service had commenced employment prior to the completion of garda vetting procedures. Potentially exposing children to an unvetted adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (3) The staff member was vetted at another service and due to urgent staff needs they were brought on board, while they waited for vetting to come through the staff member was never left unsupervised working alongside another vetted staff member. New staff members will have vetting completed prior to commencing work in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 9(3).

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 that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children in the service at all times throughout the day. Four early years staff were available in the building to meet the care needs of 21 children who were present on the day of inspection.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the adult to child ratios were maintained within the service on the day of inspection. This was further evidenced in the staff roster.

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;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept within the service with the following information.

(j) The registered provider ensured that a medication administration record was available within the service, no records were sampled as according to staff, no medication had been administered within the service, this was reflected in the documentation provided.

(k) The registered provider ensured that an accident and incident record was available within the service, no records were sampled as according to staff, no accidents or incidents had occurred within the service since 2015, this was reflected in the documentation provided.

(3) On the day of inspection, the registered provider ensured that the above records were available on the premises and open to inspection by the inspector.

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

(1)(a) The registered provider ensured that the learning, development and wellbeing was facilitated within the service in the following ways.

Basic Needs

- The children were provided with regular snacks. and meals. This included lunches which were prepared at home and brought into the service. On the day of inspection children were observed to have a selection of sandwiches, various fruits appropriately cut, crackers and cheeses. Children drank from their own water bottles. The service has a Healthy Eating Policy, and this was reflected in the food choices on the day. Mealtimes were observed to be social and pleasurable experience for the children, at a pace that best suited their needs.
- There was a rest area available in the care room if the children needed to engage in more restful activities.
- Children had unrestricted access to the toilet, which was well supervised, adults encouraged independence with self-care skills but offered assistance when needed.

Supporting Relationships.

- The adults within the service were observed to interact with the children in a warm and respectful manner, sitting with the children during play and snack times. This provides opportunities to support children's learning and development.
- Adults within the service were observed to speak to each other in a professional and warm manner.
- Adults reported that the service operates an open-door policy with time given at pick up and drop off for parents to ask questions about their child's day. The service uses a mobile application to communicate to parents on a weekly basis, bridging the gap between service and home.

Physical and Material Environment

- The furniture provided in the room was low level and appropriate for children attending with toys, equipment and play materials easily accessible and visible to the children on low-level units which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- Both rooms were bright, clean and well equipped with toys and materials to meet the needs of the children present.
- Images of the children and their accomplishments were displayed throughout the room which promoted a sense of identity, belonging and achievement.

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 main entrance to the service was secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival at the service. Access was granted via a doorbell system in which a staff member answered, therefore preventing access to the children from unauthorised persons, this also prevented the children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Hazardous materials such as cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children on high shelving or in locked areas.
- The ambient room temperature in the service was kept between 18-22°C.
- Radiator covers were adequately secured to the wall preventing injury to children.
- In each care room the kitchenette areas were secured with bolted gates and inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- The service was clean and well maintained throughout. Cleaning schedules within the service outlined the frequency of cleaning.
- Windows were open in the care rooms allowing fresh air to circulate.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications are not routinely given within the service, but staff demonstrated knowledge on the procedure for medication administration if required.

- Temperature reducing medication held onsite was stored out of reach of children but accessible to staff of needed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Trailing flexes were unsecured at a child's level within Seomra Room 1. This posed a potential strangulation risk.

Infection Control:

2. Throughout the service children's lunch boxes which contained perishable food items were kept in children's bags and not refrigerated, potentially exposing children to harmful bacterial growth.
3. Handwashing practices were inadequate throughout the service and not in line with the service policy on handwashing technique, for example: Children were observed to undertake hand washing from a shared basin, without soap with a shared cloth towel used for hand drying. This exposes children to harmful bacteria.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The trailing flexes have been covered to eliminate potential hazards. Risk assessments have been conducted to assess the area for hazards.

Infection Control:

2. A new fridge has been purchased and all children's lunches are placed in the fridge upon their arrival to the service.
3. The handwashing policy has been reviewed. Children have access to basins with warm running water, paper towels are now in use for hand drying and dedicated bins have been placed for the hygienic disposal of used paper towels.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence has been submitted.

Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence submitted.
3. Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered providers have been sufficient to address the non-compliances in Regulation 23.

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) One adult present held a certification in first aid response (FAR) and was available to the children during the operational hours of the service.

(2)

(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position within the premises.

(b) The first aid box was readily available to the adults caring for the children attending the pre-school service.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(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) (b) A record was available indicating the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment with records demonstrating it was last serviced October 2024, and the number, type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms throughout the service, these were last serviced on the 26 March 2025.
- (2) (b) The registered provider ensured that the fire drill and maintenance records were available for review by the Inspector.
- (4) A notice of procedure was displayed throughout the service indicating the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The registered provider did not ensure that regular fire drills were undertaken or recorded within the service. Through conversation and review of documentation the last recorded fire drill was undertaken on the 18 December 2024. It is acknowledged that those in Seomra 2 stated a fire drill was undertaken within the last month, however this was not documented.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)(a) A new procedure has been implemented to ensure fire drills are conducted and recorded on a monthly basis, a designated member of staff member has been assigned this task, going forward on a new school term a designated person will be nominated to oversee this task.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative measures submitted by the registered providers are sufficient to address the non-compliance in Regulation 26.