

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY227
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tír na nÓg
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Early Childhood Care & Education Centre, Ballymun Day Nursery Ltd, Sillogue, Ballymun, Dublin 11
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D11 YF66
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Linda Kelly
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/01/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	57	PM	30
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Area 1 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	T Nelson
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Tír na nÓg is located in a residential area of Dublin 11 and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 88 children aged 2 to 6 years, Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 4.00pm on a fulltime, part time and sessional basis. The service currently provides care on a sessional basis from 8.45am to 11.45am, and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm and offers part-time and full-time hours. There are four care rooms to include Rooms 1 and 2 catering for children ages 2 to 3years, and rooms 3 and 4 catering for children aged 3 to 6 years. Room 6 operates from 12 noon for those children who are opting for full time hours. Sanitary facilities are available off each of the care rooms. Other facilities include a sensory room, a reception area, a kitchen, staff room, staff sanitary accommodation and an office. A fully enclosed outdoor area is available to the rear of the premises, and there is a paved sheltered area directly accessible from each of the rooms to the front of the premises.

### Staffing

There are currently 28 staff employed to work in the service including the registered provider and the deputy person in charge who manage the oversight of the service and can provide care where needed across the rooms. In addition, there are 19 staff who work directly with the children, two administration staff, one chef, two caretakers and two housekeeping staff members. There are also eight people employed under the community employment (CE) scheme.

There were 27 adults present throughout the day of the inspection including the registered provider and the deputy person in charge, 14 staff who were working directly with the children, five ancillary staff, two CE staff members, two students and two external support workers.

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following:

- Regulation 16(1)(h)(j)(k) – Record in relation to Preschool Service
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

As a result, the scope of the inspection included Rooms 1 and 4 and did not include Rooms 2, 3 and 6. Regulation 11 was inspected across all rooms.

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 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.

(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) The registered provider ensured that;

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place which was displayed in the hallway by the reception desk.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined that ten new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection and all ten of these new staff members work directly with the children. Five adults had also joined the service on a Community Employment (C.E.) scheme. On the day of inspection, 2 students were present on an educational work placement programme. A total of 17 full files were reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting disclosures for 25 adults were requested for review including those of two support workers who were present on the day.

The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) Eleven validated written references were available from recent past employers.
  - (b) Twenty-three validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 42 reviewed. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) Documentary evidence was available that established that no adults required international police vetting.
- (4) The ten staff who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### Non-Compliance Information

(3) Documentary evidence available indicated that four adults had commenced within the service prior to the registered provider verifying the validity of references. Checks on adults must be completed prior to them having access to the children in order to establish they are appropriate to have access to children.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The registered provider will ensure the the management team who verify and validate references will ensure that the Risk Management section of the service Recruitment Policy is followed.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Evidence of recruitment policy

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the action and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (3) has been addressed.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that:

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs. There were 18 adults available to the 57 children present on the morning of the inspection and the 30 children present in the afternoon.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection. For example:
  - Ten staff were working directly across the care rooms with 50 children on the morning of the inspection.
  - Three staff members were working in Room 1 with 12 children aged 2 to 3 years old.
  - Two staff members were working in Room 4 with 16 children aged 3 to 6 years old.

### 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:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (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 the following records were maintained:

- (a) Details of the name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff were maintained within the staff files.
- (b) The service Tusla certificate detailed the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services. This was displayed in the reception area of the service.
- (c) The policy document outlined the adult: child ratios.
- (d) The parent handbook and policy document outlined the type of care or programme provided.
- (e) The parent handbook and policy document outlined the facilities available within the service.

- (f) The opening hours and fees of the service were displayed in the hallway and in the care rooms.
  - (g) The registered provider maintained all the policies required in accordance with Regulation 10.
  - (h) Attendance records detailing the daily arrival and departure of the children were maintained.
  - (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.
  - (k) Following a review of a sample of 12 records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for accident and incidents. This included details of where and when the incident occurred, the full details of the child and staff present, and was signed by management and parents indicating they had been informed of the incident.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that all of the records requested were made available on the day of the inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider did not ensure the following:
- (j) The medication records available did not allow for the recording of the details of the type of medication to be administered. Of the five medication records available, three did not include the type of medication that was administered.
- A full record with the child's full name, details of two staff who administer the medication, details of the medication and an acknowledgment of the administration by the parent must be maintained in order to accurately account for safe administration practice and prevent miscommunication on the administration of medication.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The medication administration form had been updated to include the type of medication being administered. Staff were updated of the new forms at a staff meeting.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of updated form.  
Minutes of staff meeting.

#### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the action and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 16 has been addressed.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 17 – Information for parents

*A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the information outlined in 16(1) (a) to (g) was made available to parents.

For example:

- Staff information was displayed in the reception area.
- Details on the fees and opening hours were displayed in the reception area and in the care rooms.
- The policy books were available in hard copy and the registered provider reported that this information was shared to parents during the induction process.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service ensured there was adequate and suitable food and drinks available. For example:

- The service followed a four-week menu plan, and the documentary evidence available showed there was a varied selection of food available, with alternative options for children with additional or alternative diets.
- Adequate food was offered throughout the day. Breakfast was served on arrival at 8.45am, a hot meal was served at 11.00am for those who attended the morning session and at 2.00pm for those attending the afternoon session. A snack of sandwiches, crackers and fruit was offered to those children attending for additional hours. Fruit was available in the rooms through the day.
- On the day of the inspection the children were offered beef stew with mashed potatoes for the hot meal. Additional portions were available. Staff reported that no alternatives were required for that particular meal.
- Drinking water was freely available in the care rooms throughout the day.

## 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

The registered provider ensured the following measures were in place to safeguard children:

##### General Safety:

- The main entrance to the service was secured by an electromagnetic door lock which was managed by staff. The exit latch was up high out of reach of children. This restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The outdoor play area was fully enclosed.
- Children were observed to be appropriately supervised on the way to the outdoor play area, with staff positioned effectively to ensure full supervision of the children.
- Areas in the outdoor play area which were concealed from view such as in behind the shed were cordoned off with fencing restricting access to children.

##### Infection Control:

- Suitable pedal operated lidded bins were observed in use in the care rooms and in the sanitary areas.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and single use paper towels were observed in the sanitary areas which supported effective handwashing.
- Children were supported to handwash after outdoor play and prior to mealtimes.
- Children were supported to tend to their nasal hygiene.

##### Administration of Medication:

- A documented care plan was available for a child who was prescribed a particular medication. Staff were aware of the procedures to administer the medication. The medication was stored appropriately in a visible and accessible location.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in a prominent position throughout the premises.
- Emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

The following posed a potential risk to the safety of children:

1. There was no cover for the sand pit in the outdoor play area. Although the risk assessment included a check to rake the sand as appropriate, there is potential that animal faeces could go undetected which posed a risk to the health of children.
2. A staff handbag was observed to be stored on the countertop in one of the care rooms, which was potentially accessible to children. There was a potential the contents were harmful to children.

#### Fire Safety:

3. The details of the attendance of the children in one of the care rooms were not accurately recorded in the daily attendance sheet. Three children who were present in the room were not recorded as being present. Contemporaneous accurate attendance logs must be maintained to support the safe evacuation of children in an emergency.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. A large tarpaulin was purchased to cover the sandpit. The daily outdoor risk assessment was updated to include to cover the sandpit.
2. Each room now has a secured press allocated for the storage of handbags and personal belongings of the staff. Staff were informed of the requirement to keep personal belonged in the secured press.

#### Fire Safety:

3. An additional tick box has been added to the daily attendance sheets so it can be double checked and initialled by a second staff member in the room. Staff were informed about the importance of accurately recording each child's name on the daily attendance sheets and highlighted the new tick box that must be ticked and initialled by a second teacher to confirm accurate recording of the children present.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Invoice for tarpaulin, updated risk assessment, minutes of staff meeting.
2. Photographic evidence, minutes of staff meeting.

#### Fire Safety:

3. Updated attendance sheet, minutes of staff meeting.

## Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the action and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been addressed.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

## Compliance Information

There was documentary evidence available which showed the service was insured for up to 88 children on a full day basis. The insurance was in date, with a commencement date of 1 September 2025 and an expiry date of 27 March 2026.