

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015FL227 | | |
| Name of Service: | Naionra Cholmcille | | |
| Address of Service: | Scoil an Duinninigh, Bothar Faoldhroma Draighneán, Sord, Co. Dublin | | |
| Eircode: | K67 YD28 | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Evelyn Murphy | | |
| Service type: | Sessional | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 25/11/2024 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 27 | PM N/A |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6 | | |
| Inspection undertaken by: | AM Coyle | | |
| 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

Naionra Cholmcille is a sessional early years' service provided through the medium of the Irish language. The service is located in a purpose-built building on the grounds of Scoil an Duinninigh in Swords, north Dublin with 2 care rooms in operation. The service operates from 9am to 12 midday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) for 38 weeks of the year.

Staffing

There are 4 staff employed in the service one of whom coordinates the day-to-day operation of the service in addition to working directly with the children attending the service.

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/ premises and facilities. 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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider via e mail on the 26/11/2024 in relation to one staff member who did not have completed Garda vetting disclosures available on the day of inspection.

A response was received from the service on the 02/12/2024 which outlined the steps taken by the service to address the immediate action notice, this has been accepted.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider failed to notify the Early Years Inspectorate of a change in circumstances in relation to the following as per the schedule 4 Form for Notification of Change in Circumstances:

Both the registered provider and person in charge were at variance with the information listed on the national register.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(1) Registered provider had sent an email to early years inspectorate in July to notify she is finishing in this service as manager.

Preventive Action

(1) New manager will endeavour to keep all changes up to date.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has submitted a change in circumstances form to the Early year's inspectorate. This has been accepted.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service manager was the designated person in charge of the service and a named staff member was appointed to deputise when required.

(b) The service manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced at the service and was present for the duration of the inspection.

All staff files were reviewed. A total of 4 files were maintained in respect of the 4 staff members who work in the service on a daily basis.

(2)(a)(b) There were 2 written, validated references available for 4 staff members whose files were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 3 staff members whose files were reviewed. 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) Not applicable as no staff member had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for longer than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Three staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with children in the service each held appropriate childcare qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was not available for 1 staff member who works directly with the children in the service.

(4) Documentary evidence was not available in the service to confirm that 1 staff member who worked directly with the children held an appropriate childcare qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(2)(c) The Garda vetting for staff member was received.

(4) Staff member has posted her transcripts and certs to DCEDIY, as requested by Tusla. She has followed this up with a phone call requesting confirmation of results. Manager is still awaiting confirmation.

Preventive Action

(2)(c) Registered provider in the process of amending GNVB reference number and listing herself as contact person with National Vetting Bureau to keep all vetting in place and up to date.

(4) Registered Provider will contact DCEDIY in future to confirm qualification are as required for Service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Garda vetting disclosure for one staff member.

Evidence of qualification for one staff member.

Summary Comment

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the 26/11/2024 in relation to the non-availability of a garda vetting disclosure for a staff member who works directly with the children attending the service.

The evidence submitted by the registered provider in relation to regulation 9 – Management and recruitment has been reviewed and accepted.

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced in the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In Rang Evelyn agus Maire there were 14 children aged 3 years 10 months to 4 years 8 months attending on a sessional basis, being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In Rang Christina agus Katie there were 13 children aged between 3 years 8 months and 4 years 9 months, all attending on a sessional basis, being cared for by 2 staff members.

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

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- On the inspector's arrival, the children attending the preschool were actively engaged in meaningful play-based activities in both rooms of the service. The early years practitioners present were joining in with the children's play, providing encouraging and nurturing interactions to children and supporting them to locate and set up materials to extend their play. Children appeared comfortable and confident to make choices about their learning, and the adults were responsive to children's ideas and requests.
- The children bring their own lunch and fruit snack with them to the service. There was a relaxed and sociable atmosphere at snack times, with children chatting among themselves and the early years practitioners sitting with them to eat and talk together.
- The practitioners were observed to approach any minor disagreements that occurred between the children in a positive and calm way and supported the children to resolve any conflict that arose. There was an emphasis on praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour.
- Children were supported in transitions in the care rooms through the use of verbal prompts and were observed to respond well to this approach. Both care rooms were spacious, and the children were given plenty of time to move around their play environments choosing their play materials and resources. The layout of the care rooms and the outdoor play area facilitated the free unrestricted movement of the children. The service valued outdoor play, and all the children were observed to enjoy time outside on the day of inspection.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Practitioners were observed interacting with children in a warm, caring and playful manner, informal conversation was used as a means of extending children's learning and engaging them in an activity

through the use of open-ended questioning techniques. Practitioners were heard praising children when they were helpful to others, took turns and shared resources, the children were spoken about positively with knowledgeable insight to their interests, needs and personalities. The children were observed playing together in pairs or small groups and this was uninterrupted by the practitioners enabling the children to develop social relationships with each other.

- The practitioners in the care rooms were observed to work well together and supported each other in the care of the children. Practitioners updated each other on the children's care throughout the session which ensured the children's care needs were met in a timely manner.
- Parents and guardians were observed being welcomed by the practitioners at the children's departure from the service and the opportunity for updating parents and guardians regarding their children's day in the service was taken at this time.

Physical and material environment:

- The care rooms were bright and welcoming, and the play materials and equipment were accessible on low-level shelving to facilitate children's independent choice and play.
- In both care rooms defined area of interest were available to the children including well-resourced home areas including kitchens with additional materials available for the children to extend their imaginary play, a shop, dolls, baby care items, dressing table, construction resources, transport toys along with arts and crafts materials and a wide range of tabletop resources including jigsaws were also available to the children. The practitioners in rang Evelyn agus Maire explained that the care room was changed in line with the children's interest when recently the home area had been turned into a doctor's office to reflect the children's interests in going to visit the doctor.
- There was a range of sensory materials available to the children on the day both indoors and outdoors including sand, water and rice.
- A suitable range of books were available in both care rooms to support language development and provide choice for the children.
- An enclosed outdoor area directly accessible from both care rooms was available to the children. The area was surfaced with a combination of a safety surface and artificial grass. The area was spacious and provided the opportunity for running and free movement. Children's gross motor play was supported through the provision of climbing resources and a balance board, a mud kitchen was available along with a wall mounted blackboard and a playhouse. Sensory play was enhanced through the provision of a water

table and a wooden teepee provided the children with the opportunity to take a break from activities if they chose.

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 premises and outdoor play area were appropriately secured. This prevented a child from exiting the service unsupervised and unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- The water temperature in the care rooms and sanitary accommodation did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children.
- The toys and equipment available to the children appeared in good condition with no safety hazards observed. Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Children's snacks, when supplied from home, were refrigerated on arrival to the service which reduced the risk of bacteria growth in perishable food items.
- Tables were observed to be appropriately cleaned before and following meals and snacks.
- The children in the service were facilitated to wash their hands before eating and following outdoor and messy play. Children who were toilet trained were gently reminded, and assisted when necessary, to wash their hands after using the toilet.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Comfortable rest areas were provided in both care rooms should a child choose to take a break from activities.

Fire Safety:

- The records indicated that fire drills were practiced on a monthly basis to familiarise both adults and children of the procedures to follow in order to evacuate the premises in a safe manner.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- A Garda vetting disclosure that was available for 1 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'.
- The blind cords in both care rooms were unsecured, this is a safety risk for the children in attendance.

Infection Control:

- There were no paper towels in either of the sanitary areas used by the children. The children were using toilet tissue to dry their hands, the roll of toilet tissue was subject to repeat handling thereby increasing the risk of cross contamination which was inadequate for infection control purposes.

Administration of Medication:

- A detailed care plan was not available for a child in the service who may require the administration of emergency medication in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- Registered provider still awaiting renewed Garda Vetting for this staff member.
- A blind company was contacted, all cords in the service replaced on all blinds.

Infection Control:

- Two new hand towel dispensers have been fitted in the two classrooms.

Administration of Medication:

- A care plan has been written up for the child in question, with all relevant details up to date.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- As newly appointed manager, she will be vigilant regarding Garda vetting expiry dates.
- React immediately when concerns arise, deal with issues to prevent non-compliance.

Infection Control:

- As newly appointed manager, she intends to address needs/repairs in classrooms as they arise.

Administration of Medication:

4. All medical forms will be checked by room leader and signed by the Manager.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of application for Garda vetting.

Summary Comment

The service has submitted evidence of applying for updated Garda vetting however as the Garda vetting has not been received the regulatory requirement for regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child has not been addressed and remains outstanding.

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 including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service as evidenced in the staff roster and the in-date FAR certification provided for inspection.

(2)(a) and (b) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions on the premises, out of the reach of children.

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 record was maintained of fire drills which had been completed in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on the 18/11/2024.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers were certified as having been serviced on the 15/07/2024 and the smoke alarms were serviced on the 26/06/2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.