

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY175
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Name of Service:	Naíonra Cill Allachtain
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Address of Service:	Community Centre, Killalaghton, Killoran, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H53 KF22
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Name of Registered Provider:	Siobhan Horkan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	21/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Co. Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Nic Dhonnacha
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 Cill Allachtain provides an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) preschool care programme and sessional care programme from 9.00hrs to 12.00hrs, from Monday to Friday, for 38 weeks of the year. The preschool caters for children between 2 years 8 months to 6 years of age. A child centred play-based curriculum focusing on emerging interests is offered. On the day of inspection, there were 7 preschool children attending the service. The preschool operates from a community hall in Killalaghton, in the east of county Galway. There are 2 playrooms, namely Playroom 1 and Playroom 2. On the day of inspection, only Playroom 1 was operating. A quiet rest area is available for the children to rest, relax or opt out of an activity if they choose. The preschool children have access to a designated secure outdoor play area, to the side of the premises for children's play activities, fresh air, and exploration. Additionally, the children under supervision have access to the community indoor hall, during inclement weather.

Staffing

The registered provider is supernumerary and not on the premises daily. There is a designated person in charge and a named deputy. There are a total of 3 staff currently working in the premises. three staff hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework. The staff have documentary evidence of on-going training and education.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,18,19,20,25,26, & 28. 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 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*
- (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.

(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, at all times when the pre-school children were present.

(c) Staff rosters and documentary evidence indicated that there was a clear management structure in the service, that identified the lines of authority and accountability within the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(2) All staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)&(b) Six written validated references, on file for the three staff members were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available in respect of the three staff members.

(d) Not applicable, as the staff had not live outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 months, while over the age of 18 years and thereby did not require police vetting.

(4) Three staff held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of a Level 5, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the three staff.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The preschool attendance records for the previous three weeks indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. The adult/child ratio was correct and maintained on the day of inspection.
- (3) The adult/child ratio was correct and maintained on the day of inspection.
There were two adults working directly with and caring for seven children.
All the children were aged between 2 years and 8 months to 6 years.
- (8)(c) The service is not operated single-handedly, as there was a designated person in charge and additional staff working in the preschool service.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

A copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations was available on the notice board and available for parents, guardians, employees, unpaid workers, contractors, and authorised persons.

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

Basic Needs

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service. The healthy eating policy was available on request.
- Nutritious meals and snacks were served at regular times, but there was flexibility.
- The atmosphere during mealtimes was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and staff.
- The staff encouraged and supported the children to be independent.
- The tables and chairs were suitable for the children's ages and stages of development.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilet and did not have to wait to use the toilet.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.

- All the children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment, both indoors and outdoors.

Supporting Relationships

The service supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships by -

- Having a key person for each child,
- Listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures, and body language,
- Using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact,
- Providing opportunities for small and large group activities and play, leading to increased social awareness, teamwork, and a sense of belonging within the group,
- Working with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life, and any other concerns.
- Parents/guardians received copies of the updated preschool handbook, with policies, procedures, healthy eating advice and the drop off and collection procedures.
- On speaking with staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the preschool including the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times and via text messages, by phone calls, and using a private social media app. The service had a newsletter system and individual child profile scrapbook, which captured the child's activities and experiences with documentary / photographic evidence and key adult observations. A classroom planner was also available showing various activities and themes that the children engaged in and will engage in over the coming few months.
- Staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them, and talking to the children in a variety of ways.
- The themes of the week were Science and preparing for Christmas. With evidence of Christmas songs on the white board and photographic evidence of science experiments the children discussed. The travelling county library arrived outside during the inspection and the children received a bundle of books related to Christmas and other interests.
- The staff present on the day of the inspection showed kindness - were caring, supportive and reassuring whilst caring for the children.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The indoor play area space was designed and arranged to maintain a space that was clean, organised, and free of clutter. It was divided into various interest areas that are supplied with materials organised in a way to support children’s play and learning. It allows all children access to the same facilities, activities and play opportunities, to promote their welfare and development.

Playroom 1

- Items including imaginative play materials, dress up clothing, dolls, action toys and a tea set. There were puzzles, links, connectors, numbers, gadgets, water beads, tracks, stacking materials, pins, a castle, farmyard, builders’ tools, and doctors’ sets. There were transport toys with tractors, and diggers. There were farm animals, stables, and little figurines. There were soft seating, cushions, and books. There was a shop with real world items and cash register, telephones and a kitchen with kitchen utensils. There were musical instruments. There was a creative area with paints, art, and craft materials. There were low desks for writing skills. There were sand and water basins with utensils and a tuff table with coloured rice and miniature toys.
- Displayed on the walls were educational posters, visual aids children’s artwork, themes, little helper system and schedules. Items included – Family photos, our community, mirrors, our birthdays, daily

routine, our autumn hedgehogs, seasons and songs we love 'when Santa got stuck in the chimney' is the current song they are learning.

(b)

- A rest and quiet area was provided in the playrooms and hall in the form of child size couches, to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he or she chose to. The children attending the sessional service were observed to sit and look at books in this cosy area.

(3)(a) Outdoor play Area

- All staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities in implementing the service's policy on outdoor play.
- Children accessed the outdoor space to the side of the premises, on a daily basis.
- The service balanced the need for safety with the need to provide physical, challenging experiences.
- The equipment and materials available provided children with play, movement and exploration opportunities that were exclusive to the outdoors.
- Fencing and walls prevented access to streets and other dangers, such as pits, and traffic hazards.
- On the day of inspection, the staff supervised all children by both sight and sound in all areas within the outdoor area. All the children played outside dressed in suitable weather clothing. The outdoor area was surrounded by walls, metal fencing and covered with soft matting and a grass surface with concrete paths. Items included an activity centre/ tree house with a climbing frame and slide. There was a mud kitchen with utensils, buckets and shovels and a shop with real items and baskets. There was a planting area, a sand basin where the children were observed digging and shovelling sand. There were flower shaped blackboards mounted on the fence. There was a bouncing tyre with supporting frame. There were playhouses, picnic tables, balls, and bicycles.

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 entrance door into the pre-school was secure to prevent unauthorised access by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- The external outdoor play area was secured by fencing, a boundary wall and gates so that unauthorised persons could not access or enter the area or children could not exit unsupervised.
- The temperature of the playroom was recorded and maintained within the recommended room temperature of 18°C -22°C.
- All cleaning agents and equipment were stored inaccessible and out of children's reach.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Daily records of attendance were kept for all of children attending the playroom.
- Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.

Infection Control:

- During the inspection, the children were assisted and encouraged to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting, after using a tissue, after playing outdoors and on entry and exiting the pre-school service.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues was readily available indoors and in the outdoor play area.
- The playroom was observed to be kept adequately ventilated with the windows left open whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels.
- Foot pedaled lidded bins were available throughout the service and sanitary areas.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- There were child size couches beside the library in Playroom 1 and in the hall where a child could rest and relax and opt out of an activity if they wished.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The hot water in the wash hand basin in Playroom 1 and the hot water in the two wash hand basins in the sanitary area were not thermostatically regulated. The water temperature ranged between 43°C and 47°C. This posed a potential risk of scalding the preschool child. It is acknowledged by the person in charge that recent plumbing works were carried out in the service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

On the 23/11/2023 the registered provider advised of the following.

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety

The hot water heating system in the preschool service was serviced and maintained and the thermostat was regulated correctly immediately following inspection.

Daily water temperature checks will be carried out with an appropriate water temperature checking device and records will be maintained in the preschool service.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety

Photographs and a copy of the water heating system service maintained by a competent person was submitted to the office of the early years inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 (General Safety) has been adequately addressed.

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) The service provided evidence that two staff members were trained in first aid for children and were available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Three staff had current training in first aid for children. (First Aid Responder Course) (2)

(2)(a) There was a first aid box with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position in the Playroom.

(b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to 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 firefighting 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 of the monthly fire drills completed in the service.
The last recorded fire drill was in 23.10.2023.

(b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-

fighting equipment with the annual service dated 23/08/2023.

The smoke and fire detection alarm system for the premises had the last annual service dated 23/08/2023.

- (4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the Premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance for a sessional service with up to a maximum of 22 children. The expiry date was 27.03.2024.