

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY224
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Name of Service:	Scoil Iosa Pre School & After School
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Address of Service:	Scoil Mhuire, Oranmore, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 YW0X
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Name of Registered Provider:	Fiona Burke, John Burke
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date 1 of Inspection:	16/04/2026
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Date 2 of Inspection:	17/04/2026
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No of pre-school children Day 1:	AM	56	PM	N/A
No of pre-school children Day 2	AM	49	PM	N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park Hospital, Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel
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).

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Description of service

Scoil Iosa Pre-school and Afterschool is a sessional service which operates from 08:30 until 12:00. It is registered to accommodate children aged from 2 years to 6 years old and there are three sessional care rooms in operation namely- Jumping Joeys from 08:30 to 11:30, Bright Sparks and the A-Team from 09:00 to 12:00, which operate Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year.

The service is centrally located in the town of Oranmore on the outskirts of Galway city. It operates from three modular units within the grounds of Scoil Mhuire National School which have direct access to four outdoor areas- tarmacadam playground, artificial grass pitch, a games pitch and a garden. A public carpark is located nearby. A school age service is available in the morning from 07:30 to 08:45 and in the afternoon from 13:30 to 18:00.

Staffing

There are 15 adults employed in the sessional service including the 2 registered providers, manager and 5 adults employed on the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). In addition, there is one student on work placement.

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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Records of a Pre-school child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included five children's records from each of the three care 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 both registered providers, deputy, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

(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:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) The registered providers were the two persons in charge and there was a designated person available to deputise as required.

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- (b) The staff roster indicated that one of the persons in charge or the designated person was available while the pre-school children were on the premises.
- (c) A management structure was available in each of the modular unit cloakroom areas with photographs and qualifications of each adult working directly with the children. In conversation, the adults were aware of their individual roles and responsibilities.
- (2) The files of the 15 adults and 1 student were available.
- (a) Twenty seven of the 32 written and validated references required were from previous employers.
- (b) The remaining 5 of 32 written and validated references required were from sources other than previous employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults working directly with the children demonstrating compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Overseas police vetting was available for seven adults for whom it was required who had lived outside of Ireland for more than six months as an adult.
- (4) Staff files viewed on the day indicated that 11 adults working directly with the children had obtained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education ranging from levels 5-9 on the National Framework of Qualifications and 3 had a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. The remaining two adults did not require a childcare qualification.
- (7) (a) Documents were on file to evidence that supervision and induction had taken place for the adults working directly with the children and the student on work placement.

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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

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children during the sessional hours of the service.
- (2) The adult/child ratios were met. There were 12 adults and 1 student observed working directly with 56 children on the morning of day 1. On day 2, there were 11 adults and 1 student observed working with 49 children on the morning. On both days one of the registered provider's and the deputy facilitated with the paperwork required for the inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

- (1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*
- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
 - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
 - (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
 - (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
 - (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
 - (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
 - (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*

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(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

1)

A sample of 15 of 66 children's pre-school records were reviewed from the 3 care rooms in operation. These were found to contain all the required information under (1) (a)-(i).

(3) (c)

The children's pre-school records were open to review on the premises.

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

Basic needs:

- Children's snacks on both mornings were observed to be healthy and nutritious. In conversation, staff in the Jumping Joey's care room stated that the children's snacks were prepared by the parents/guardians and these were noted to consist of yogurt, cheese, filled sandwiches/bagels and bite sized pieces of fruit. Water, stored in individually labelled bottles, was available throughout both mornings in both the indoor and outdoor areas. Staff were observed replenishing the bottles as required.
- Alternative food including ham, cheese, bread and wraps was available, if required.
- Children were afforded ample time to finish snack without being rushed. Children who were finished snack were observed availing of story time in the rest/quiet areas of the care rooms.
- Developmentally appropriate cutlery and crockery were observed in use on both mornings. These were positioned within easy access of the children.
- Children were observed accessing the sanitary areas independently in the Jumping Joeys and A-Team care rooms. Staff were available nearby to provide reminders of hygienic hand washing and to facilitate and model the disposal of paper towel into the pedal bin in the area. In conversation, staff in both care rooms stated that there were no children who required nappy changing.

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- Rest/quiet areas were visible in each care room which were furnished with a variety of soft furnishings. These were located away from noisy activities. Examples included vinyl square cushions, fabric cushions and carpet under foot.
- Children's stepping stools were visible in the sanitary areas facilitating independent access to the toilets and wash hand basins.

Supporting children's relationships:

- A key person approach was in place in the service with named staff members assigned the responsibility for observations of each child in their group. The children's scrapbooks, which had been put together by staff, were labelled with each child's name and were available to view in each care room. Staff stated they document each child's individual interests and emergent curriculum throughout their time in the service.
- Staff members in the care rooms who were supervising children playing in both the indoor and outdoor areas, were observed to work well as a team. They were heard, on several occasions, discussing children's individual needs throughout the day.
- Reminders were given verbally and visually by staff during the morning routines so that the children could anticipate and prepare themselves for transitions. In addition, staff from the Jumping Joey's care room stated that children's transitioning to school was facilitated with visits to meet with the teachers and familiarise them with the layout of the school before the children started in the adjoining national school.
- During tabletop activities and floor play the adults were heard engaging positively with the children. Examples included adults heard praising and encouraging children to persevere when building with construction materials and children assisting a staff member in the Bright Sparks care room with strengthening the legs of the cow which had been made as part of the curriculum theme.
- Details of a recent staff meeting, which took place in March 2026, were available in the service. These included topics such as planning, risk assessments and policies. Staff stated that meetings took place regularly and that curriculum meetings took place monthly.
- Communication with parents, through a digital application, was furnished to the inspector with photographs sent home every few days of the children involved in activities in their care rooms. In addition, staff were observed chatting to parents/guardians at pick up time in the outdoor play area and staff stated emails and an internet messaging service were also used.

Physical and material environment:

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- Clearly defined, well stocked areas were visible in each of the care rooms which provided play opportunities for enhancing the learning needs of the children across all developmental areas.
- A variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys and play equipment in each care room, which were easily accessible from storage boxes at the children's level, were displayed and labelled with pictures and words describing each item.
- Tables and chairs were positioned to facilitate group and solitary activities with a wide variety of resources stationed nearby.
- Displays including children's artwork, birthday and family walls were visually appealing and included relevant titles and captions.
- Each care room had an area where children could sit alone or quietly in small groups which was visible by the adults in the room.
- The outdoor play areas provided alternative changes of environment for the children. A range of developmentally appropriate equipment was observed in use by the children throughout the morning. Opportunities for challenge and risk were provided with children observed practicing their co-ordination skills on balancing beams, climbing trees and climbing up and down steps. Sensory materials were available from a covered sand tray where children had hands on access to explore with resources including sand spades, steel bowls and diggers. A staff member was observed reading a story to children while they were all seated on soft matting in the outdoor area. At a separate table a staff member supervised children engaged with constructing materials who were enhancing their fine motor skills and fostering creativity through open ended play.
- Staff stated the children had shared access to additional outdoor areas including the garden area which has a mulch ground surface, an artificial grass pitch and a concrete games area where they could practice their gross motor skills.

Programme of activities:

- Ongoing monthly observations, linked to both national frameworks of quality and curriculum, were documented for each child which helped create a complete, well-rounded picture of each child's progress and development. These observations informed the planning for the curriculum. The curriculum was observed to be flexible in accordance with the emerging interests of the children, their needs and preferences. Examples were observed throughout the inspection including children in the Bright Sparks

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room engaged in milking a cow and artwork visible in another care room depicting the hungry caterpillar theme.

- Children's language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, storytelling and singing which were observed during the inspection.
- Activities were mainly child led and children had the opportunity to express their views, take the lead and exercise choice in relation to their engagement in activities and in accessing play equipment throughout the session in each care room. Each child was offered the opportunity to take part. An example included children in the A-Team bringing in their chosen toy for show and tell.
- Children are involved in community activities weekly where they have opportunities to increase their social skills and exchange knowledge sharing. Examples include visits to the local nursing home and library.

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:

- Ramps with railings were available at the entry doors of each care room providing safe access and exit for all children and adults.
- Up to date risk assessments for the outdoor areas were available and completed in each care room ensuring a safe environment for the children.
- Hoovers and brushes were secured out of reach of the children.
- Windows were fitted with restrictors preventing children from exiting or falling from them.
- Cordons were visible at the kitchen areas preventing children from gaining access to unsafe areas.
- Flexes and cords were secured out of reach of the children in each care room.
- Cupboards with cleaning agents were secured with safety catches ensuring the children could not access unsafe areas.
- Staff were heard responding promptly to ensure the safety of the children by reminding the children not to climb on the furniture in the care rooms.

Infection Control:

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- Hooks and cubby houses were provided in each care room for the storing of children's personal belongings away from the floor areas.
- Hand basins in use by adults and children were fitted with thermostatically controlled hot water, between 27.9°C and 39°C, dispensing hand soap and paper towels encased in dispensers. Pedal operated bins were available for the disposal of paper waste.
- Additional equipment to facilitate toilet training was stored off the floor area preventing contamination. Examples included children's toilet seat inserts.
- The staff supported an awareness of healthy habits and picture/word reminders of required health practices for handwashing were displayed in the children's sanitary areas.
- Handwashing was observed coming in from outdoor play, before consuming food and after toileting preventing the spread of germs.
- Windows in all care rooms were open aiding the circulation of fresh air.
- Cleaning schedules were noted to be kept up to date.

Administration of Medication:

- Temperature reducing medications, stored in original containers with an expiry date of 04/28, were available in the event of an emergency.

Safe Sleep:

- No children were observed sleeping on either day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- The fire assembly sign was visible on the grass in the outdoor play area providing an area of safety away from the care rooms in the event of an emergency.
- Fire extinguishers were secured with brackets in each of the care rooms.
- Fire doors were unobstructed enabling children and adults to exit the care rooms quickly in the event of an emergency.

Outing:

- Children go on weekly outings. The service is covered by their insurance policy for this activity.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

The main entrance gate was not adequately secured to prevent unauthorised adults from entering or children leaving the premises unsupervised while the children were observed playing in the outdoor play area. It was

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acknowledged that when informed the deputy temporarily secured the gate until a more permanent solution could be organised.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The gate has been secured to prevent unauthorised adults entering or children leaving the premises unsupervised while playing in the outdoor play area. Prior to the children going outdoors to play staff will ensure that the gate is secured.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. A photograph of the secured gate was received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under 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) Certificates were available to evidence that two adults had first aid responder for children (FAR) training completed. The staff roster evidenced that two adults were available while the pre-school children were on the premises.

(2) (a)(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available in each care room. These were accessible to the adults while the early years children were present in the service.

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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.
- (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)
- (a) The inspector observed that written records were available of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service. The record of the most recent fire drill was dated 26 March 2026 with the previous month noted as 24 February 2026.
 - (b) Written records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service along with the smoke alarms. The firefighting equipment certificate was recorded as 20 November 2025 and smoke alarm certificate was dated 20 January 2026.
- (2)
- (c) Both the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm records were open to review on the premises.
- (4) The notices of the visual fire drill procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were located on the wall of each modular unit.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation was furnished which evidenced that the registered providers had insurance for the number of children attending and types of services provided.

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Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The three modular units and the office appeared to be sound and stable.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) The mechanical air vent grille in the Jumping Joeys sanitary area was filled with dust potentially impacting the efficiency of the ventilation system. It was acknowledged that this had been cleaned on the morning of day 2.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

- (d)
- Corrective and Preventive Action**
- The mechanical air vent grille in the Jumping Joeys sanitary area was cleaned. This has been added to the weekly cleaning list of all three care rooms to ensure that they are maintained in a clean state to facilitate the circulation of fresh air.
- Supporting documentation submitted**
- The inspector observed the clean vent grille on day 2 of inspection. In addition, a photograph of the clean vent was received along with a copy of the cleaning list with the cleaning of the vents added to the list on a weekly basis.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 29.