

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KK072
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Square One (Tus Maith Naionrá)
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	18 Whitewood, New Park, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
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<b>Eircode:</b>	R95 P400
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Marie Ring
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	29/01/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM	5
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency Early Years Inspectorate Ely Hospital Ferrybank, Wexford
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Mc Garry
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

Square One (Tus Maith Naoinrá) is a part-time preschool service situated in a housing estate in Kilkenny City. The service caters for children from 2 to 6 years of age. The service promotes Irish as a first language and is used in the service by staff and children. The service is operated from a semi-detached one story house in a housing estate in Kilkenny. It consists of an early years room, hall, toilets, a kitchenette, staff toilet and an outdoor play area at the rear of the premises for the exclusive use of the children attending.

### Staffing

There are two staff employed in the service. Both staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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 the child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on the following regulations.

Regulation 9 management and recruitment,

Regulation 10 policies and procedures,

Regulation 11 staffing levels,

Regulation 15 Record of a preschool child,  
Regulation 17 Information for parents,  
Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,  
Regulation 22 Food and Drink,  
Regulation 23 safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child,  
Regulation 25 first aid,  
Regulation 26 fire Safety,  
Regulation 28 Insurance.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

## Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(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)(b)

The manager of the service was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection. The registered provider arrived later to assist in the inspection process.

(2)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were two staff employed in the service. Both staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)(b)

There were four required written and validated references available on file for both staff.

(c)

There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for the 2 staff members. The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for the 2 staff employed in the service.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

All staff working directly with the preschool children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### Compliance Information

There were written policies, procedures and statements, as specified in Schedule 5, available for the service. The policies reviewed for this inspection were the policy on managing behaviour and the policy on managing accidents and incidents in the service. These policies and procedures were specific to the setting.

### 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)  
There was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children during the period of inspection.
- (2)  
At 11.00am  
There were 19 children aged between 2 and 6 in the care of two staff.  
At 1.00 pm  
There were 5 children aged between 2 and 6 in the care of two staff.
- The registered provider came to the service during the morning of the inspection and was available to assist in the care of the children if required.

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

### Compliance Information

A sample of children's enrolment forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

### 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 service provided parents with a parent handbook to include information regarding the service ethos, curriculum and policies. This handbook was a national document outlining the ethos of the Naoinra including the introduction of the Irish language to the children. The service also provided parents with information to outline the curriculum, the hours of operation, the funding schemes available, contact details and the facilities available within the service. It provided parents with information on the day-to-day requirements and running of the service: healthy eating, medication management, behaviour management, complaints, fire safety and first aid.

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

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

### Compliance Information

The preschool room and outdoor play areas were resourced with a supply of equipment and play materials for play and learning needs of the children in the service. Staff used open ended materials to teach the children and promote the Irish language. For example, the inspector observed the staff initiating an imaginative game with the children. Children were asked to pick a selection of recycling materials from a large container. For example, yogurt pots, chocolate wrappers and ice cream containers. Children were asked to go and find the group of children who had also chosen these containers. This game was conducted through Irish. Staff who spoke to the inspector said this game was to use household items to develop the children's Irish vocabulary.

The areas of interest in the room were well developed with thought and care for the children's needs. For example, there was a dress up area with a supply of approximately eight outfits for children to wear. There was

also a supply of dolls and prams, cars, dinosaurs and plastic bricks for tabletop play. There was extensive use of photographs in the service of children doing different activities. For example, there were photographs of the children dressed in their local GAA jerseys doing various exercises. Children took pride in showing the inspector the various photographs of themselves on display in the service.

The service also had a programme called “Bhí Teidí Óg ag Teacht”. This teddy had his own suit case and a note book. The teddy had travelled to various children’s houses over the course of the previous year. Parents completed the notebook detailing the activities the teddy had enjoyed at their home. Staff who spoke to the inspector said this exercise was also to promote Irish in the service as staff discussed the teddys weekend travels with the children on return and introduced Irish words to relay the stories to them.

### 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 had a healthy eating policy in place. Parents provided all food for the children attending the service. At snack time children were observed to enjoy a variety of healthy food options such as, diced fruit and vegetables, sandwiches, yogurt and some homemade cakes. The staff took the opportunity at snack time to further promote their healthy eating policy by going around to all the children’s lunch boxes and naming their healthy choices in Irish and English.

Children who were attending on a parttime basis received a second snack when the majority of the children who had been attending on a sessional basis went home.

### 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 had taken the following steps to ensure the safety of the children attending the service.

**General safety:**

Access to the service was gained through the front door. The openings of the windows were restricted with appropriate restrictive opening devices. All radiators were thermostatically controlled. The fire exits were not obstructed. The playground at the rear of the service was safe, suitable and secure.

**Infection control:**

The service appeared to be clean and in good repair on the day of inspection. Cleaning templates were available in the service to document the regular cleaning of the preschool room and toilet areas. There was a large fridge available in the service to store the food which was provided by the parents. All sinks for hand washing in the service were equipped with warm thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap, and foot operated pedal bins. The temperature of the hot water flowing from the wash hand basin in the toilet area was recorded at 36°C on the day of inspection. All bins in the preschool room and toilet facilities were foot pedal operated.

### 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)

There was a person trained in a first aid responder course available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-*
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*
  - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (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)

There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on December 2024.

(b)

The annual record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment was carried out in the service in June 2024. The annual record of the maintenance of the smoke alarm on the premises was carried out in May 2024.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the entrance door to the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance in place to cover the children who were present on the day of inspection.