

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KY090		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Naionra Aine		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	6 Lioscarrig Drive, Caherslee, Tralee, Co. Kerry		
<b>Eircode:</b>	V92 H590		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Ann O'Dowd		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	29/09/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	39	PM 25
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	N. Reidy		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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>	N/A		

### Description of service

This private-based purpose-built early years service is registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day care to children aged between 2 years and 6 years. The service is open between the hours of 08:00 am and 5:30 pm Monday to Friday. The service is located in the urban Tralee town.

There are 2 care rooms in operation located in separate buildings with the outdoor play area between the buildings. There is sanitary accommodation and nappy changing facilities serving each of the care rooms.

### Staffing

There were 12 adults attached to the service including the registered provider that are employed to work directly with the children. There were 4 adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme.

### 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. The inspections 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.

### 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) The registered provider is the designated person in charge and there is a named deputy to deputise in her absence as required.
- (b) When the announced inspection commenced, the registered provider and the named deputy were on duty to assist with the inspection process.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to each of the 12 adults attached to the service were inspected.
- (a) There were 22 references from previous employers with records of validation on file.
- (b) There were 2 references from a source other than a previous employer on file with records of validation.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for each of the 12 adults. 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) There was Police vetting on file for 1 adult who resided outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for greater than six consecutive months.
- (4) All staff working directly with the children had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) with copies of the relevant qualifications on file.

### 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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

### Compliance Information

- (1) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with children.
- (2) The required adult to child ratios were observed in the 2 care rooms in operation on the day. In room 1 there were 4 adults caring for 20 children aged between 2 years 11 months– 4 years, 13 children attending on a sessional basis and 7 children attending on a part-time and full day care basis. In room 2 there was 4 adults caring for 19 children aged between attending aged between 3 years and 4 years, 10 children attending on a sessional basis and 9 children on a part-time and full day care basis. The registered provider worked between both rooms assisting as required.
- (8) (a) The registered provider did ensure that a minimum of two adults were always on the premises during the hours of operation.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:
- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
    - (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor were maintained.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (i)
1. The staff rosters maintained did not meet the requirement of the regulation.
    - There was 1 staff present in room 2 that was not recorded on the staff roster.
    - The staff rosters maintained did not record the times and cover for meal breaks.

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

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The omission from the staff roster was immediately rectified by adding the missing staff member details to the roster. The registered provider will formally check the roster 24 hours before the week begins to confirm that all staff are correctly documented. All staff breaks will be recorded daily, and each staff member will be responsible for their break time recordings. To ensure clarity and compliance for the daily staff attendance records procedure all staff are responsible for maintaining accurate break times. The manager will conduct a daily audit to verify that all attending staff are signed off and recorded for their breaks. Any omissions will be brought to the staff members attention for immediate correction. The corrective responsibility is that of the registered provider.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of the staff rosters, including meal break times was submitted.

### Summary Comment

The requirement for the regulation has been met.

## 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)

#### Basic Needs: -

- The children's toileting and hygiene needs were attended to regularly during the day. The staff supported and encouraged the children with self-toileting as was needed.
- The toilets were located within both care rooms supporting the children to independently access them.
- The registered provider informed the inspector she is planning to install a bathroom for children's use in the designated outdoor play area.
- The inspector observed children were promptly accommodated to use the toilet whilst playing in the outdoor area.

- The mealtimes observed were relaxed and unhurried. The children who had finished eating before the others played with the toys available.
- The children sat at the child sized tables and chairs with the adults sitting with them.
- The inspector observed children’s individual needs were met in relation to the time the morning snack was taken.
- Staff informed that the timing of the morning snack varies for some children, and they facilitate children’s choices.
- The food observed on inspection included for example hummus with carrot sticks, yogurts, sandwiches and a selection of fruit.
- The inspector observed the staff checked in with children and questioned if they were hungry or thirsty.
- The children’s drinks bottles were accessible to them in the care rooms during the session.
- The registered provider had bottled water available for topping up the children’s bottles as was needed.
- The children in each care room enjoyed freedom of movement within the rooms.
- The registered in formed the inspector that she has planned to further add an overhead enclosure to the rest area in room 1.
- In room 2 a spacious ball pool unit with soft matting and climbing areas was accessible to the children during the session.
- In room 2 there is a sensory room used for rest and relaxation available to the children each day. This was not observed to be used on inspection.
- The children were given the choice of activities in the care rooms and when they wished to opt out of or change the activities or rest/relax in the designated rest areas.
- The children had access to the toilets located in the rooms enabling children to use the toilet as they needed to and seek assistance if required.
- The children attending the service have access to the spacious outdoor play area situated between both buildings.
- Since the last inspection the registered provider has further developed the area, for example a new timber playhouse where the children were observed building blocks and playing in small groups, a timber “an Siopa” and a timber “Den” with soft matting underfoot.
- The entire outdoor area has artificial grass matting underfoot and a section of the area has overhead roofing for use in all weathers.
- The inspector observed the children playing happily in the area supervised by the adults.

- The children play singly, in pairs and in small groups with the various toys that included for example ride on toys, blocks, tuff trays with small people and small animals, dolls and buggies, toys kitchens and associated accessories.
- The boundary fencing and walls surrounding the outdoor space were embellished with a mix of natural and artificial plantation.

### Supporting Relationships: -

- The staff were observing meeting and greeting the parents/guardians at collection time in a kind, friendly and professional manner.
- The staff were observed to be kind, caring and nurturing to the children that were in their care.
- The staff were observed listening to children in a caring, gentle way when they expressed their emotions.
- Staff spoke to the children in low soft tones of voice, coming down to their level making eye contact.
- The staff were observed to use a system of communication for children including for example “Lámh” and picture word cards.
- Written daily notes were maintained in a designated notebook for children’s time spent in the service, that included for example the activities the children participated in during the session and “Lámh” signs introduced.

### 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 appeared safe and secured. The internal and external doors were secured as required and the outdoor area was secured with a combination of walls, gates and a keypad operated door with a high-level push button opening. This prevented any child gaining access to the car park and prevented unauthorised adults from gaining access to the children.
- The cleaning products seen on inspection were stored out of the reach of the children.
- When the children from room 1 were going outdoors the inspector observed the staff member counting the children to ensure each child in attendance was accounted for.

##### Infection Control:

- At each of the sinks used by the children and the adults there was a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels to facilitate effective hand washing.
- Lidded pedal operated bins were provided in the service.

- Perishable food items were stored in the fridges provided in the care rooms.
- The children were observed to wash their hands, for example after using the toilet and before mealtimes.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 12 adults attached to the service. However, 1 vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EY-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting. The inspector acknowledged the registered provider provided written evidence in support of the application made to renew the said garda vetting dated 26.9.'25

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

The staff member was removed from direct access. The renewed Garda vetting has been received and filed. The manager will create a garda vetting renewal register that will track all staff vetting dates so as the mandatory renewal dates will be clearly visible. The re-vetting applications will be initiated 3 months prior to the renewal date by the manager.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

The processed Garda vetting in respect of the said adult was received.

### Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has been met.

## 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 registered provider ensured that there were staff available at all times with first aid responder (FAR) training. There were 10 staff members with a completed in date FAR certification.

(2)

(a) The first aid boxes were stored in each of the care rooms, up high, out of reach of children.

(b) The first aid boxes were suitably stocked for the number of children attending the service and available for staff to attend to the children if required.