

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK147			
Name of Service:	Ríocht na Sí			
Address of Service:	Conradh na Gaeilge, 18 Sraid Thomais, Limerick, Co. Limerick			
Eircode:	V94 CH29			
Name of Registered Provider:	Brid Uí Chinneide			
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional			
Date(s) of Inspection:	16/05/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	10
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2 nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Str Limerick.			
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan			
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

Ríocht Na Sí is a privately owned Naionra offering a sessional and part time pre-school service to children of pre-school age. It operates from the Conrád Na Gaeilge premises located in the centre of Limerick city.

The service can cater for up to 22 pre-school children at any one time. It offers a morning session from 8.30am to 11.30am and an afternoon session from 12.00pm to 03.00pm each day, Monday to Friday. Children availing of the part time hours remain at the service after the morning session ends until 1pm in the afternoon. The dialogue throughout the day is through the medium of Irish therefore assisting the children to build fluency in a second language.

The service operates from a large well-resourced pre-school room. A second room is available for free play and gross motor play activities. There is a small outdoor space accessible to the children to the front of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider is the person in charge of operating the service each day. A deputy person is available if required. There are 2 additional adults working at the service. All staff hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education. One staff has completed the LINC programme, a course designed to enhance inclusion of children with additional needs in Early Childhood Care and Education settings.

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 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider was the designated person in charge. There was a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present in the service for the duration of the inspection and staff rosters indicated that either the registered provider or her deputy were present each day.

(2)(a) There were written references available for all staff working at the service, with recorded validations where required.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, references from an alternative source such as schools or colleges were provided.

(c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available for all staff members and each certificate was dated within the last 3 years.

(d) International police vetting was available for 2 staff members who had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) All staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) The service operates a morning session and an afternoon session and a part time service. There were 19 children with 3 adults attending the morning session and 10 children and 3 adults attending the afternoon session. This met the requirements of Regulation 11.

(3) At all times the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

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

(1) A sample of 11 children's enrolment forms were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of the children.

- (a) The name and date of birth of the child.
- (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) Provision to record 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 of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service.
- (e) The names of all persons who had 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 received by the child.
- (i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

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;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1) The management at the service ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and each staff working at the facility. This was available in the parent statement for the service.*
- (b) Details of the type of service in operation and the age profile of children for which the facility is registered to provide services to. This was displayed on the notice board of the service.*
- (c) Details of the adult: child ratios in the service.*
- (d) The type of care or programme provided in the service. This was clearly displayed on the wall of the preschool room.*
- (e) The facilities available.*

- (f) The opening hours and fees.
- (g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child daily.
- (i) Staff rosters were maintained daily and available for inspection.
- (j) The service had a medication administration record template available that could be used in the event of a child requiring medication to be administered at the service.
- (k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service. Signatures of staff and parents were detailed on each record.

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 basic needs were clearly met in the service. There was a healthy eating policy in place. The parents supplied healthy snacks and drinks for the pre-school children. A variety of fresh fruits, crackers, pitta breads, cheeses and healthy sandwiches were observed in each child's lunch box. Lesson plans with a focus on healthy food choices had been completed with the children. On the day of the inspection the children showed pride in displaying the healthy options that had in their lunch boxes. Children availing of the part time service had a second snack each day when the morning session had concluded. Perishable foods were safely stored in a fridge until required at the service. Drinking water was always accessible to the children.

Children had unrestricted access to the bathroom facilities. Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were available to ensure hygienic washing of hands. Children were observed washing their hands following outdoor play and before each meal. Bibs were available to protect children's clothing during messy play activities. Appropriate outdoor gear was available if required for outdoor play. Soft furnishings and a rest area was accessible in the service if children were tired and needed time away from active play areas.

Tissues and wipes were always accessible to the children and all waste was disposed of properly in foot pedal operated lidded bins.

Children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment both indoors and outdoors at the service.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The large preschool room provided a good range of developmentally appropriate and challenging experiences for the children. The room was divided into two areas by a low-level timber divider. Low level tables and chairs were available in both areas to facilitate tabletop activities and dining at mealtimes. Play equipment and materials were grouped to provide specific interest areas and appealing places for children to play and explore. Art and craft materials were easily accessible with paper, paint brushes and paint pots all available. Much of the children's artwork was clearly displayed around the room. Imaginative play areas with a home corner and kitchen props were accessible. Soft furnishings next to a book stand/library area provided a rest area to facilitate story time. There was a wide variety of equipment and materials in storage which were rotated to suit the changing programme, interests, and skill levels.

Children also had access to a second room in the basement of the premises. In this space equipment to support gross motor development was available such as trampolines, hoola hoops and tunnels. An outdoor area was accessible to the front of the building and children got to spend time outside each day. The area was equipped with a mud kitchen, planting area and basketball net. A play den area was created under the outdoor stairwell.

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 and a second staff member had up to date first aid responder training.

(2)(a) There was a well-stocked first aid box located in the service.

(b) The first aid box was readily available and accessible if required.