

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK156
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Scoil na Nog St. John's Pre-school
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Scoil Eoin Naofa, Cathedral Place, St John's Square, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V94 T223
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Margaret Hickey
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	29/11/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	40	PM	0
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Browne
<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

This community service was first established in 1996. It operates three sessional services from 09:10 to 12:10 hours, Monday – Friday, under the Early Childhood care and Education Scheme for eligible children, from a modular unit located on the grounds of St Johns Scoil Na Nog primary school, Limerick city.

There are three playrooms, sanitary accommodation for the children and staff, a sensory room, office and enclosed outdoor play areas available for the preschool children.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the Chairperson of Scoil Na Nog St Johns Board of Management and they do not work in the service.

There is a designated person in charge who is responsible for running the pre-school service. There are 10 staff members employed at the service. All staff have the required childcare qualifications.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 24, 25, 26, however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 29 within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Record of a preschool child.

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*

*(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 had ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present in the service on the day of the inspection.
- (2) The registered provider had ensured that each employee working in the service was suitable and competent as the following documents were available on file for the 10 staff members employed.
- (a) References from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer.
- (b) References from reputable sources in the case of a person who had no past employers.
- (c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the 10 staff.
- (d) Police vetting was available for two members of staff who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 months.
- (4) All the staff members working with the children had childcare qualifications.

### 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 person in charge and 9 staff members were present and were working directly with 40 preschool children throughout the morning. The adult/child ratios were correct.
- (3) The registered provider and the person in charge ensured that at all times the number of staff present in the service met the requirements of the regulations.

### 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 children's registration forms were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars in each of the forms examined:
- (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) 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 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 services objective was to ensure that each child's learning, development and well-being was supported, taking all children's individual interests, needs and stage of development into consideration. There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service to encourage and educate the children about the importance of good nutrition. The service supplied healthy snacks and drinks for the pre-school children. Staff sat with the children at break time and actively encouraged mealtimes to be a social occasion. Childrens drinks were stored on a shelf in each playroom and were easily accessible to them throughout the day.

Sanitary accommodation was located close to the play room in the service and children were observed to toilet independently.

A supply of tissues and wipes which were accessible to the children. Lidded bins were available for the safe disposal of waste.

The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their level of independence. There were child friendly visual aids to help the children to wash their hands effectively.

The rest areas with comfortable seating and cushions was accessible to all children.

The staff responded to the children's cues for assistance in a prompt and sensitive manner. The children were supported as they played individually and as part of a group. There was a sensory room for individual or small group activities.

An outdoor play area located a short distance from the preschool facility was used by the children each day. Here children had lots of opportunity for active movement and play. There was a garden area but not used on the day as it was waterlogged.

On occasions the staff and children take a walk to an enclosed garden area located on the ground of the school and church premises. Here the children have the opportunity to explore this natural environment collecting twigs, leaves and other natural materials.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

There were 3 playrooms in operation at the service and each room was a large, inviting, well-designed space which contained many interest areas for the children. Low level tables and chairs were accessible for dining at break time and for tabletop activities. Imaginative play areas with dress up clothes, play kitchen and a home corner were available. A reading area with soft seating and a wide range of books, a construction area with building materials and an art and craft area with paints, brushes and paper were also provided in each room. Sand and water tray were available in each room and children were observed spending long periods engaged in this sensory and imaginative play.

All equipment was stored at children's eye level, labelled and easily accessible. Childrens artwork was visible around each room and posters on the alphabet and nursery rhymes.

Family photos and each child's country flag of origin were displayed to support inclusion and help children to be confident about their identify and sense of belonging. Children were given time to settle into their new environment and reminders of home such as the family photos helped in the transition from home to preschool. Children were observed directing their own play, working in small groups and staff were observed joining with them when invited.

The outdoor area provided opportunities for fresh air, discovery, movement, exploration and activities exclusive to the outdoors. The outdoor play area was safe, secure and children were supervised by staff at all times.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

## Compliance Information

- (1) Each pre-school child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by staff. This record was available on the attendance register.
- (3)(a) The person in charge ensured that no person other than the following were allowed enter the service.
- (i) Pre-school child attending the service.
  - (ii) A person dropping or collecting such a child.
  - (iii) An employee.
  - (iv) An unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee.
- (b) A daily record in writing was kept of persons who entered the preschool. The visitor's logbook contained the following details.
- The persons contact number.
  - Their reason for entry.
  - The name of the person who approved access.
  - The check in and out times.

## 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 at all times a staff member on duty with an up-to-date certificate in first aid response.
- (2)(a) There was a well-stocked first aid box located in each playroom, kitchen and staff room.
- (b) The first aid boxes were readily available and easily accessible if required.

### 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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The date of the last fire drill was the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2023.
- (b)The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced in February 2023.The smoke alarms were serviced in September 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in prominent positions at the premises.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (d) The outside lidded waste bins were accessible to the children and parents and were not fenced off from the outside play area and main entrance area. The bins were positioned close to the reception area at the preschool facility. This posed a safety and hygienic risk to children, parents and staff.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d) The manager for the service stated in the corrective action plan that a gate will be installed to the side of the building to section off an area for the bins and make them inaccessible to parents and children. The bins will be stored in a wheelie bin storage unit.

This work will take 2 to 3 weeks to be completed .

**Supporting documentation submitted**

No

**Summary Comment**

The action as stated by the manager in relation to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 29 Premises point (d) is in the process of being addressed.

This issue remains non-compliant until all work has been completed and this will be reviewed at the next inspection.