

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015LK156

Name of Service: Scoil na Nog St. John's Pre-school

Address of Service: Scoil Eoin Naofa, Cathedral Place, St John's Square, Limerick, Co. Limerick

Eircode: V94 T223

Name of Registered Provider: Margaret Hickey

Service type: Sessional

Date(s) of Inspection: 11/11/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	32	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla,
Estuary House,
Henry St,
Limerick

Inspection undertaken by: E Browne

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
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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 Saint John's Girls and Infant Boys School 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 preschool 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 9 staff members employed at the service, this includes the person in charge.

All the staff members 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, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 10, 11, 19, 25, 26 and 29.

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 ensured that the service had a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise if required.
- (b) The designated person in charge and the deputy were available on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2) The following documents were available on file for the nine staff members employed in the service.
- (a) There were fifteen written and verified references from past employers, available in respect of eight staff members working at the service.
- (b) There were three written and verified references from other sources furnished by two staff members.
- (c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for all the staff. Garda vetting for the staff members was dated within the last three years as per the regulatory notice, EYI-RN12.3 renewal of garda vetting, published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 1st of January 2024.
- (d) Police vetting was required for two staff members who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 months.
- (4) The staff members working with the children had the appropriate childcare qualifications.

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 and procedures available in the service which the person in charge and staff members were currently in the process of updating.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection there were 32 pre-school children present and 8 adults on the premises for the sessional service operating from 3 preschool rooms. The adult child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

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

Snacks and drinks for the children were provided by the school in line with the healthy eating policy of the service, these included fruit, sandwiches, crackers and yogurts. There was a fridge available for the storage of perishable foods and drinks prior to their consumption. The staff sat with the children at break time and actively encouraged break times to be a social occasion.

Children were observed to wash their hands at appropriate times during the sessions such as after toileting, messy play and before eating. Most of the preschool children were toilet trained and toileted independently with assistance given where it was required. The children who required additional assistance with toileting the staff were observed giving one to one attention and responded to their communication cues - verbally and nonverbal. Hand washing took place using hot water, liquid soap and paper towels.

The staff responded to the children's cues for assistance in a prompt and sensitive manner. The staff were positive in their communication with the children, using soft tones of voice and listening to the children in a caring and gentle way.

A designated area with soft couches were available to the children if they wished to rest and relax away from more active play areas.

The children were supported as they played individually and as part of a group. Children were observed moving freely indoors working in small groups or on their own and they appeared to be content and happy in their chosen activity.

Children have daily access to an enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the premises containing lots of natural play materials and equipment. The children have access to an additional play area and a green area on the school yard premises.

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 were 4 staff members who had up to date training in First Aid Responder (FAR), expiry dates were 27th of November 2026 and the 1st of April 2027.

(2)

(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible position in each playroom and in the kitchen area.

(b) The first aid boxes were available to the children attending the pre-school 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) The last recorded fire drill was the 30th of September 2025.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on the 13th of October 2025 and mains powered smoke alarms was serviced on the 2nd of September 2025. A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

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,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The premises was a prefabricated unit erected in 2000 and there were no indications of obvious defects noted on inspection.
- (b) The premises appeared safe and secure. There was a keypad security system at the front door and gates to the side entrance and the enclosed outdoor areas remained closed throughout the sessions.
- (c) All areas were well lit by natural light and by artificial light when needed. Openable windows were in place to ensure a means of air circulation in each playroom.
- (d) The areas outside were maintained and routine cleaning schedules were in place for all internal and external areas. The premises was rodent proofed, and a pest control company checked the facility in October 2025.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets and wash hand basins available at the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) There was evidence of mould and water staining around the skylight in the adult bathroom facility. This posed a potential risk to the wellbeing of the staff using the facility.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The registered provider has stated that:

The skylights has been sealed from the outside. The walls below the skylight in the staff bathroom were cleaned and treated for mould and the walls will be painted by the end of the week.

The surrounding ceiling panels that were stained have been replaced.

Regular checks of the skylights for the year to pre-empt issues arising in the future and to act as reminders to address any issues immediately have been scheduled.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Photographic evidence was submitted.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 29 point (d).