

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015LS014

**Name of Service:** Tir na nÓg

**Address of Service:** Clononeen, Borris in Ossory, Borris in Ossory, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

**Eircode:** R32 FP79

**Name of Registered Provider:** Elizabeth Ward

**Service type:** Part Time, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 25/09/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	12	PM	5

**Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:** Early Years Inspectorate,  
Tusla, Child and Family Agency,  
Primary Care Centre,  
Church Avenue,  
Tullamore, Co. Offaly

**Inspection undertaken by:** K. Murphy

**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

The service is registered as a part time service catering for up to 22 children. The age range of children enrolled in the service is 2 to 6 years of age. The sessional service operates between the hours of 09:00 - 12:00. The part time service operates between the hours of 09:00 - 14:00. There are no children currently enrolled in the 12:30 – 15:30 session. The service is operated by an independent provider.

The Early Years' Service is located in a classroom within the local national school. The Early Year service has access to the shared facilities of the national school. A separate outdoor play area is attached to the service. On-site parking and set down facilities are available. The service is urban in its location in the town of Borris in Ossory, County Laois.

### Staffing

Five staff members are employed in the service. The registered provider and three staff members were present and working with the children during the inspection.

### 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.

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*

*(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 and a person to deputise were available in the service.

(b)

The registered provider was present for the duration of the inspection.

Five files including the file of the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available for four staff members from past employers or from a source other than a past employer.

The required number of written references were available in respect of the registered provider from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the five files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

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

(4)

Staff working directly with children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at levels 5 to 8 on the National Framework of 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.*

*(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*

*(a) a sessional pre-school service, and*

*(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

*(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)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was exceeded during the inspection.

(4)(a)(b)

There were ten children attending the service supervised directly by three staff members and the registered provider.

(8)(a)

The attendance records reviewed indicated that two adults are present throughout the opening hours of the service.

## 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-*

*(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The care practices and routines were child led with the staff following the individual verbal and non-verbal cues of the child. The staff were positive towards children and were familiar with each child, their personalities and their daily routines. Staff were observed to give comfort and reassurance to the children. Staff used individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities, toileting and mealtimes.

Seamless transitions were noted as the children were given a lead in time to change from one activity to another. Positive behaviour strategies were observed during the inspection. Staff used a calm approach using soft language tones, giving positive praise and encouragement to children. Good teamwork was observed amongst staff.

Children who went to the toilet independently were supervised by a staff member. The personal hygiene of the children was maintained with children's noses kept clean and regular handwashing taking place during the morning.

Children were observed to move between the various environments and play activities enjoying physical play and gross motor activities as well as imaginative and sensory play.

A period of rest and relaxation was afforded to children attending on a part-time basis. A meal was provided by each child's parents and enjoyed as part of a small group in the early afternoon before the part-time service concluded.

Individual learning journals and photograph books are used to record photographs and narratives relating to the children's activities and daily life in the service and to provide a permanent record for each individual child.

At collection time parents were provided with a verbal handover on the activities and progress of each child throughout the morning.

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

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*

*(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*

*(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-*

*(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable and adequate play and work equipment were provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, sensory, tabletop activities, arts and crafts, home corners and physical play.

(b)

Low level beds and soft furnishings provided appropriate rest facilities in the pre-school room for any child who wished to avail of rest and relaxation.

(3)(a)

A designated outdoor play area with a combination of natural grass, stone and tarmacadam surface areas was available. The perimeter was secured by a high-level wall and gate. The outdoor play area was equipped with a painting station, art easel, sensory trays, a variety of bikes and trikes, a dig area and planting areas.

### 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 entrance to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. Visitor access was controlled. The inspector signed the visitor book on arrival. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

##### Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. The pre-school room and the sanitary accommodation were ventilated by natural ventilation with windows open.

Warm water, hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. The temperature of the water recorded at the wash hand basins was approximately 30 degrees Celsius.

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet under the supervision of staff.

A refrigerator was available for the storage of beverages and perishable foods in the pre-school room.

Foot operated pedal bins were available in the pre-school rooms and in the associated sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste.

##### Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available if a child presented with a high temperature and was stored safely in the service.

##### Fire Safety:

Fire exit routes were unobstructed and a fire assembly point was located to the rear of the premises.

##### Outing:

Risk assessment checklists relating to the outings carried out from the service were available for review.

### 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.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

The records of arrival and departure reviewed verified that each child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by a nominated staff member.

(3)(a)

All entry to the service with the exception of (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) has to be approved by a staff member.

(b)

A visitor log was in place to record the details and purpose of all visitors to the service.

(4)

The visitor log is retained throughout the annual operation of the service.

### 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 one other staff member were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)  
A fully equipped first aid cabinet and box were readily available in the service.

(b)  
A first aid box was accessible to the adults caring for the children in 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 firefighting 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)  
A written record for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 5 June 2025. The service was closed for the months of July and August.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced in November 2024. The smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in September 2025.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in 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 evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2026.