

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH205				
Name of Service:	Tir na nÓg Highscope				
Address of Service:	Balreask, Trim Road, Navan, Co. Meath				
Eircode:	C15 FC2C				
Name of Registered Provider:	Phyllis Geraghty				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	07/11/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>22</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	22	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath				
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham				
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

Tir na nÓg Highscope preschool is operating a sessional service. The service can accommodate up to 22 pre-school children attending at any one time. The operating hours are 09.00am to 12.00pm. The age range catered for is 2 years 8 months to 6 years. The service consists of a care room and sanitary accommodation in the adjoining hall. The outdoor area is available to the back of the premises.

Staffing

There are five staff employed in the service including the registered provider and two AIM support workers. A transition year student was present also.

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, 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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

Five staff files and the file of the transition year student were reviewed:

(2) (a)(b) Twelve validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for all adults. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Garda vetting was not required for the Transition year student under 18 years of age.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(6A) Two staff members were employed under the access and inclusion model.

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) On the day of inspection there were 4 adults working directly with 22 pre-school children attending the service.

(3) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity on the day of inspection:

Four adults cared for 22 children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 4 years.

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 of the Children:

Staff supported the children to be independent while they used the toilet, cared for their personal belongings, by including them in the facilitation of the programme of care and during mealtime. The children were treated with positive regard during all interactions. 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 part of the group.

Physical and Material Environments:

The children accessed both the indoor and outdoor environment and engaged in play based activities. The care room was laid out with low-level tables and chairs suitable to the age of the children in attendance. The children's artwork was displayed on the walls and hanging from the ceiling and placed in their individual record books. Designated areas of interest were available with appropriate supporting play materials and equipment. A shop and kitchen corner, a dolls house with furnishings, a reading area and units with a large variety of play and educational materials were available at a low level and accessible to the children. An area was available for children to rest or take a break from activities within the care-room. The outdoor area provided a space where the children could freely move and play.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

The staff were observed to engage in a caring and sensitive manner, children were spoken to at their level and in soft gentle tones of voice. It was evidenced that staff operated in partnership with parents. Staff collected the children at the gate and greeted each parent or guardian at drop off and collection time.

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 service was secured by a door and gated access. The outdoor area was secured by walls and a gate.
- The building, materials and equipment within were maintained in good condition.

Infection Control:

- The care room and sanitary facilities were maintained in clean condition.
- Warm water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lined, lidded and sealed bins were available in the care room and two sanitary facilities.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after play activities and using the toilet and prior to mealtime.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) A record was kept of each child's time of arrival and departure on a daily basis by the staff members.

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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) A written record was available of fire drills which were completed monthly in the service. the last recorded fire drill was on the 21st October 2025.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment and smoke detection alarms were last serviced on 20th October 2025, and the 1st September 2025, respectively.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 22 children at any one time. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28th March 2025 to the 27th March 2026.