

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN042
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Name of Service:	Naíonra Eois
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Address of Service:	Roslea Road, Clones, Co. Monaghan
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Eircode:	H23 RW28
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Name of Registered Provider:	Eimear McDonald
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	15/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader
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

Naíonra Eois have been operating as a community run childcare service since 2012. They provide full day care, part-time and sessional education and care to pre-school children aged from 2 to 6 years of age through the medium of Irish. The service is open from 08:30 to 17:30 each weekday and caters for a maximum of 22 children. The service operates from a classroom in the local Gael Scoil in the town of Clones Co. Monaghan. There is sanitary accommodation and a kitchen. The service has an outdoor area to the side and front of the service.

Staffing

There are 7 adults employed in the service who work directly with the children, a service manager and 1 adult employed as a cook.

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, 11, 20, 21, 22, 25 and 26; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 19(3) and 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

Additional Information

A safety Immediate Action Notice was issued on 16/11/23 in relation to raised radiator surface temperatures which were a potential burns risk. A satisfactory response addressing the non-compliance was received from the registered provider on the 16/11/23.

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.

(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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspectors arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

There were 7 staff members employed in the service including the registered provider and 1 staff member employed on a community employment scheme. The 7 staff files were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for 6 members of staff in the service.

Two written references were available for 1 staff member.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for each of the 7 staff members.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented for inspection documentary evidence indicated that international police vetting was not required as none of the staff members had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the childcare qualification for all 7 members of staff in the service including the member of staff on a community employment scheme met the minimum qualification required to enable them to work directly with the preschool children.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) One staff member did not have both their written references validated.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) The staff member, who's references had not been validated, are now validated since the date of inspection.

All staff files will be validated before starting their work in our service. The deputy manager will be responsible for overseeing the staff folder on a termly basis to ensure this.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response has addressed the non-compliance identified in Regulation 9.

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.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

(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) There were an adequate number of adults present with the preschool children attending the service when the inspectors arrived at the service and for the duration of the inspection.

(2) The following adult: child ratios were observed in the care rooms when the inspectors arrived at the premises:

Preschool Room:

There were 18 preschool children (aged 3 - 5 years) attending this room with 4 childcare staff. Three additional adults who were rostered to work came to work in the room at 13:00, 13:30 and 13:45 respectively.

The child adult ratios were correct.

(8) The registered provider ensured that at least 2 adults were on the premises at all times.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(3) A chart with 3 space rockets with pictures of the children's face was in use to reward good behaviour. This system was visible to everyone in the room. Once children reached the top of the rocket, they received a treat. It was reported that not all children may reach the top of the rocket and therefore this process could be seen as degrading by some children and affect their self-esteem and become upset if they did not reach the top.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Staff have started using an alternative rocket. Staff are going to encourage children to work as a group at their table rather than as an individual. Please see photo attached.

The new system will be reviewed at the end of term and see if it is working ok. Staff won't use a reward system where they feel it will reduce any child's self-esteem/confidence.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response is accepted and will be for review at the next inspection. The non-compliance has been addressed.

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-

(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)(b) There was a floor mat on the ground in the book area with a canopy over it where a child could sit and relax on or take a break from an activity. Additionally, there were 3 daybeds for the children aged over 2 years of age to sleep on if required.

(3)(a) There was an outdoor play area on the premises which was an enclosed area to the front of the building which the children were observed to access. This area had a tarmacked surface. A variety of pieces of wooden play equipment were available that promoted many areas of development and included a large climbing frame with slide and swings, a boat, a climbing wall and mud kitchen. There were of ride-on toys, balance bikes, tyres for climbing, water shoots and balls.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) Soft cushions and the small plastic covered sofa were stored outside the room and behind the office desk and therefore not accessible to the children to sit and rest on as part of the cosy area. It is acknowledged that the registered provider did bring the sofa to the area following a discussion with the inspector.

(3)(a)

1. A piece of wood was broken off the wooden mud kitchen and there was a nail protruding from the area. This is a potential injury hazard.

2. There were accumulations of leaves gathering around the boat area and along the fencing. These are a potential slipping hazard.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b) The soft sofa & cushions are always kept out now. (please find proof attached).

(3)(a)

1. The nails have been removed to avoid injury & a replacement strip has been added to even the wood surface.
Leaves cleared (Please find proof attached).

1. We will continue to risk assess before outdoor time and be mindful of areas which may be deemed hazardous.
The sofa and soft furnishings will be available at all times to the children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response and supporting evidence is accepted and the non-compliances identified in Regulation 20 have been addressed.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

In the care room there was a variety of play materials and equipment. The equipment was suited to the ages and stages of development of the children present and promoted many areas of child development. The play equipment was stored on low level open shelving which was accessible to the children.

In the playroom the toys and equipment available were divided into specific areas of interest including a book area, Sugradh Uisce and Gaineamh, art supplies and materials, a home area, with table and chairs, dolls and a shop. There was a Puzail agus Mireanna Mearaí area and an Ait Tógála and construction work bench and tools. There was hair dressing equipment and dress-up clothes in the Rólimirt area, fine motor equipment farming unit, small world figures and a large television with an interactive white board system.

Non-Compliance Information

Some of the equipment was tired and in disrepair, the paintwork on the kitchen units were chipped and broken with the inner wood material exposed. The paintwork of the small table and chairs was chipped.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The kitchen has had a replacement sheet added for hygiene reasons. (Please find proof attached).

The service will be investing in new resources at the end of this current school year but until then we will carry out risk assessments on all our toys/resources.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances in Regulation 21 have been addressed and will be for review at the next inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Healthy eating was promoted in the service as was evident by the dinner and snacks provided by the service in the various rooms. The morning and afternoon snacks were supplied by the parents and consisted of sandwiches, crackers, raisins, fruit, couscous, yoghurts and pancakes. On the day of the inspection the homemade dinner provided for those attending on a full day care basis was observed to be chicken curry and rice.

Potable drinking water was available and the children had access to their drinks as required in the room.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The surface temperature of 1 of the radiators in the care room was recorded at 57.4° C, which exceeded the safe radiator surface temperature of 50° C and was a potential burns risk.
2. The stand of the large interactive television/ white board was protruding and a trip hazard.
3. There were a number of sharp unprotected corners e.g. on the television, black and light shelving units. These are an injury hazard.
4. A cupboard door on the unit at the back of the room was broken and a health and safety risk.

Infection Control:

5. At 11:15 and 11:50 there was no hot water in the taps in the sanitary accommodation. When discussed with the registered provider it was discovered that the water heating unit was not switched on. When re-checked at 12:30 the water was warm after it had been switched on.
6. The children's hands were not washed after outdoor play and they went straight to table top activities. It was acknowledged by the registered provider that hand gel was used.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Proof that the surface temperature of the radiator had come down has been forwarded. The dial was turned down to 3 and the surface temperature was reduced to 41.1 degrees and the room temperature remained at 21 degrees. (please find proof attached)
2. Our interactive whiteboard (which looks like a large television) remains in the same position as we believe it's the safest area within our room space.
3. Soft coverings for the corners have been purchased and placed on the corners of the units. (Please find proof attached)
4. The cupboard drawers have now been drilled back to make them secure. (Please find proof attached)

Preventive Action

1. Staff will all continue to monitor the surface temperature & room temperature.
2. We will continue to monitor & risk assess when there are a lot of children in the area with the whiteboard.
When we move premises, the interactive board will be fitted to the wall and no longer on a stand.
3. Any future purchases with sharp edges will have soft coverings added but we will aim to always purchases items with rounded corners.
4. We will continue to monitor the hinges of the cupboards to ensure they do not come loose.

Infection Control:

5. Our immersion store has been cleared out to ensure switches aren't interfered with. (Please find proof attached. The press in which the immersion is placed, will be kept free from other large items such as Hoover, to ensure the switch is not hit by accident.
6. All child's hands are now washed after coming from outside. Hand sanitiser is no longer used.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

A safety Immediate Action Notice was issued on 16/11/23 in relation to raised radiator surface temperatures which were a potential burns risk. A satisfactory response addressing the non-compliance was received from the registered provider on the 16/11/23.

The registered provider's response and supporting documentation were reviewed. The non-compliances identified in Regulation 23 have been addressed and will be for review at the next inspection.

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 ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response for children, on the premises at all times.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipment and available to the preschool children.

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 record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service, the last recorded 29/9/23.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated the 29/6/23.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.