

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015MN043 | | |
| Name of Service: | Naionra Lorgan | | |
| Address of Service: | Drumillard Business Park, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan | | |
| Eircode: | A75 Y278 | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Brendan Ó Dufaigh | | |
| Service type: | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 11/11/2024 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 21 | PM 14 |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84 | | |
| Inspection undertaken by: | S. Mc Kenna | | |
| 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

Naionra Lorgan is a community based childcare service located within Gaelscoil Lorgan. The service operates from a converted industrial unit in the town of Castleblayney Co Monaghan. The service provides full day, part time and sessional preschool care and education to children from 2 to 6 years. School aged care is also provided. The service operates from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) from 9am to 12 middays. A large enclosed outdoor area is available to the children. There is parking available outside the building.

Staffing

Eleven staff are employed to work directly with children, of which three staff are part of a community employment scheme. The registered provider is not service based.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28. 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, deputy 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise in their absence.
- (b) Following discussion with the person in charge and a review of the staff roster, it was confirmed that at all times when the preschool service was in operation the designated person in charge or a named person in charge were on the premises.
- (c) A clear management structure was available, which detailed the lines of authority and staff roles.
- (2) The staff files for 11 adults were reviewed.
- (a) (b) Two written and validated references from past employers, and or reputable sources in the absence of past employments were on file for 11 adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 11 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all employed staff.

(d) A review of the 11 employment history records demonstrated that two adults had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. The required police vetting for one adult was available on file.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 8 adults employed to work with children, held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications. The remaining adults did not require a qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) The required police vetting for one adult, who had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months was not available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff member completed the police vetting application, and the final police vetting certificate has been received and submitted to the inspector. Management will ensure that all vetting procedures are followed, ensuring anyone who has lived outside the country will be vetted for the correct region as well as garda vetted.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of final police vetting certificate.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 9 (2) (d).

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult to child ratios were observed:
- Morning Time**
- Four adults cared for twenty-one children aged 3 years to 4 years 10 months.
- Afternoon Time**
- Four adults cared for fourteen children aged 3 years to 4 years 10 months.
- In addition to the above, three staff on a training scheme were present and working in a supernumerary capacity.
- (8)(a) A review of the staff roster demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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

(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

The following examples demonstrated how the registered provider ensured that the children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

Basic Needs

- The snacks and meals eaten by the children on the day of inspection were observed to be varied and suitable for the children's age. All food items consumed by the children are taken in from home and stored in the fridge until snack/meal times. Breakfast is scheduled for 8 – 8.50am each day with toast and cereal provided. The morning snacks at 10.30am on the day of inspection contained a variety of sandwiches, bread sticks, rice cakes, yogurts, chopped fruits, ham, waffles, bread rolls and pancakes. The children had their own drinks at snack and meal times. Outside of these times the children's drink bottles were left on a unit within the care room, and or taken outside, allowing children to access their drinks at all times. The hot meal was served at 1pm, with meals observed to contain a variety of potatoes/rice/noodles or pasta, meat, vegetables and sauces. An evening snack takes place at 3.30pm in the afternoon where children will have the remainder of their snack that they have taken in from home.
- The children were observed to independently use the sanitary facilities. Additional toileting supports were provided by the adults were required. Spare clothes were stored in the service. Aprons were available for messy play activities. The children were observed to wear coats outdoors on the day of inspection.
- An area of rest was provided by the means of a soft mat and bean bags. Stackable beds and bedding are available should a child attending part time or full time require a sleep during their time in the service.
- The children availed of a change of environment to the outdoor play area during the inspection. When the inspector arrived at the service the indoor area and a sectioned part of the outdoor area to include the sand and water areas was in use by the children.

Supporting Relationships

- The children were observed to interact well with one another. Any minor disagreements observed were dealt with promptly by adults in a gentle and appropriate manner. The adults demonstrated sensitivity and warmth towards the children in their interactions. The adults were observed to sit with children at snack time, engaging in conversations about the children’s interests and home life.
- The adults spoke to the children using warm tones, with gentle guidance or direction provided when needed. The children’s individual care needs were met, for example a child who appeared tired on the day of inspection was facilitated to come inside and rest during outdoor play time.
- The atmosphere in the care room was warm and friendly. The routine was a variety of structured and child led play. The routine was familiar to the children, and they demonstrated awareness of what was coming next in their day.
- The children were observed to be consistently engaged in play both indoors and outdoors on the day of inspection. The adults were observed to remain close by children and provide support when the need arose.
- The staff team were observed to work well with each other. Roles and individual tasks for staff were clear, with transitions managed smoothly.
- Communication with parents is through a messaging service, emails and in person at arrival and collection times. A keyworker system is in place, which includes a child’s notebook , completed with photos and comments by the keyworker and sent home with the children on a regular basis.
- The adults advised the inspector that the ethos of the service is to speak in the Irish language at all times, however, should a child not understand Irish, that English can be used intermittently. Discussions, conversations and songs among the children and adults were observed in the Irish language throughout the inspection.

Physical And Material Environment

- The indoor area was laid out with many interest areas and a large variety of play materials and equipment for the children’s use. Some of the designated areas included home corner, dress up equipment, role play sets, table top activities, playdough, creative area, small world play and floor play opportunities. A rest area with books and beanbags was also available. There were many displays within the care room, to include children’s creative art work pieces, an “Incy Wincy” display, and a “Me Fein and Mo Chlann” display.
- The children have use of a designated outdoor play area. The large area was surround by high level fencing and gates, and included ground surfaces of artificial grass, tarmac and concrete. There are some wooden sheds, a wooden gazebo and a wooden bus available for children’s use. The wooden shed had a home corner area with

blocks, floor play toys and a tool bench within. Many ride-on trucks and toys were available to the children. A sand play kitchen area, ride on trucks, the slides and water play proved popular choices of play among the children on the day of inspection.

- The play materials and resources in the outdoor area were plentiful. The person in charge explained they aim to have the outdoor area as well-resourced as their indoor area. This was evident on the day of inspection through the large variety of play opportunities available to the children while in the outdoor area.
- The furniture available in the indoor environment was suitable for the number, age and stage of children in attendance. The storage units and shelving in the care room provided easy access to materials for the children. The outdoor area was set up each day by a staff member prior to children's use, ensuring all materials were accessible to the children. Various benches and chairs were available for rest in the outdoor area.

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:

- Upon the inspectors arrival to the service the entrance door was secured.
- The designated outdoor area is secured by high level fencing and gates.
- The children were observed to be adequately supervised both indoors and outdoors. The staff were observed to closely supervise children while in the outdoor area.
- An assigned member of staff carries out a risk assessment in the outdoor area each morning before the children attended the area.
- The materials and equipment used by the children appeared in good repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.
- Storage areas remained inaccessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of the children.
- Fire exits remained unobstructed during the inspection process.

Infection Control:

- There was warm running water, hand soap, bins and paper towels available for handwashing purposes.

- Hand washing was observed in practise after children used the toilet and before snack and meal times.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to snack and meal times.
- The children’s food taken in from home, was stored in the refrigerator until snack/mealtimes.
- Cleaning records were in place and up to date. The service was observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic manner.

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) Following review of staff files, it was evident that the registered provider ensured that there was a member of staff trained in First Aid Response (FAR) on the premises at all times, demonstrated by 4 staff with in date FAR training certificates on file.

(2) (a) & (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available on the premises, both in the care room and in the outdoor play area. The first aid boxes were stored in accessible and conspicuous locations out of the reach of 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

- (a) A record of fire drills that take place was available, with the most recent dated fire drill recorded on 14 October 2024.
- (b) The annual maintenance certificate for the fire extinguishers and smoke alarms was dated October 2024.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedure was displayed throughout the service, which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for 22 pre-school children attending the service on a Full Day Care basis. The policy detailed that the service was insured until 27 March 2025.