

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN055
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Name of Service:	Tír Na nÓg
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Address of Service:	Corracloughan, Monaghan Road, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan
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Eircode:	A75 DD23
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Name of Registered Provider:	Fionnuala Lynch
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	13/01/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM	24
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S. Skinnader	No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan
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Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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 is a privately run service in operation since 2004. The service provides full day care, sessional and part-time care to pre-school children from 0 - 6 years of age. The service operates from 07:30 - 18:30 Monday - Friday. The service is situated in a covered industrial building on the outskirts of the town of Castleblayney. There are 2 care rooms, nappy changing and sanitary accommodations, an office and a kitchen. There is an enclosed outdoor area to the side of the premises.

Staffing

There are 10 staff including the registered provider who work in the service. Eight adults who are employed work directly with the children and 1 of these adults is also the cook. The remaining 2 staff work with school aged children only.

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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and a system in place to designate a named deputy person to deputise as required. The person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

There were 10 staff files presented for inspection.

(2)(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for all 10 members of staff.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda vetting disclosure was available for all 10 staff members in the service and 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.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented on the day of inspection, international police vetting was available for the 2 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of greater than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that the 8 members of staff, who worked directly with the pre-school children had a minimum Level 5 childcare qualification.

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) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service in the Preschool Room and Baby Toddler Room.

(2) When the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there were 2 rooms in operation i.e. the Baby Toddler Room and Preschool Room.

The following adult: child ratios were observed:

- Two staff in the Baby Toddler Room with 9 children aged 1 year to 2 years and 7 months.
- Two staff in the Preschool Room with 19 children aged 3 - 5 years.

At approximately 11:30 another staff member arrived at the service to work as a floater between the rooms and a second adult arrived with the dinner and stayed on the premises until approximately 13:30 and assisted in the Preschool Room.

(8) On review of documentation the registered provider ensured that there are at least 2 adults 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

Compliance Information

There were 2 rooms in operation on the day of inspection namely the Baby Toddler and Preschool Rooms.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service:

Basic needs:

- Morning and afternoon snacks were brought in by the children and consisted of a variety of fruit, sandwiches, crackers, yogurts and drinks. The hot dinner for those staying on a full day care basis was homemade and consisted of potatoes, broccoli and fish fingers. The service had additional snacks should a child forget their lunch. Drinks were accessible to all children and they were given plenty of time to finish their dinners.
- In both care rooms the children were observed to move freely and had a change of environment to the outdoor area in the morning and again in the afternoon. The children were dressed appropriately to go outside. Assistance was provided to the younger children in the Baby Toddler Room.
- The toilet trained children were encouraged to be independent with toileting and discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required. Nappy changing was routinely carried out and children were observed to be checked and changed at different times. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children in both rooms after toileting, outdoor play and before meals.
- Attention was given to personal care such as nose blowing and cleaning faces.
- In the Baby Toddler Room the individual children's sleep needs were adhered to and children were observed sleeping at different times throughout the day. Dinners were kept for any child who was sleeping and given to them when they woke.

Supporting Relationships

- A key worker system was in operation in the rooms and this promoted the development and sustainment of relationships between the children, their parents, and the staff in the service.
- Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the staff and children in both the rooms for example “you’re a good boy, you’re sharing”, “I am so proud of you”, “now sweetheart will we get your shoes on?”. At dinner time children were encouraged to eat their dinner with “will you try a bit more?? and “big crocodile bites !” and the children were observed to eat more. The staff sat on the floor with the children in the Baby Toddler Room to interact with them in a warm and supportive manner. Staff in the Preschool Room were also observed to support the childrens’ play requests and therefore they could freely go between the outdoor area to the indoors as they choose.
- Staff reported most communication with parents was via the electronic application “the app” used in the services and informally at drop-off and collection times.

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,

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) There was 1 cot room off the Baby Toddler Room with 5 cots for the children under 2 years of age who required a sleep. Daybeds were available in the service if needed for a child over the age of 2 years who may require a sleep. All cots and cot mattresses were in good condition. Cot mattresses fitted the cots adequately and had appropriate safety labels and a wipeable covering. There was at least the recommended 50cm between cots. There were soft areas in the Baby Toddler Room consisting of matting and soft toys/cushions.

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

General Safety:

1. One of the blind cords in the Preschool Room was broken and hanging down potentially accessible to the children. Other blind cords in the service were not adequately restricted. This is a health and safety risk.

Safe Sleep:

2. During the sleep checks the room thermometer was not always physically checked to correctly document the sleep room temperature. For example on 1 occasion the previous room temperature recorded was recorded at 17.8 ° C when the thermometer was registering 19.2 ° C.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider sourced a blind company to come in to repair and attach new safety restrictors. The condition of these will be checked regularly on the daily risk assessment.

Safe Sleep:

2. The registered provider had a meeting with staff on the importance of always checking sleep room temperatures at the sleep checks. A poster with the temperature checking procedures were placed in the sleep room. The process of checking the sleep room temperature is to be checked by the supervisor regularly and there will be spot checks from the manager.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence and copy of daily risk assessment.

Safe Sleep:

Copy of staff meeting minutes and visual temperature check procedure poster.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the registered provider's response and supporting evidence. This is accepted and the non-compliances addressed.

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 (FAR) for children, on the premises at all times. Six FAR certificates were reviewed.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available to the preschool children.

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 adequate insurance cover for a maximum of 45 children expiring the 27/03/26.