

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015MO084

Name of Service: Naionra Baile Chruaich Teoranta

Address of Service: Shranamonragh National School, Ballycroy, Westport, Co. Mayo

Eircode: F28 YY89

Name of Registered Provider: Anne Conway

Service type: Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 23/09/2024

No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	5

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo
Inspection undertaken by:	M Farrell
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

Naionra Baile Chruaich Teoranta is a non-profit, community-based childcare service located in Ballycroy, a rural area in Co Mayo. The Naíonra is registered to provide parttime services and sessional to children aged from two to six years of age between 09:15 - 14:15hours . There are two playrooms with interconnecting doors, an office, a kitchen and sanitary facilities on the premises. A large enclosed outdoor play area is located to the rear of the building.

Staffing

Two staff members work directly with the children in the service. The registered provider is not employed in the service.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under sections of regulations 9, 11, 15, 16, 21, 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, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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,

(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

(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

(2) There were two staff members working in the service. The following vetting documents were available on file in the service for the two staff members:

(a) Two written validated references from past employers.

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

(4)

There was evidence available on file to show that the two staff members held the required qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent.

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.

(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) An adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the pre-school service. There were two adults working directly with nine children on the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service on the morning of the inspection. Two adults provided direct care to five children during the afternoon of the inspection.

(2) Part-time services were provided following the morning session with two staff directly caring for five children. The minimum required adult to child ratios of 1:6 for children aged between two to three years of age and 1:8 for children aged between three and six years of age were maintained during the provision of the part-time service.

(3) During the sessional service in the morning, the minimum required ratio of adults to children were adhered to in the service as two adults cared for nine children.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) to (i)

All ten of the children who attend the service records were reviewed by the inspector. Each of the children's records was found to contain the information required under the regulation.

(3) (c)

The required information was made readily available to the inspector by the designated person in charge on request.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) The following information was available in the service:

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the staff members.
- (b) Information on the type of service type and ages of children that the service is registered to provide services to.
- (c) The adult: child ratios provided in the service.
- (d) The service's type of care or programme.
- (e) The facilities available in the service.
- (f) The service's hours of opening and fees.

- (g) The service's policies, procedures and statements as required under Regulation 10.
 - (h) Details of the daily attendance of each pre-school child recorded in a daily attendance record book.
 - (i) The staff roster was displayed in the hallway.
 - (j) There was a record book to record any medication administered to children while attending the service to include signed parental consent.
 - (k) An accident/incident book was available to record details of any accident, injury or incident involving children attending the service and to be signed by staff.
- (3)
- The records were made available in the service to the inspector by the designated person on request by the inspector.

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

There was a wide variety of age and developmentally appropriate equipment available to the children both indoors and outdoors. The indoor play area consisted of two large interconnecting playrooms that the children and staff moved freely between. The playrooms were arranged in defined interest areas that were labelled in Irish such as the book corner/(*Cúinne na leabhar*). The toys and play equipment were displayed at low levels in accessible storage systems allowing children to choose the toys that they would like to play with. The first playroom next to the service's main entrance door held a rest area with soft seating beside a book area with age-appropriate Irish language books. Large supplies of tabletop activities were stored in open shelving including jigsaws of varying degrees of difficulty, pegboards and magnetic shapes. There was a display of photographs of familiar places in the locality including houses and buildings on a wall of the playroom. The second playroom had imaginative play areas such as the home corner/(*an cúinne baile*). This area had wooden kitchen units, plastic food items, toy cutlery and cooking items. A well-stocked shop area had a till and plastic fruit and vegetables for the children to sell. Other defined interest areas included the brick/construction area, transport area, and a doll area with toy dolls and accessories such as a travel cot, push chairs and feeding bottles.

Messy play activities were available in both playrooms. These included a sand area/*(gaineamh)* where a large plastic play table contained sand and a range of play items and there was a water table/*(an t-uisce)*. The art area/*(péint)* had an easel, paint, paper and crayons. Aprons were available to protect children's clothes when painting and playing with water. Outdoor messy play equipment available to the children included a mud kitchen, a large, covered sandbox and a coloured rice play activity that staff set up on an activity table.

Sand timers were provided for staff to use to visually represent time for children and help with sharing and transitions between activities. The children had access to diversity dolls reflecting different ethnicities to play with in the playrooms. Sleep beds were available in the service if children needed to rest/sleep.

Tables waist-high to the children and chairs appropriate to the heights and developmental stages of the children were provided for activities including tabletop work, group activities and mealtimes. There was seating in the outdoor area/*(gairdín)* suitable for children and adults under a canopy extending out from the building in the large outdoor area at the rear of the building. This area was used at lunchtime during the inspection by the children staying on after the sessional service to attend parttime services.

A large amount of play equipment to promote and support physical activity was provided in the large enclosed outdoor play area including ride on toys, wheelbarrows that were used at the sandbox, crawling tunnels and climbing systems. Recycled tyres were fixed into the ground creating further crawling opportunities. A wooden shed was used to store smaller items of play equipment. There was an enclosed woodland area behind the outdoor area with natural play items including leaves, pinecones and moss where the staff said the service sometimes went for walks.

The toys, play equipment and furniture were found to be clean, appropriately maintained and in good condition. The staff carried out daily risk checks of equipment and recorded their findings on checklists that were displayed in the playrooms. Cleaning schedules and records for toys, play equipment and furniture were available in the service.

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 main entrance door was secured when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and remained secured during the inspection preventing people from entering without permission. The inspector was admitted to the service by the designated person in charge following production of identification documentation. The gates to the outdoor areas were secured during the inspection when children were playing outdoors preventing children from leaving the area unnoticed. Cleaning products were stored in a secured cupboard in the playroom or at high levels and were inaccessible to the children. The kettle was stored out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

The children's snacks that contained perishable food items were stored in a refrigerator on the children's arrival to the service. The staff were observed to supervise the children washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating food. Warm water and liquid soap were used for washing hands and paper towels were used to dry hands and then disposed of in foot pedal operated bins.

Administration of Medication:

Care plans were in place for children who may require medication to be administered to them in the service in accordance with the service's policy on medication administration. A record book was available to record any medication that was administered to a child by staff members. Medicines were stored out of reach of children but readily accessible by staff and in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exits were observed to be free from obstruction during the 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) Both members of staff had undertaken First Aid Response (FAR) training with certificates available for inspection.
- (2) (a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box in the service stored out of reach of the children.
(b) The first aid equipment was readily available if a child required first aid treatment in the 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 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) Written records of the monthly fire drills undertaken in the service were kept by the staff. The last fire drill was recorded as having been undertaken on the 9 September 2024.
(b) Certificates of the maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms/fire detection system were available for inspection. The firefighting equipment was last maintained on the 26 February 2024 and the smoke alarm system was serviced on the 7 August 2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures (*druil dóiteáin*) to be followed if a fire occurred in the service were clearly displayed in the playroom.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A certificate of insurance for parttime service provision for a maximum of 22 children with an expiry date of the 27 Marc 2025 was available for inspection in the service.