

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier: TU2015MO123

Name of Service: Tir Na Nog Crèche & Montessori

Address of Service: Church Road, Belmullet, Co Mayo, F26 EY70

Email Address: tirnanogcreche97@gmail.com

Name of Registered Service Provider: Mary Maloney O'Boyle

Type of Service Registered: Full Day Care ü

Date of Inspection: 3 0 1 1 2 0 2 1

No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection: AM 34 PM -

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 & S. Gallagher
Title: Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health Welfare and Development of Child	Safety

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	This full day care service is located in an urban setting in Belmullet, Co. Mayo. A service is provided to children aged between one and six years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 07:50 hours and 17:20 hours. This includes a sessional service for 38 weeks of the year.
Premises	The premises is a detached, two storey building with four playrooms, a sleep room, a kitchen and ancillary facilities.
Staffing	There were nine adults in the service at the time of the inspection including the registered provider who was in charge of the day to day running of the service, the cook and a student present on educational placement.
Methodology	<p>Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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.</p> <p>The findings on inspection are based on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained through examination of documentation • Direct observation • Discussion with relevant staff <p>This inspection was unannounced and focused on areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required.</p> <p>The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service.</p> <p>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.</p>
Acknowledgements	The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

GOVERNANCE

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:	<p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The registered provider was the service's designated person in charge and there was a named person able to deputise as required. (b) The designated person in charge was present at all times during the inspection. A sample of attendance records reviewed found that the designated person in charge or deputy was available at all times when the service was in operation. <p>(2) The vetting documentation for eight of the nine adults in the service had been reviewed on previous inspections. The following was available for the ninth adult:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) Vetting documentation from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána. <p>(4) Evidence of the completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or an equivalent qualification had been reviewed on previous inspection for the seven adults who worked directly with the children in the service.</p>
Non-Compliance Information:	<p>(2) The following was not available for one adult:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) & (b) <p>There were no written validated references available for one adult.</p>

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Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

	(d) It was unable to be ascertained if international police vetting was required for the adult with no employment history available on file in the service. There was no photographic identification for the adult.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	<p>The registered provider advised in a written response that:</p> <p><u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u> The adult was requested to provide references and a curriculum vitae. The curriculum vitae showed that international police vetting was not required for the adult.</p> <p><u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u> The registered provider will ensure that vetting documents are supplied before their start date in the service.</p> <p><u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u> The following evidence was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate by the registered provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two written validated references from past employers including the adult's most recent employer. • Curriculum vitae demonstrating that international police vetting was not required for the adult. • A copy of photographic identification.
Summary Comment:	The actions taken together with the evidence submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the non-compliance found on inspection.

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing Levels

	<p>(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.</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—</p> <p>(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</p>
Compliance Information:	<p>(1) On the morning of the unannounced inspection there were seven adults including the registered provider working directly with children.</p> <p>(2) The following adult to child ratios were provided during the unannounced inspection in line with the required ratios taking into consideration the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as follows:</p> <p>Early Start playroom: Two adults cared for three children aged between one and two years of age and two children aged between two and three years of</p>

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	<p>age. One further child aged between one and two years of age arrived at 12:30hours.</p> <p>First Friends playroom: Two adults cared for four children aged between two and three years of age and seven children aged between three and six years of age.</p> <p>Bright Sparks playroom: The children from the Busy Pals playroom and Bright Sparks playrooms joined together for the day for music activities. Two adults cared for seventeen children aged between two and half years and six years of age for sessional services.</p> <p>A further adult floated between the playrooms providing relief cover. Additional adults present on the day included the cook who also carried out cleaning duties and an adult student on educational placement.</p> <p>(8)(a) There were at least two adults present at all times during the unannounced inspection. A sample of attendance records and staff rosters reviewed showed that at least two adults were present in the service at all times.</p>
<p>Non-Compliance Information:</p>	<p>(2) It was observed that between 12.45 hours and 12.55 hours one adult was caring for three children aged between two and three years and seven children aged between three and six years in the First Friends playroom. A student on work placement was observed to accompany children from this room to the sanitary area during this time frame.</p>
<p>Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider</p>	<p>The registered provider advised in a written response that: <u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u> The staff breaks have been rescheduled to ensure that the appropriate adult to child ratios are kept. <u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u> The registered provider will ensure that adult to child ratios are always maintained with qualified staff going forward.</p>
<p>Summary Comment</p>	<p>The actions taken have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and have been accepted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.</p>

HEALTH WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

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

Compliance Information:

At the time of the inspection there were four preschool playrooms in operation in the service however on the day the children from the Busy Pals playroom upstairs had joined together with the children from the Bright Sparks playroom in their downstairs playroom for a music programme delivered remotely.

BASIC NEEDS:

- There was a three-week menu plan in place in the service. The main meal provided on the day for the full day care children who availed of the warm meal was a pasta dish with chicken, carrots and broccoli in a sauce. Foods were provided from home for the other snack and mealtimes in the service and were observed to include items such as filled sandwiches/rolls, pancakes, prepared fruits and yoghurts. Drinking water was available to the children at all times. Placemats with the children's photographs on were provided in the Bright Sparks playroom and used at dinner time. The children sat together in groups at dinner time and the adults sat with them and encouraged conversations in an unhurried manner.
- The older children in attendance who were toilet trained were supported by the adults to toilet at a time of their choosing. Regular nappy changes of non-toilet trained children were carried out in the nappy changing units on a nappy changing table waist high to the adults.
- Supplies of tissues were available in the playrooms and the adults prompted the children to use them to clean their noses when needed. The children were prompted/supervised by the adults to wash and dry their hands at appropriate times. Bibs were available in Early Start playroom to protect the children's clothing whilst eating.
- Rest areas with soft furnishings were provided in the playrooms for the children to relax and rest on during the day if they wished. A separate sleep room was provided on the ground floor with seven standard cots. Stackable beds were provided for children aged over two years of age. One child from the Early Start playroom was observed to sleep in the sleep room following dinner on the day of the inspection.
- The weather was very inclement with large spells of rain on the day of the inspection and none of the children were observed to play outdoors during the limited inspection period. The children from the Bright Sparks/Busy Pals and First Friends playrooms all enjoyed taking part in a music programme with a remote presenter visible on a large projector. The programme involved singing, dancing and action songs that both the children and adults joined in with.

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SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The adults were observed to interact warmly with the children in their care calling the children by name and using positive language with appropriate levels of praise and encouragement. The adults were observed to be responsive to the children's needs responding to their cues in a timely manner in relation to sleep, feeding and toileting/nappy changing.
- There was a large family tree photographic display on the walls in the Busy Pals playroom with photographs of the children's families strengthening links between home and the service.
- Communication diaries recording written details of the younger children's day in the Early Start playroom including nappy changing, feeding and sleeping and toileting for the duration of their time in the service were provided for the children's parents daily.
- Short verbal handovers of communication between the adults and parents were observed at collection time whilst respecting social distance requirements.
- The designated person in charge advised that electronic messaging systems were used to give information to the parents regarding their children's activities with photographs provided.
- The adults advised the inspectors that team meetings were held in the service.
- The service was preparing for Christmas with numerous decorations in place across the service. The designated person in charge advised the inspectors that a children's Christmas concert was to be recorded and made available to their families to view to celebrate the occasion.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

Indoor Environment

- There were four playrooms in the service of which three playrooms were in use on the day as the children attending the Bright Sparks and Busy Pals playroom were grouped together for the day to take part in a music programme that was being undertaken on a weekly basis at the time of the inspection. A playpod system was in place to limit contact between children. The Early Start playroom and First Friends playroom were treated as separate pods and the children attending both the Bright Sparks and Busy Pals Montessori playrooms were designated as one pod.
- Appropriately sized tables and chairs were provided to facilitate snack time, arts/crafts and other table-top activities whilst allowing adults to work with children at their level. Artwork reflecting Christmas and Winter themes created by the children was displayed throughout the service for example snowmen creations in the Bright Sparks playroom.
- On the day of the inspection the Bright Sparks Montessori playroom was set up facilitate the remote delivery of a music programme in the service. A large projector screen and computer system was set up to one side of the room and the chairs and tables arranged to allow a large space in front of it in the centre of

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the room. The playroom was used initially by the children from the First Friends playroom followed by a combined group of the children from both the Busy Pals and Bright Sparks playrooms. The chairs and musical instruments including maracas, tambourines, triangles and xylophones were cleaned down by the adults in between uses.

- Both the Bright Sparks and Busy Pals playrooms had similar clearly defined Montessori areas of learning including mathematics, language, sensorial, geography, science and nature and culture. The areas were well resourced with varieties of activities for children to choose from. Toys and equipment were displayed at low levels on open shelving and were clearly visible and accessible to the children. Art and craft areas had plentiful supplies of equipment to facilitate the numbers of children attending. Soft seating was provided in both playrooms for the children to rest and relax on if they wished during the day. Age-appropriate reading books were available to the children in the playrooms.
- Both the Early Start and First Friends playrooms had clearly defined and well-resourced areas of interest. Toys and equipment were displayed at low levels on open shelving. Low level tables and chairs were provided for tabletop activities and mealtimes. Soft seating was provided in both playrooms for the children to rest and relax on if they wished during the day. Play equipment in the Early Start playroom included a playhouse, blocks of various shapes and sizes, interconnecting toys, stackable toys, activity sets, a ride on tricycle, a sit on car, dolls and cots, a kitchen area, transport toys and dress up toys. Play resources in the First Friends playroom included blocks of various sizes, puzzles and jigsaws, transport toys, construction toys, a home area, a baby area and a dress up area.

Outdoor Environment

- There was large enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the premises. The area had grass ground cover and was divided into two sections by wooden fencing. One of the sections had a large crawling tunnel, a winding wooden maze and a planted area. The second section had a large climbing system with swings and a slide. A large sit in boat was also available to the children in this space. A picnic bench was provided for seating in the area.
- The service also used a large concrete space in between the building and the enclosed outdoor space that was directly accessible from the rear door of the service.
- The weather was very inclement on the day of the inspection with heavy rain and the outdoor areas were not used during the inspection.

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 at the rear of the building was secured on the inspectors' arrival to the building with a bell system in place to gain admittance preventing people from entering without authorisation and children from leaving the service unnoticed. The entrance door at the front of the building was secured throughout the period of inspection.
- The outdoor play areas were secured to prevent unauthorised entry or exit.
- The service has reviewed the entrance system to the service and signage was displayed advising of physical distancing requirements. The parents/guardians were met at the entrance door at drop off and collection times.
- Complete and accurate daily records of attendance were observed to be kept for all of children attending the service and records of the daily attendance of staff were maintained. The attendance of the inspectors was recorded in the service's attendance book on arrival and departure at the service.
- Blind cords were secured with appropriate securing attachments.
- Cleaning equipment/materials and alcohol-based sanitiser was stored out of reach of the children in the service.

INFECTION CONTROL:

- The service had reviewed their infection control policy to include infection control measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A playpod system was in place with the Busy Pals and Bright Sparks playrooms treated as one pod and the First Friends and Early Start playrooms treated as separate playpods.
- The adults demonstrated an awareness of the requirements in relation to the restriction of movement and self-isolation. A system was in place for staff to advise the designated person in charge if they felt unwell prior to the commencement of their shift. The adults confirmed to the inspector that they were aware of the updated infection control policy and procedures and the requirement to self-isolate where appropriate.
- The office had been designated as the facility to be used to accommodate a child or staff member who becomes ill and shows symptoms of COVID-19. Supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) including disposable gloves, aprons, and facemasks were provided for use by the adults as appropriate. The adults wore face coverings appropriately during the inspection. Windows were observed to be opened as needed to ventilate the Bright Sparks playroom and at 12:15hours the playroom air temperature was recorded at 18.7°C within the required range of 18-22°C for a playroom. Children's temperatures were monitored during the day and parents notified if they displayed any potential symptoms of COVID-19.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate hand washing facilities were available in the downstairs sanitary units with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available. Hand sanitiser dispensers were available in the service dispensing hand sanitiser. Hand hygiene was observed to be practiced frequently by the adults and the children for example after messy play, toileting and before dinner time. • The service was observed to be clean with high contact areas regularly cleaned by the adults. Records of the cleaning/disinfecting in the service were kept by the adults. • Children’s soothers were stored in individual boxes. • The cots in the sleep room were positioned at least 50cm apart when the children under two years were sleeping in them. Individual bedding was provided for the children. • The perishable food provided from home for the children’s snacks were stored in the service’s refrigerator under 5°C. <p>ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no medication administered to a child during the inspection. The adults demonstrated an awareness of the safety practices required in relation to the storage and administration of medication. <p>SAFE SLEEP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A separate sleep room was located on the ground floor of the service. There were seven standard cots with safety mattresses provided for the children. <p>FIRE SAFETY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The emergency exits were observed to be free from obstruction on the day.
<p>Non-Compliance Information:</p>	<p>GENERAL SAFETY:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was an empty black refuse bag on the floor in the Busy Pals playroom which posed a potential suffocation risk to a child. 2. The toy boat in the outdoor area had areas of wood that was rotted and posed potential splinter risks and difficulties for cleaning. 3. There was an iron stored on a shelf in the Busy Pals sanitary unit with a training flex with the potential to cause an injury to a child. 4. The hinges for the door on the playhouse in the Early Start playroom had jagged edges of plastic exposed thus posing a potential risk of injury to a child. 5. Two cots located in the sleep room were positioned directly against the radiator which may pose a risk of injury to a child. 6. There was a foothold observed in one cot between the base of cot and the mattress thus posing a potential risk of injury to a child. <p>INFECTION CONTROL:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The vent in the Busy Pals sanitary unit was dusty and required cleaning.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. There was a cloth hand towel provided in the children’s sanitary area on the first floor of the building. 9. There was no paper towel provided in the adult sanitary unit. 10. The foot pedals were missing from the foot pedal operated bins in the children’s sanitary unit and Bright Sparks playroom and children were seen to lift the lids with their hands to dispose of paper following handwashing posing a risk of cross infection. 11. Two mattress covers in the sleep room were stained thus posing the risk of cross infection.
<p>Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider</p>	<p>The registered provider advised in a written response that:</p> <p><u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u></p> <p>GENERAL SAFETY:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The empty black refuse bag on the floor in the Busy Pals has been removed. 2. The toy boat is being repaired. 3. The iron has been removed from the shelf in the Busy Pals sanitary unit. 4. The door has been made secure. 5. The cots have now been positioned safely. 6. The correct sized mattress is now in place in the cot and there is longer a foothold. <p>INFECTION CONTROL:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The vent in Busy Pals sanitary unit has been cleaned out. 8. The cloth towel provided in the children’s sanitary area was removed. 9. Paper towels were replaced in the adult toilet. 10. New foot pedal bins have been purchased. 11. The mattress covers have been washed and replaced. <p>A system is in place for the washing/cleaning of mattress covers and sheets in the service. Each child is assigned their own cot.</p> <p><u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u></p> <p>GENERAL SAFETY:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In future no potential hazards will be left around on floor area where children may be playing. 2. The boats will be checked regularly for rotting. 3. No electrical equipment will be stored in the Busy Pals Montessori area. 4. All materials will be checked for sharp edging. 5. All cots will be double checked to ensure that they have not been moved near radiator every morning and afternoon. 6. All cots will be double checked for correct mattress sizes. <p>INFECTION CONTROL:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The vent will be checked and put on the room cleaning schedule for monthly checks. 8. The staff have been advised to use the paper towel instead of cloth towels in the sanitary areas.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. The staff are to inform the registered provider or management if the paper towel roll has been used up. 10. The bins will be replaced immediately if broken. 11. Staff have been instructed to wash the mattress covers every week along with bedding. <p><u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u> The following evidence was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate by the registered provider:</p> <p>GENERAL SAFETY:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Evidence of repairs to the toy boat in the outdoor area. 4. Evidence of the repairs to the door of the dolls house was submitted. 5. Evidence of the repositioning of the cots. <p>INFECTION CONTROL:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Photographic evidence of the cleaning of the vent. 10. Evidence of the purchase of foot pedal bins.
<p>Summary Comment:</p>	<p>The actions taken together with the evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the non-compliances found under the regulation.</p>