

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015OY015

Name of Service: Re Scoil Iosagain

Address of Service: St. Josephs Day Care Centre, Daingean Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Eircode: R35 HN56

Name of Registered Provider: Sr. Xavier O'Brien

Service type: Sessional

Date of Inspection: 08/04/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.

Inspection undertaken by: T. Duignan

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

Re Scoil Iosagain is operated by a not for profit, voluntary community group, Tullamore Travellers Pre School-Ltd. It is located in a purpose-built premises with its own grounds, next to the convent secondary school in the town of Tullamore, Co. Offaly and has been operational since 1985. The service consists of an entrance hall, a lobby and cloakroom, one play room with sanitary accommodation including a nappy changing facility, a kitchen, and store room. A secure outdoor play area is provided to the back of the building which can be accessed from the playroom. This sessional service provides an Early Childhood Care and Education programme to children aged from 2 to 6 years. The service is registered to operate from 09:30am-12:30pm, Monday to Friday. The service can accommodate twenty-two children and is operated by the person in charge.

Staffing

The registered provider was not the designated person in charge and was not in the service on the day of inspection. The service was operated by the designated person in charge who facilitated the inspection. Three staff were present on the day of the inspection and were all working directly with the children.

The staff hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 and safety. 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.

Additional Information

1. A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child was issued in respect of no staff member in the service qualified to administer first aid for children.
2. A written response by email was received by the Early Years Inspector on 8 April 2025 from the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider in relation to the immediate action notice. The response was accepted by the Early Years Inspectorate.

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,

(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

The files of three employees were reviewed.

(2)

(a)(b) Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of three adults employed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for three adults working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff members employed.

(d) Not applicable, as no adult had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months whose records were reviewed.

(4) Three adults employed and working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.
- (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) There were fifteen children attending the service being supervised directly by three adults.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

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-
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The play room was bright and spacious and was presented to enable children to engage in child led play based on their interests. The play room was well stocked and offered age-appropriate toys and equipment. Areas of interest included home corner, construction area, mark making table, small world area, jigsaws and peg boards, sensorial materials including playdough and sand, puzzles and fine motor materials. All toys and materials were placed on low level shelving and were accessible to the children. A large selection of dressing up outfits was provided for imaginary play as well as family play with new born baby dolls, cots, prams, and buggies. A home corner offered kitchens and cooking toys and blocks, bricks, peg boards and arts and crafts were provided for table top activities. The outdoor area adjacent to and accessible from the playroom included a fixed multi activity climbing frame, a fixed interactive play frame, a gardening and potting area with raised beds for planting, a covered sand tray and a

water wall. The ground surface was covered with impact absorbent material to minimise any injury to a child if they fell. Toys and equipment available included push toys, ride on equipment, balance bikes, trikes, scooters, slide and climbing frame and chalk for surface drawing. The children used the front of the building area on the day of the inspection which included a spacious grassed area. They were observed to enjoy running, playing school ground games, football, chalking their shapes and catching bubbles.

(b) A cosy rest area was provided for children's use in the playroom.

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 entrance door to the service was secured and managed by staff members to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. There was documentary evidence available that daily indoor and outdoor risk assessments were completed daily and reviewed by the person in charge to promptly identify and manage any potential risks in the care rooms. The service had a system in place to manage maintenance issues.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members were familiar with the importance of handwashing practice as a means to control the spread of infection in the service. They supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Nappy changing practices were consistent with the nappy change procedure for the service. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal and containment of used tissues. The soiled nappies were removed to the outdoor bin following nappy changes being completed. Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. The staff members were familiar with the required practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored.

Safe Sleep:

A comfortable rest area was available for the children in the playroom if they wished to take a break from activities and rest

Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service. The fire exits were not obstructed.

Outing:

The service does not conduct outings.

Non-Compliance Information

Fire Safety:

1. The firefighting equipment was not serviced yearly as the maintenance certificate available was dated September 2021. The absence of yearly servicing created a potential risk that the firefighting equipment may not work effectively in the event of a fire in the service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Fire Safety:

1. The firefighting equipment has been serviced. The firefighting equipment service will take place every year, as recommended by the servicing company

Supporting documentation submitted

Fire Safety:

1. Fire fight equipment service record.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.
- (2) Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) no person other than-
 - (i) pre-school child attending the service,
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,
 - (iii) an employee, or
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

- (1) The person in charge ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in each care room.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a),(b) The person in charge ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained. The inspectors' visit to the service was documented in the visitor's book on arrival.
- (4) The person in charge confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

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

- (2)
- (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the service.
 - (b) Two suitably equipped first aid boxes for children were available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

Non-Compliance

- (1) There was no person trained in in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, immediately available to the children attending the service.
- A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child was issued in respect of no staff member in the service qualified to administer first aid for children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) A First Aid Response (FAR) for children course has been undertaken by the preschool room leader and other staff will complete the paediatric first aid courses.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) Copy of email relating to FAR First Aid course.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 25

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 firefighting 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 written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 19 March 2025.
 - (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment was serviced in September 2021 and the smoke alarm was last serviced on 19 September 2024.
- (4) Notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 31 August 2025. The insurance provided cover for 22 children.