

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015OY062
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Naíonra Nóiníní Beaga
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Unit 1, Syngefield Business Park, Birr, Co. Offaly
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<b>Eircode:</b>	R42 X058
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Eimear Ni Ógáin
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	04/12/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	27	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co Offaly.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	K. Murphy
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

The age range of children that the service is registered to accommodate is 2 to 6 years of age. The service is open Monday to Friday and is operated by an independent provider.

The Early Years' Service is located within a single storey purposely adapted commercial facility. Two pre-school rooms, a kitchenette and an office are provided. An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the service. The service is situated in the town of Birr, County Offaly.

### Staffing

There were four adults present on 4 December 2024. The registered provider was present and working directly with children.

### 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 co-operation of the registered provider, 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.

(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)

A designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

The registered provider and the designated person in charge were present for the duration of the inspection.

Five staff files including the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from past employers or from a source other than a past employer in respect of the four staff files reviewed. Two written references from a source other than a past employer were available in respect of the registered provider.

- (c)  
A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the staff files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)  
Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4)  
Staff members working directly with children held qualifications at levels 5 to 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed to be 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.*
- (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)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.
- (3)  
There were twenty-seven children attending the service supervised directly by four adults.

## 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;*
- (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.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) and (k).

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 17 – Information for parents

*A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).*

#### Compliance Information

A parent information handbook detailing information in respect of 16 (1)(a) to (g) is given to parents of children at the start of the new pre-school term.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

*A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider presented an electronic copy of the of Part V11A (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No.40 of 2013) of the Act and Regulations for review.

### 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

(1)(a)

The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development. Children were encouraged to be independent in caring for their belongings and putting on their coats. Children were supervised to use the toilet independently and regular hand washing was observed. All children were observed to enjoy free play, choosing their own activity to participate in and playing in the outdoor play areas supervised by staff. A key person system is in operation in the service which helped to promote the emotional security for children. There was a calm and happy atmosphere in the service. Children were content with their carers and staff were familiar with each child and their personality. Adults were observed to be positive towards children evidenced by individual names used, eye contact and praise for children on completion of activities. Good teamwork between the staff members was observed during the inspection.

During snacks and mealtimes, the staff sat with small groups of children, providing support and offering assistance as required. Children were dressed appropriately in coats and hats for outdoors and enjoyed the play experiences in the outdoor play area.

The service worked in partnership with parents and used a social media platform to provide daily and weekly updates to parents. A newsletter is circulated to families at the end of each month. Artwork and observations are shared with parents. The children's learning journals depicted children's developmental progress and activities during the year.

A range of developmentally appropriate experiences were available for all children. Areas of interest were noted in the room and included a home area, construction area, arts and crafts, dress up, sensory play and small world items.

### 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.*

*(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable and adequate play and work equipment were provided indoors and outdoors.

(b)

Soft furnishings provided appropriate rest facilities in the pre-school rooms for any child who wished to avail of rest and relaxation.

(4)

A small garden area was located to the rear of the service and available to the children. The perimeter was secured by a high-level concrete wall and wire fence. The outdoor area was equipped with a variety of swings, slides, rockers, tables and benches, a covered sand pit, a seesaw, a stationary wooden train for imaginative play. Wall mounted chalk boards, a music wall, a water wall and a variety of bikes and trikes were available for children's use.

## 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 doors to each pre-school room were secure to ensure the safety of the children within. The Inspector signed the visitors book in the reception area of the service.

Daily checklists were available and reviewed in respect of the pre-school rooms and the sanitary accommodation. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

##### Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. Cleaning schedules were available. Warm water, hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the pre-school room and the sanitary accommodation.

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the pre-school rooms and in the associated sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste.

##### Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature. Medication was stored correctly in the service.

##### Fire Safety:

Fire exit routes were unobstructed in the service. A fire assembly point was noted to the front of the service.

## 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)  
Two adults were qualified in first aid response (FAR). The roster indicated that FAR cover was provided during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)  
A first aid box was available in a prominent location in the service.

(b)  
A first aid box was readily available to children in the pre-school 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 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)

There was a record of fire drills carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 12 November 2024.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were serviced on the 21 October 2024 and 10 September 2024 respectively.

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were noted in conspicuous locations in the premises.

## 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 for the number of children attending the service and the expiry date noted was 31 August 2025.