

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN052
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Name of Service:	Tir na nOg Creche
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Address of Service:	Cluain Fraoigh, Lanesboro Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon
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Eircode:	F42 XK16
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mairead Ryan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	25/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM	20
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy
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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Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

This privately owned early years' service is in a housing development, on the outskirts of the town of Roscommon. This service offers a full day care and part time care provision from 8.00hrs to 17.30hrs. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme and sessional care programme are also offered. The service is registered for pre-school children aged 2 years and 8 months to 6 years of age. This purpose-built facility has three large pre-school rooms. On the day of inspection, two playrooms were operating, namely, the Junior Pre-school room and the Senior Pre-school room. The premise has its own kitchen, where children's main meals are prepared, cooked, and stored on site. There is an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises for children's play, exploration, and fresh air. A child centred play-based pre-school curriculum focusing on emerging interests is provided.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge and there is a named person able to deputise. Eight staff work in the pre-school service. Seven staff work directly with the children and hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 or over, in Early Childhood Care and Education. The staff have documentary evidence of ongoing training and education. Additionally, there is a designated chef who prepares, cooks, and serves the daily main meal.

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

This inspection was unannounced and focused on Regulations 9,11,19,22,23,25,26 and 28. 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, 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*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The registered provider was the person in charge when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.

Staff rosters indicated that either the registered provider or the deputy person in charge were available, on the premises, at all times when the pre-school children were present.

(2) One new staff member has commenced in the service since the previous inspection on 16th of April 2025.

(a)&(b) Two of the two written validated references, on file for the staff member were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the nine staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Documentary evidence indicated that one of the nine staff, who had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than six consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years, had the required police vetting.

(4) Seven staff held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 or over, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the staff.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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,

(1) At all times during the period of the inspection, the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(2) Documentary evidence in the form of staff rosters indicated that adult child ratios were adhered to.

On the morning of the inspection, there were 28 pre-school children, aged 2 years 8months to 5 years, being cared for by six staff members. Additionally, the registered provider was supernumerary, assisted with childcare relief and the administration elements of the inspection.

In the afternoon of the inspection, there were 20 pre-school children, aged between 2 years 8 months to 5 years. There were four staff and the registered provider, working directly with the children.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were two staff on the premises at all times while the pre-school was operating.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

- The staff encouraged and supported the children to be as independent, as possible.
- The tables and chairs were suitable for the children's ages and stages of development.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets and did not have to wait to use the toilet.
- The staff used the correct language surrounding toileting.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax in a designated cosy area in each for the playrooms. Additionally, there were stackable beds available for children's sleep provision.
- The children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment. Play activities and experiences were developmentally appropriate and suitably challenging. Children had plenty of opportunities to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.
- The children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment. Play activities and experiences were developmentally appropriate and suitably challenging. Children had plenty of opportunities to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.
- In the Junior Pre-school room, the children were observed playing with playdough, colouring, and doing puzzles and completing sorting activities. The children chatted to the inspector about their day.
- In the Senior Pre-school room, the children were observed at free play, making puzzles, drawing and colouring, playing with a doctors set, playing house / kitchen, using transport vehicles on tracks, and at dress up / pretend play. The children were observed stacking, constructing, at magnetic play, shape sorting, connecting, and playing with animals and figurines.
- It was observed that outdoor play is also part of the daily routine with the children doing actions songs and rhymes and at play in the outdoor area on the day of the inspection.
- The outdoor area was equipped with a large activity centre with swings, a climbing wall, a slide and a playhouse. There was a wooden boat, a selection of rockers, ride on tractors and bicycles

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

and a grassed area to play football and sand play. A planting area was also available to enable planting opportunities.

The staff supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships by

- having a key person system for each child,
- showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust,
- listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures, and body language, using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact,
- providing opportunities for individual and small group activities and play, leading to increased social awareness, co-operation, collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of belonging,
- providing opportunities for children to learn from each other and with each other, to work together, join in and contribute to projects and tasks, working with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life, and any other concerns.
- On speaking with the staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the pre-school including the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times and via text messages, by phone calls, and by email.
- The staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them, and talking to the children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, and commentating, extending a child's activities and initiating games and activities. The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences. The inspector noted the staff acknowledged a child's achievements 'that is great' 'well done' and used questions such as 'what should we do next?', 'is there any other way to do this?', to allow children to critically think and explore.
- On the day of the inspection, the staff showed kindness. They were thoughtful, supportive, and reassuring whilst caring for the children. They cared for children by being supportive while the children engaged in free play, role play, and creative play. A climate was fostered where the children knew their boundaries. The staff supported children to enter social groups, and to learn to help and positively engage with other children. They encouraged and praised children for specific, positive, and appropriate behaviours. Children were given positive alternatives,

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

rather than just being told 'no'. Children were supported in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict. The children could identify, name, and explore their feelings both positive and negative.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- There was a healthy eating policy. There was evidence that the foods consumed were adequate, nutritious, and varied.
- The registered provider advised that healthy eating was promoted within the service by ongoing staff training, visual aids, and adherence to best practice guidelines.
- Before 9.00hrs, the children had the opportunity for breakfast consisting of cereal, toast and water or milk to drink.
- At 10.45hrs, the children had their snacks provided by parents and guardians, including fruit pieces, yogurts, crackers, sandwiches, cheese and meat
- At 12.55hrs, the main meal of broccoli, mashed potatoes, gravy, and fish fingers were offered.
- It was advised by the registered provider that at 15:50hrs, the evening snack would consist of a choice of ham and cheese wraps and brown bread, yoghurts and a selection of fruits and water to drink.
- At the main meal and evening snack the children had the opportunity for seconds and or an alternative.
- Cutlery, plates, and crockery were offered for children's meal / snack times.
- Clean and safe drinking water was at a low-level and accessible to children in each playroom.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 into the pre-school were secure to prevent unauthorised access by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- The external outdoor play area was secured thus preventing potential unauthorised persons access and or entry into the premises. The metal latches on the two side gates had a method of security preventing a child accessing the housing development.
- There were window restrictors on the windows in the Junior Pre-school room, Senior Pre-school room and Junior nappy changing area, as a safety precaution. Additionally, four windows in the Junior Pre-school room that were secured by a restrictive locking system had a key readily available in the event of a fire or an emergency.
- There was shatter proof ceiling lighting.
- The children were supervised by sight and sound whilst playing within their respective playrooms.
- Toys and play equipment were non-toxic and in good condition.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- All cleaning products were stored on high shelves inaccessible to a child.
- There was a designated staff room, to ensure staff consumed their hot drinks away from the children.

Infection Control:

- Regular hand washing by the staff and children was observed. Staff prompted the children to wash their hands before eating, following toileting, and after messy play activities. and after outdoor play.
- Adequate liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available in the sanitary units.
- There were suitable cleaning products available in the service.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- On the day of inspection, there was a water temperature reading of 28.8°C, for effective hand washing.
- The children's spare clothes were stored in readily identifiable airtight bags and placed in separate boxes to prevent the risk of cross contamination.

Administration of Medication:

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- There were no medications administered to a child, on the day of the inspection.
- The staff demonstrated knowledge of safe practices with regards to the safe storage and administration of medication, should it be required.

Fire safety

- Monthly fire drills were carried out on the premises to ensure the children were familiar with the procedure in event of an emergency.
- All exit routes from the service were free from obstruction during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for the eight staff members. However, one of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years and were not in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider submitted a written response to the office of the early years inspectorate to advise that a new garda disclosure form has been applied for one staff member and the registered provider will ensure the vetting disclosures are checked to ensure they are within the three-year time frame.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

The registered provider submitted evidence of the vetting disclosure for the staff member.

Summary Comment

The Early Years Inspector has assessed the response and evidence submitted and deems it to comply with Regulation 23.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 service provided evidence that there was a person trained in first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Three staff had evidence of first aid training.
- (2)(a) In each playroom, there was a first aid box with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending 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) A written record was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service.
- The last recorded fire drill was carried out on 9th of February 2026.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the firefighting equipment with the annual service dated 26th of November 2025 and the smoke and fire detection system with the annual service dated 4th of March 2025.
- (4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service's insurance was for a full day care service, catering for a maximum number of 38 children, with an expiry date for the 27th of March 2026 and included the following -

- public liability insurance;
- insurance against fire and theft;
- buildings insurance;
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.