

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015RN052
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Tir na nOg Creche
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Cluain Fraoigh, Lanesboro Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon
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<b>Eircode:</b>	F42 XK16
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Mairead Ryan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	16/04/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	9	PM	9
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. Kennedy
<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

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. Nine staff work in the pre-school service. Eight 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

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the areas 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 cooperation of the registered provider, deputy 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, and*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

*(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.
- (b) The deputy person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and the registered provider was on the premises from 10am 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.
- (c) Staff rosters and documentary evidence indicated that there was a clear management structure in the service, that identified the lines of authority and accountability within the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.
- (2) The nine staff files were reviewed.
- (a)&(b) Eighteen of the eighteen written validated references, on file for the nine staff 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. The service did adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (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) Eight 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 eight staff.

### 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,*

#### Compliance Information

(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 9 pre-school children, aged 3 to 5 years, being cared for by three 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 9 pre-school children, aged between 3 years to 5 years. There were three staff including 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.

### 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.
- 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 advised during the inspection that outdoor play is also part of the daily routine however, it was not availed of on the day of the inspection due to the inclement weather.
- 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 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, 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 sweetcorn mashed potatoes, gravy, and fish fingers were offered.
- It was advised by the manager that at 16.00hrs, the evening snack would consist of a choice of ham and cheese, 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.

### 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.
- 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 36.1°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:

- 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:

1. The door into the storeroom off the senior preschool room had no system of security posing a potential access safety risk.
2. Two of the radiator covers in the senior preschool room and one radiator cover in the junior preschool room were in poor condition and damaged with the potential risk of injury to a child.
3. One radiator cover in the junior preschool room was not secured to the wall and could pose a potential risk of injury to a child.
4. A section of the laminated floor covering in the senior preschool room was raised and could pose a potential tripping hazard.
5. The surface matting on one of the steps of the activity centre in the outdoor area was not secure and could pose a potential tripping hazard.
6. A wooden lath on the climbing wall of the activity centre was rotten and could pose a potential risk of injury to a child.
7. A section of the wicker storage unit in the junior preschool room was loose and broken and required repair.

#### Infection Control:

8. The play mats in the junior preschool room were worn and frayed and could prove difficult to effectively clean.
9. A wall tile was missing at one of the wash hand basins in the sanitary area off the senior preschool room and could prove difficult to effectively clean.
10. There was flaking paint on the two sections of the wooden surrounds of the boat house.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

The registered provider submitted a written response on 20<sup>th</sup> of May to advise

1. A lock has been fitted on the door into the storeroom off the senior preschool room and the registered provider will ensure that all doors that children have access to are adequately secured.
2. The two radiator covers have been replaced in senior preschool room and the registered provider will ensure that the radiator covers are maintained in good condition.

3. The radiator cover has been secured to wall in Junior Preschool Room and the registered provider will ensure the radiator cover is checked regularly to ensure it is secure.
4. The floor in senior preschool room has been sanded down and is now level and the registered provider will ensure this is checked regularly to ensure it does not pose a tripping hazard.
5. Outside rubber mats outside have been securely nailed down to prevent tripping. The matting will be checked regularly to ensure they are secure and does not pose a tripping hazard.
6. A new wooden lath has been replaced on the climbing frame. This will be checked regularly to ensure it is intact and repaired as required.
7. The wicker storage unit has been fixed and secured, and it will be checked regularly to ensure it is maintained in good condition.

### **Infection Control:**

8. The play mats have been repaired, and new mats will be ordered, and these will be checked regularly to ensure they maintained in good condition and can be effectively cleaned.
9. The wall tile has been covered up and this will be checked regularly to ensure the wall surface can be effectively cleaned.
10. The boat house has been painted. And this will be checked regularly to ensure maintained in good condition.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence was submitted to advise of

### **General Safety:**

1. The lock fitted on the storeroom door.
2. The two replaced radiator covers in the senior preschool room.
3. The secured radiator cover in the junior preschool room.
4. The repaired section of the floor in the senior preschool room.
5. The secured outdoor playmats.
6. A new wooden lath on the climbing frame.
7. The repaired wicker storage unit in the junior preschool room

### **Infection Control:**

8. The repaired play mats in the junior preschool room.
9. The repaired tile in the sanitary accomodation.
10. Two sections of the wooden boat house repainted.

## Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on next 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) 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 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.

(b) Records were available in relation to the firefighting equipment with the annual service dated 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2024 and the smoke and fire detection system with the annual service dated 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.

(4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

### 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 33 children, with an expiry date for the 27<sup>th</sup> 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.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

(a) From a visual inspection the premises were of sound and stable structure.

The service's exterior walls, roof and foundation appeared to be structurally sound, weather/water-tight, to ensure protection from weather.

The interior floor, wall and ceiling appeared to be well finished, with no evidence of mould.

Drainage and septic tanks were inaccessible to children.

(b) Exits were clearly identified and visible during service hours.

Electrical sockets were safe.

On the day of inspection, the playroom temperatures were 18.7°C to 19. °C.

The service had an oil heating system with radiators thermostatically controlled.

(c) There was natural lighting from the windows on the outer walls for each playroom.

The playrooms were well ventilated by means of the openable windows and doors.

The artificial lighting provided was shatter proof.

(d) The service had a cleaning schedule.

(e) There were three designated staff toilets with three wash hand basins.

There were two toilets and two wash hand basins adjacent to the Senior Pre-school room.

There were three toilets and three wash hand basins adjacent to the Junior Pre-school room.