

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY052
Name of Service:	Réaltóga
Address of Service:	Moyne National School, Moyne Village, Thurles, Co. Tipperary
Eircode:	E41 D6K3
Name of Registered Provider:	Marian Daly
Service type:	Sessional
Date of Inspection:	11/12/2023
No of pre-school children:	AM 7 PM -
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
Inspection undertaken by:	L McGeeney
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 application
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Description of service

This sessional service was established to provide care and education to children aged 2 – 6 years. A registered school aged care service is also provided. The early years service operates Monday – Friday, 9.15am – 12.15pm for 38 weeks of the year. Places are funded under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) for eligible children.

The service is operated from a room in the national school in the village of Moyne, near Thurles in North Tipperary. The service has exclusive use of the room which was extended and remodelled in recent years to provide a separate entrance and sanitary accommodation area for the service. The children have access to their room and a dedicated outdoor play area at the side of the school. The children also have access to the rest of the school grounds.

Staffing

The registered provider works directly with the children on a daily basis supported by a member of staff employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM).

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(2)(4), 11(1)(3)(8), 20(1)(3), 21, 22, 24(1), 25, 26(1)(4) and 28.

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

(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

(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) There had not been a change in staff since the last inspection on 1 June 2021, at which time the staff files were inspected and found to be compliant.

(4) Staff held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5 or 6 on the national qualifications framework. The registered provider was engaged in further studies towards a level 8 qualification in early childhood care and education.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) There were 2 staff supervising the 7 children aged between 2 years 11 months and 5 years old who were present in the service on the day of inspection.

(3) The adult to child ratio was maintained at greater than the minimum requirements of 1:11.

(8)(c) There were two staff working in the service. On occasions when only one member of staff was present the school principal was available to call on to provide assistance in the event of an emergency.

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 19 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.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The children had access to both indoor and outdoor environments on a daily basis. The indoor space was bright and comfortable with lots of natural light through large windows. The room was divided into two distinct spaces by the use of flooring and furniture. One half of the room had a green carpet covering the floor while the other half of the room had a linoleum surface. The carpeted area was used for floor play activities, imaginative play, small world play, construction and relaxation in the cosy corner. The other half of the room was used for messy play, art activities, sand and water play, dining and tabletop activities. The children enjoyed freedom of choice and freedom of movement around the room and between activities throughout the morning.

(b) Sleep facilities were not required as the children were aged over 2 years and attended for 3 hours each day. There was a cosy corner where the children could rest and relax during the day. This space had a sofa, with cushions and blankets and was partially covered overhead by a canopy. One of the children was observed relaxing on the sofa, with a blanket covering her legs, propped up with a pillow and looking through a book.

(3)(a) There was an area at one side of the school which was used by the service for outdoor play on most days. This space had been further developed since the last inspection in June 2021. Metal gates had been installed at

either end of the space to secure it and the tall leylandii trees had been cut down to let in more light. The tree stumps had been retained and were shaped into wooden animal sculptures, a throne style seat and bases for other equipment. The staff said that this part of the site was the last to get sunlight each day which meant it was sometimes too cold to use. On days when that was an issue the children had access to outdoor play in the school yard and mud kitchen on the opposite side of the site.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service was very well equipped with a wide range of furniture, toys and materials for the children to play with and explore. There were child sized tables and chairs in one half of the room for activities and dining. One of the tables was designated as the lunch table where children could sit and eat with their friends at any time during the morning. Furniture in the other half of the room included the sofa and soft furnishings in the cosy area and units and tables in the play kitchen. There were open shelving units and low-level cupboards with doors where toys and equipment were stored and easily accessible to the children. Other equipment included water and sand tables, art materials, books, geography resources, construction toys, small world toys, sensory materials, Montessori equipment and puzzles.

The children were observed using the available materials to create other resources for themselves with the help of staff, for example, the children and staff used a blanket placed over a table to make a tent where a group of boys engaged in small world play and construction.

Outdoor equipment and materials included ride-on toys, balls, push toys, gardening tools and equipment brought outside from the room.

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

The service had a healthy eating policy. Children brought a packed lunch to eat during the morning. Perishable foods were stored in a fridge in the room. Foods eaten on the day of inspection included sandwiches, fruit, fromage frais, cheese, yoghurts and crackers with drinks of water or squash. The children set their place when they were ready to eat and tidied up when they were finished, including wiping the table where they had been seated. The children brought their own drink bottle which they could access throughout the morning when they wanted a drink. Bottles were refilled with water when empty.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) Staff were responsible for recording the children's daily attendance. There were paper based records where the staff recorded the arrival and departure times of the children.

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)(a) The registered provider held current certification in first aid response (FAR) valid until November 2025.

(2)(a) There was a first aid box available on a shelf in the room where it could easily be accessed when required.

(b) The first aid box was available if required by a child attending the 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 written record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service.

(b) There was a written record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. Firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were serviced on an annual basis, most recently in September 2023.

(4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed on the wall in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had current insurance for up to 22 early years children or 20 school aged children in attendance at any one time.