

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD059		
Name of Service:	Naíonra Scoil Gharbháin		
Address of Service:	Abbeyside, Dungarvan, Waterford		
Eircode:	X35 NP84		
Name of Registered Provider:	Silvia Ui Sheanloaich		
Service type:	Part Time		
Date of Inspection:	20/04/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	49	PM 12
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Waterford Community Services Cork Road Waterford		
Inspection undertaken by:	M.Ryan.		
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

Naíonra Scoil Gharbháin operates from a gaelscoil in Abbeyside, Dungarvan, Co Waterford. The service opened in 1982 and is managed by the board of management of the Gael Scoil Gharbháin. The service is located on the grounds of the school with two purpose-built rooms and one portacabin. The naíonra presently offers a sessional Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) from 08:45hrs to 12:00hrs, Monday to Friday, for children aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years of age. Adjacent to the early years building, an outdoor playground is provided solely for the use of the early years service.

Staffing

The registered provider is the principal of the Gael Scoil. The service employs nine childcare staff. All staff hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent at level 5 or over on the national framework of childcare 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/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,10,11,17, 19.

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, 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) The manager was the designated person in charge. The service also had a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(a) (b) At all times during the inspection the manager was on the premises.

(b) The management committee of Scoil Gharbháin Gaelscoil were the registered providers of the naíonra. This structure and lines of authority and accountability were clearly outlined in the services policies and procedures and further explained in the parents' handbook.

(2)

On review of the staff files, it was evident that two new staff members were employed to work with the children since the last inspection on 21 October 2020.

The following was observed on the file for each of the new staff members.

There were two written validated references from past employers.

(a) There were two written validated references from reputable sources in the case where it was not possible to obtain references from past employers.

(b) There was evidence of a completed Garda vetting disclosure certificate from An Garda Síochána for both new staff members.

(c) Not applicable as the new staff members had not resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

There was evidence that all staff employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5, and 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. There was evidence of continuous professional development and qualification certificates on file.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The service had all the policies, procedures and statements required under Schedule 5 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. The policies and procedures were systematically organised into folders and were clear, relevant, and specific to Naíonra Scoil Gharbháin. All the policies and procedures had been updated in December 2022, and these policies were available in a bilingual format of the Irish and English language.

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)
In the morning session of the inspection there were 49 children, 2 years 8 months to 5 years of age being cared for by 7 staff. In the afternoon session of the inspection there were 12 children, 2 years 8 months to 5 years of age being cared for by 2 staff.

(3)
The staff: child ratios exceeded the requirement for the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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

All information required under Regulation 16(1), subparagraphs (a) to (g) for parents or guardians of children proposing to attend the service was available in the bi-lingual (Irish and English) parent handbook and on the main entrance notice board and included photographs and staff details. The manager informed the inspector, that all parents or guardians were provided with this information on their child’s enrolment. Furthermore, parents signed a parental agreement at the beginning of the year to confirm that they agreed to the procedures of the service.

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a pre-school child shall not be-

(a) permitted access to the internet,

(b) photographed, or

(c) recorded

while attending the pre-school service other than in accordance with the terms of the consent of a parent or guardian given in the form specified in the service's policy on the use of the internet and photographic and recording devices.

Compliance Information

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN

The atmosphere in the service was busy, pleasant, and friendly. The children were cared for by the same staff each day and the interactions between the children and staff were relaxed, familiar and caring. During lunch time the staff supervised the children and conversed in the Irish language about the food the children were eating. Staff were observed recalling happenings in the Naíonra to encourage the children to use the Irish language, while the children responded in English it was evident that they understood.

The staff met informally with parents and guardians daily at collection times and verbal feedback was observed being given on the child's day at the early years service. The manager reported that each childcare room had its own messaging service for daily communication with parents and guardians. A monthly plan was shared with parents through this means of communication.

The parent's handbook was issued to parents at an open evening held for the enrolment of new children each year. This handbook was observed to be well laid out, concise and practical.

The manager reported that parental involvement was actively encouraged and welcomed in the service. Recent examples were where parents from different cultural backgrounds talked to the children about their country of origin.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

The manager explained that the Naíonra Scoil Gharbháin early years programme was delivered through the immersion of the Irish language and was play based with an emphasis on creativity through the open-ended use of arts and craft opportunities. For this purpose, the care rooms were observed to always have a variety and abundant selection of quality arts and craft materials all easily accessible and available to the children.

The importance of nurturing children's holistic development was documented as the ethos for the service in the service's statement and purpose. This was observed with a simple structured activity used to help children identify their emotions with the use of emotion stones /cards/and templates. These materials had faces with easily identifiable emotions such as happy/sad/angry/cross. Staff were observed conversing with the children in small groups using the Irish words for the emotions and encouraging children to give examples of situations in which they experienced these emotions. On the day, children were observed at craft work making rainbow plates while the staff member used the opportunity for colour identification through the medium of Irish.

Each child had a learning journal in which photographs and some examples of the child's work was compiled and was made available to parents if they so choose throughout the year. Key observations were recorded on each child's wellbeing, development, and integration with the Irish language, at the end of each term.

A new addition available to the naionra since the last inspection was the use of a large sensory room in the gealscoil building. The manager reported that the naionra were delighted to have access to the room for use with small groups of children.

The outdoor play area was adjacent to the main early years building and was for the sole use of the naionra. This play area was observed to have ample supplies of activities and opportunities for the children and the play area was in constant use throughout the duration of the inspection. Children were observed using the bicycles, scooters, small slides, large outdoor logo, ball games and the large sand pit.