

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2021CE002			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Croí na nÓg Preschool			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Creegh South, Cree, Co. Clare			
<b>Eircode:</b>	V15YD63			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Natasha Murray			
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional			
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20/06/2023			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	13	PM	2
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. McCarthy			
<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).

## Conditions if applicable

Not applicable

## Description of service

Croí na nÓg Preschool is a privately owned service located in Creagh village, in west Clare. The service operates Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 13:00 catering for children ranging in age from two to five years. A school aged childcare service is facilitated from 14:00 to 17:00. The programme of care and learning is facilitated in one room within the national school. An enclosed outdoor play area is located to the rear of the premises. The perimeter is safely secured with walls, fencing and gates.

## Staffing

On the 20th of June 2023 two members of staff worked directly with the children. Both staff members have appropriate qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education. The registered provider provided an administrative role during the inspection.

## 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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. 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*

*(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 designated person in charge and a named staff member is available to deputise as required. The registered provider arrived subsequent to the inspector's arrival and remained for the duration of the inspection.

(b)

Both the designated person in charge and the person who is assigned as deputy were available throughout the inspection.

Three files were available in respect of the registered provider and two members of staff. The findings included the following:

(2)(a)

Two references sourced from past employers in respect of one member of staff were available.

(c)

Garda Vetting disclosures were available and reviewed in respect of the registered provider and the two members of staff.

(d)

Not applicable, as the members of staff had not lived in another State for a period longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

The staff employed by the service held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications at Level 5 and Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

1. Two written references in respect of one staff member were not validated.
2. Two references were not available in respect of two members of staff.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(2)(a)(b)

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

Two validated references are now available for staff members. The service will ensure that the employment history records and references will be available for staff in the future.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

- References
- Employment history records

### Summary Comment

Based on the registered providers response and documentary evidence the areas of non-compliance under Regulation 9 are addressed. The practice will be reviewed on next inspection.

### 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)  
During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)  
On the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 an adequate number of adults supervised the children. Two members of staff cared for the thirteen pre-school children in the morning and two preschool children in the afternoon. The manager provided an administrative role during the inspection.

(8)(a)  
During the inspection more than two adults were available to care for the children at all times.

### 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 inspector observed the children's learning, development and well-being to be supported by the members of staff. The staff cared for the children in a kind and caring manner and the children's cues for assistance were responded to in a prompt manner. The staff supported the children to be independent while caring for their personal belongings, using the toilet, participation in tasks and tidy up time.

On arrival to the service the children were observed to engage in tabletop activities that included use of construction play materials. The children transitioned to circle time which involved general discussion, singing, rhymes, individual and group discussions, and preparation for the graduation. The children and adults sat together during mealtime and chatted amicably with their peers. After mealtime the children engaged in a group painting task which involved individual creations for their parents. The children enjoyed their time in the outdoor area and were observed to engage in chasing, ball and cycling games, sensory, physical and constructive play. To conclude the sessional programme the children and adults engaged in relaxation breathing exercises in the care room.

The indoor and outdoor environment was appropriately resourced for the needs of the children. The indoor area included areas of interest such as a rest and reading area, a home corner, a doctor's surgery, a large dolls house, a dress up section with a large range of costumes. Shelving units with play materials and accessories were accessible to the children. The children's artwork and learning materials were displayed on the classroom walls. Individual learning journals were available for each child attending which demonstrated areas of learning over the two preschool years. The outdoor area is accessed daily by the children. The play area is located to the rear of the building and enclosed by concrete walls, fencing and a gate. The children have access to a large synthetic surfaced enclosed court and a play area with a covered section and wooden benches. Areas of interest included a mud kitchen, a construction area, water play, slides, sea saw, large tyres, ride on toys and balls.

## 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 to the service and surrounding perimeter was secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering or unsupervised children exiting the building.
- The children's arrival and departure times were recorded in a logbook.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor play area was adequately secured with a concrete wall, a fence and gated access.

##### Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean condition. Surfaces and furniture were cleaned after use.
- Running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lined, lidded pedal bins were available in the care room, the toilet facility and the nappy changing area.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals during the programme of care.
- Child friendly illustrations demonstrating good handwashing practices were displayed in the sanitary facility.

##### Administration of Medication:

- The manager stated that medication is not routinely administered, and that medication had not been administered this school term.

##### Fire Safety:

- The fire exits and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The service conducts monthly fire drills in preparation for emergency situations.
- A child friendly poster was available to demonstrate the fire evacuation procedure and the reasons for completing fire drills at the exit door from the care room.

##### Outing:

- The manager demonstrated a good knowledge of conducting outings and a service policy was available.

## 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 registered provider had a record of up to date First Aid Responder training. The certificate was valid until November 2023. Two members of staff had a record of up to date paediatric first aid training. The certificates were valid until the 10th of August 2024.

(2)(a)  
A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in the care room.

(b)  
A first aid box was available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

## 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 fire fighting 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)

Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2023.

(b)

A record of the number, type and maintenance for the firefighting equipment and the fire alarm system were available. The most recent firefighting equipment and fire alarm system maintenance service took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 2023.

(4)

A fire action notice demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed at the entrance to the care room.

## Part VI – Safety

### Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for twenty-two pre-school children attending the service. The policy is valid until the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2024.