

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2023CC001

**Name of Service:** Tír Na Sí Farm Preschool and Daycare

**Address of Service:** Fermoy Road, Condonstown South, Watergrasshill, Co. Cork

**Eircode:** T56 EF90

**Name of Registered Provider:** Julia McCarthy

**Service type:** Full Day, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 11/08/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM	15
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**Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Estuary House,  
Henry Street,  
Limerick,  
V94 XT5F

**Inspection undertaken by:** S O'Brien

**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** N/A

### Description of service

Tír na Sí Farm preschool & daycare centre is a childcare setting based on the outskirts of Watergrasshill village, Co Cork and began operation in August 2023 with two care rooms. On the day of inspection, one care room was in operation. It is located on an open farm and the setting operates with the ethos of valuing outdoor play and time in nature. The setting is registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years. The service operates from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The service offers full day care for 46 weeks of the year and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, 38 weeks of the year.

### Staffing

The service employs eight staff members which include the registered provider. The registered provider is based in the service. On the day of inspection, six staff were present including the registered provider.

### 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 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, 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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person who was available to deputise if needed.
  - (b) The registered provider and the named deputy were on the premises at all times during the inspection.
  - (c) There was a clear management structure in place and the staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Eight staff files were reviewed including the file of the registered provider.
- (a) Seven of the references available were from a past employer and were validated.

- (b) Nine of the references available were from a reputable source and were validated.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all eight staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting had been obtained for one staff member who had lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) All eight staff working directly with the children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 6 to level 8 on the national framework or a qualification deemed equivalent by the minister.

### 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) There was an adequate number of staff caring for the children in attendance in the service on the day of inspection.
- (2) The following adult to child ratios were observed to meet the minimum requirements in Neddy's care room:
- There were 18 children aged between 2 years 6 months to 5 years being cared for by 4 staff members, in Neddy's room. The manager was also available to provide relief cover if needed.
  - In the afternoon, there were 15 children aged between 2 years 6 months to 5 years, being cared for by 4 staff members, which included the manager.

(8) On review of the staff roster, there were at least two staff members on the premises while the service was in operation.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 12 children's records were reviewed and contained the relevant information required as outlined from (a) to (i).

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The following records were reviewed on inspection:

(i) The inspector reviewed the staff roster which clearly outlined the start and finish times of each staff member.

### 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)

##### Basic needs

- The children were observed having several opportunities to explore the outdoor areas in the service. In the morning, the children were observed going for a walk in the farm. In the afternoon, the children were observed playing in the slides and swings area.
- Children were encouraged to wear sun hats while in the outdoor area during the sunny times of the day.
- Individual water bottles were available to the children during mealtimes and while in the outdoor area on the day of inspection. Children were encouraged to keep hydrated as the day of inspection was a warm day.
- Children were observed having fruit for morning snack, chicken pie, carrots and mash for dinner and rice pudding for afternoon snack.
- Children were supported with toileting and handwashing as needed. The staff encouraged independence and self-help skills.

### Supporting relationships

- The staff were observed to communicate with the children in a respectful manner and ensured they were at the child's level when communicating with them.
- The staff were attuned to the needs of the children. This was observed when a child was on the farm walk and displayed signs of tiredness and the staff member carried the child.
- The staff outlined the importance of communicating with each child's parents and guardians.
- Family pictures were on display to promote the children's sense of identity and belonging.
- Children's photos were on display in the room and used to record the activities and interests of the children. The staff encourage each child to lead their own learning.

### Programme of Activities

- The children were observed going on a farm walk where the children explored the fairy garden and engaged with nature.
- The staff used the farm animals as a learning resource. This was observed when the children began counting the number of cows and calves in the field. The children were observed recalling their knowledge of the animals.
- The children were observed playing with water and sand trays in the outdoor area which promoted sensory play for the children. The children were observed chatting to each other and using their imagination skills.
- The children were observed playing on the swings, slides and climbing frames which promoted physical movement and development.

## 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 was secured and prevented any child from exiting unsupervised or any unauthorised access.
- The outdoor area was observed to be a safe place for children to play.
- The farm walk was observed to be a safe place for the children to explore
- Internal doors to unsafe areas for children were observed to be secured.
- Toys and equipment were observed to be in good condition during the inspection.
- All flexes and cables observed during the inspection were in good condition.
- On inspection, cleaning agents were stored out of reach to children.
- Medicines were stored in their original containers, clearly labelled and out of reach to children, on inspection.

##### Infection Control:

- Children were observed washing their hands after outdoor play and toileting and before mealtimes.
- Water temperatures were recorded in the sanitary area and outdoor handbasins between 25°C and 37.8°C which allowed for effective handwashing.
- Perishable items from the children's lunches were stored in a refrigerator to prevent foods from spoiling.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed to be administered on the day of inspection. Staff were aware of the procedures to follow in the event of medication needing to be administered.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were observed to be clear and unobstructed.

## 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.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The children were checked in and out on attendance books in the care room. Staff were observed checking in and out the children during the inspection.

(3)

(a) Any visitors to the service could not enter the premises without entry being approved by the registered provider or manager.

(b) A record in writing was available of all persons entering the premises. The inspector was asked to check in and out of the service on arrival and departure.

## 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) Four of the staff who worked directly with the children held a current certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)

(a) The first aid boxes were stored out of reach to children and were easily accessible to the staff in the event of requiring them.

(b) The first aid boxes were available at all times while the service was in operation.