

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK129
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Name of Service:	Naíonraí Na Raitlin
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Address of Service:	No 6, The Forge, Raheen, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 WY6A
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Name of Registered Provider:	Elizabeth Hanrahan
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Service type:	Childminder
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Date of Inspection:	13/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	4
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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

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Description of service

This childminding service is operated from the providers own dwelling house, which is located in the residential area of Raheen, close to Limerick city.

The service caters for pre-school children from 6 months to 5 years from 08.00am to 17.00hrs pm for 49 weeks of the year. The children have access to the playroom, kitchen area/living area, hallway, bathroom and sleeping facilities. The service has a garden and paved area to the rear of the dwelling house,

Staffing

The childminder works each day in the service. The childminder has completed a QQI level 6 qualification on the National Qualifications Framework document.

There is a second adult available to assist if required.

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, 12, 19, 25, and 26; however, on inspection additional non-compliances which posed a risk were identified under Regulation 23 and 24. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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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 and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The childminder was operating outside the registration status of childminding. On the day the childminder had more than 5 preschool children in her care. There were 7 preschool children present at the time of the inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The childminder has stated in the response that:

An arrangement with parents has been completed to ensure the ratio is kept to a maximum of 5 children on the premises at any one time.

Supporting documentation submitted

The photographic evidence of correspondences from the provider and parents regarding the adult/child ratio for a childminder caring for children.

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Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement of Regulation 8 Notification of Change of Circumstances.

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 registered childminder was the person in charge.

(b) The registered childminder was on the premises when the inspector arrived at the service.

(2)(a) Two written references from past employers were available for the childminder.

(b) Written and verified references from sources other than past employers were in place for the 2 named persons who were available to assist in the event of an emergency.

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(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the registered childminder and 2 named persons who were available to assist in the event of an emergency.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) The childminder had completed QQI level 6 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

(a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,

(b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and

(c) there is a working telephone on the premises.

(2) A childminder may have more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time where all such children are siblings of each other.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) There was one child under the age of 15 months.

(c) There was a working telephone on the premises.

(2) Not applicable as there were no siblings under of age of 15 months.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a) The adult/child ratio for the childminder was not compliant with Regulation 12(a) on the day of the inspection.

There were 7 pre-school children present in the care of the childminder instead of the maximum of 5 preschool children allowed from 12mid-day to 1300 hrs. In the morning there were 4 preschool children present. One child was collected at 11am by her parent. Four preschool children were dropped at 12mid-day from their preschool service.

From 13:00 hrs to 14:00 hrs there were 6 preschool present.

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From 14:00 there were 4 preschool children present.

The children ranged in age from:

12months to 24 months = 3 children

3 years to 5 years = 5 children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The childminder has stated in the response that:

(1)(a)

An arrangement with parents has been put in place to ensure the ratio is kept to a maximum of 5 children on the premises at any one time.

Supporting documentation submitted

The photographic evidence of correspondences from the provider and parents regarding the adult/child ratio for a childminder caring for children

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 12 point (1)(a).

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;*

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(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

There were 5 preschool records available for inspection on the day however only one child record contained the required particulars from (a) to (i).

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

1. There were no records available for 3 of 8 preschool children in attendance at the service at the time of the inspection.

2. Point (b) The date on which the child first attended the service was not documented on 3 of the 5 preschool children's records.

3. Point (g) The telephone number of the child's registered practitioner was not documented on 3 of the 5 preschool records.

4. Point (h) A record of immunisation was not documented on 3 of the 5 preschool children's records.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The childminder has stated in the response that:

(1)

The children records have been updated in line with the preschool regulations and all required particulars from (a) to (i) have been completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of updated child records.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 15 Records of a preschool child point (1) 1,2,3 and 4.

This will be assessed at the next inspection.

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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 and Physical Environment:

On the day the children were observed playing indoors in their designated playroom located off the kitchen. This playroom had been developed where there was a plentiful supply of play equipment accessible to the children on low level shelving in the room.

Blocks and other play materials to support imaginative and creative play were accessible to the children.

Pencils, paper and crayons were accessible to the children on low level shelves in the playroom for mark making activities and to support fine motor skills. Reading books to support language development and other play materials were accessible to the children.

Children under 2 years of age were observed to sleep in traditional style cots and were checked at 10-minute intervals by the childminder. There was soft seating with adults' couches in the playroom and the kitchen area if the children liked to have a rest away from their play activities.

Children have access to a large outdoor play area which was safe and secure at the rear of the service. On the day the children did not get an opportunity to go outdoors to play as it was raining.

A hot nutritious meal of spaghetti bolognese was served to the children for dinner. The older children sat at the table in the kitchen and the younger children were seated in highchairs. The children were offered a choice of milk or water with their meal. The childminder sat with the children and helped as required. The children were given plenty of time to enjoy their food and finish their meal.

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

(3)(a) The childminder ensured that no person other than the following were allowed enter the service.

(i) Pre-school child attending the service.

(ii) A person dropping or collecting such a child.

(iii) An employee.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

There were 3 children attending the service that were not checked in and out of the service each day by the childminder. Only 5 of the 8 preschool children in attendance were recorded in and out of the service each day in the attendance record book.

(3)(b) A daily record in writing was not kept of persons who entered the preschool.

The visitor's logbook must contain the following details.

- The persons contact number.
- Their reason for entry.
- The name of the person who approved access.
- The check in and out times.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The childminder has stated in the response that:

(1)
A roll book for five preschool children attending daily has been created together with an excel spreadsheet for the 8 preschool children registered including children who attend on a fulltime and part time basis.

(3)
An excel spreadsheet for each person entering the childminding facility, this includes all people who are the nominated people to collect the children daily. Parents have been advised that they must manually sign in and out daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of roll book.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 24 points (1) and (3). This will be assessed at the next inspection.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

Hand operated lidded bin were in use in the nappy changing area for the disposable of paper waste and nappies instead of a pedal operated, leak proof, cleanable lidded bin. This posed a risk of infection to the children and childminder.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Infection Control: The childminder has stated in the response that:

Two lidded pedal bins for disposing of the nappies and hand towels were purchased for the utility and bathroom areas.

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Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

No

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23-point infection control.

This will be assessed at the 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 registered childminder was trained in first aid response for children and was at all times, immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2) A suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) Was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.

(b) Was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

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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

- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment in the premises was available and was serviced in January 2024.
- (4) The fire drill procedure was displayed in the playroom area.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) There were no records of fire drills available in the service. This posed a risk to the safety of the children and adults in the service.
- (b) There was no maintenance record available of the most recent servicing of the smoke alarm system for the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The childminder has stated in the response that:

- (1)
- (a) The fire drills take place on a monthly basis and are documented in the attendance record book.
- (b) Invoice dated Aug 2023 when the smoke alarm system were last serviced.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of records.

Summary Comment

The evidence was assessed and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 26 Fire Safety points (1) (a) and (b).