

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025TY001
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Naíonra Bóin Dé
-------------------------	-----------------

Address of Service:	Gaelscoil Aonach Urmhumhan, Nenagh, Co Tipperary
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	E45 AK02
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Stephanie Kennedy
-------------------------------------	-------------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	10/12/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	-
-----------------------------------	----	---	----	---

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	North Tipperary Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co Tipperary, E45A099
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	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

Description of service

This Irish language, sessional service was established in September 2025 to provide care and education to children aged between 2 and 6 years old. A registered school age care service is also provided.

The service operates Monday – Friday, 9am – 12pm 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 single storey, detached building adjacent to the main school building of Gaelscoil Aonach in the town of Nenagh in north Tipperary. The building consists of three resource rooms, which are used by the school, and a large room, which is used by the service. Other facilities include a kitchenette, sanitary accommodation areas and an enclosed outdoor play area at the back of the building for the exclusive use of the service. The children also have access to the school grounds when not being used by school children.

This is one of several services in the Nenagh area operated by the registered provider under the name ‘Ladybirds’.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service but is available to call on when required. The pre-school leader and two other staff, including staff employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), work directly with the children in the pre-school service each morning. Additional staff are employed to work in the school age care service in the afternoons and to carry out ancillary tasks such as cleaning and maintenance. If needed, additional staff can be called on from the other Ladybird’s services to provide relief or assistance.

Staff who work directly with the children hold recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5 or 6 on the National Framework of 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 announced 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(1)(2)(4), 11(1)(3), 19(1)(a), 23, 24(1)(3) and 25(1)(2).

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 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 pre-school leader was the person in charge for the duration of the pre-school service and there was a named person who could deputise in her absence.

(b) The person in charge or her deputy were present in the service for the duration of the pre-school service.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that of the three staff employed in the service, all staff members were recently employed in this new service. All three staff files and that of the registered provider were reviewed as part of the inspection process.

(a) Two written and validated references were available for each staff member working in the service.

- (b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from sources such as previous schools and colleges.
- (c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member working in the service. Garda vetting had been renewed, in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting documentation was not required as none of the staff had lived outside of the state for a period of six consecutive months or longer.
- (4) Staff employed in the pre-school service held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5 or 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) There were three staff working directly with eight children aged between 3 and 5 years old on the morning of the inspection.
- (3) The adult to child ratio was maintained at greater than the minimum requirement of 1 adult to 11 children.

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 following was observed on the day of inspection through direct observation, discussions with staff and review of records.

Basic needs:

The children were provided with meals, snacks and drinks throughout the day. Each child had their own drink bottle that they could access when they wanted a drink. In addition, staff brought out jugs of water and milk at mealtimes or when children requested a drink. For example, several children requested a drink of milk when they came back from the school play.

The children who were toilet trained could access the toilet as required. Children who were not yet toilet trained had their pull-ups or nappies changed as required.

Supporting relationships:

The children benefitted from the very positive adult to child ratios in the service. This ensured that there was a staff member available to meet each child's needs promptly. This was particularly important for the children who were still learning how to regulate their own emotions and had more frequent need of one-to-one interactions with staff for support and reassurance.

The school welcomed the presence of the service in the school and the children and staff were made to feel welcomed and included. For example, the children and staff had been invited to attend the schools nativity play which took place on the morning of the inspection.

Physical and material environment:

The activity room was spacious and well laid out in a number of defined interest areas. Each area was marked by a picture and word description in Gaeilge, as were containers and drawers containing toys and materials. The posters on the walls were also in Gaeilge reflecting the dominant language spoken in the service.

The staff spoke to the children in Gaeilge, immersing them in the language. The staff used English sparingly, such as to give clarity when they knew the children needed it.

The children's art work, birthday calendar and photos covered the walls of the room.

There were cosy areas with padded floor mats, vinyl covered cushions and beanbags where the children could rest and relax during the morning.

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 premises was kept secured at all times. There was a keypad operated, electro-magnetic locking system on the main door into the service. The entrance door to the premises and the fire escape door from the activity room had glass panels which allowed staff to see who was seeking access before opening the door to them. This prevented any unauthorised access to the premises.

The children had access to an enclosed and gated outdoor play area at the back and side of the building which prevented them gaining unsupervised access to the school grounds, which were also enclosed and gated.

The staff carried out and recorded a daily risk assessment of the premises to ensure that general safety was maintained in the service.

The service was a 'nut free zone' to ensure that children with nut allergies were not exposed to nuts while attending the service.

There was a procedure in place for the safe transfer and transport of children by car between Naíonra Bóin Dé and Ladybird's Pre-school and Childcare, Carrig Rua, Nenagh for full day care from 12pm.

Infection control:

The service had an infection control policy which included hand washing. Staff and children were observed washing their hands at appropriate times during the day such as before eating, after messy play and after using the toilet or nappy changing.

Administration of medication:

The service had a policy on the administration of medication. Signed parental consent was sought prior to any medication being given to a child while attending the service.

Fire safety:

Fire doors and escape routes were kept clear of obstruction.

Outing:

The service had a policy on the safe conduct of outings which was utilised on the day of inspection for the outing to the main school hall to see the nativity play. Signed parental consent was sought from each parent for the outing and a first aid box and charged mobile phone were taken on the outing. A roll call was taken before the children left their room. The children lined up in pairs with a member of staff at the front and back of the line and one available to follow.

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) Staff recorded the children's arrival and departure times in the daily attendance register.

(3)(a) Staff met all visitors to the service at the entrance door before allowing them entry if appropriate.

(b) A written record was maintained of any visitors to the service.

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) Two staff held current certification as First Aid Response (FAR) valid until November 2026. The third member of staff held current certification in paediatric first aid, valid until May 2026.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available in the service.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children if they required it while attending the service.