

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK147
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Name of Service:	Ríocht na Sí
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Address of Service:	Conradh na Gaeilge, 18 Sraid Thomais, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 CH29
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Name of Registered Provider:	Breandán Ó hAinídh
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/09/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	13
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Services, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan
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).

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Description of service

Ríocht Na Sí is a privately owned Naíonra located in the Conrád Na Gaeilge premises in the centre of Limerick city, where it offers a sessional and part-time pre-school services for up to 22 children at any one time. The facility operates Monday to Friday, providing a morning session from 8.30 am to 11.50 am and an afternoon session from 12.00 pm to 3.00 pm. Children enrolled in the part-time option can remain at the service after the morning session finishes, extending their stay until 1.00 pm. To help children build fluency in a second language, all daily dialogue throughout the service is conducted through the medium of Irish. The pre-school features a large, well-resourced main room, an additional separate room dedicated to free play and gross motor activities, and a small outdoor space accessible at the front of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider has appointed a designated person in charge to manage the service on a daily basis. An additional 2 staff are also employed at the facility. deputy person is available if required. All staff hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education. One staff has completed the LINC programme, a course designed to enhance inclusion of children with additional needs in Early Childhood Care and Education settings.

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

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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.

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,*

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(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 provider had appointed a designated person in charge to work and manage the service. There was a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection and staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or her deputy were present each day.

(2)(a) There were 2 written references available for the designated person in charge of the service and the relief staff member. There was 1 reference available for 2 staff employed at the preschool. All references were validated.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, references from an alternative source such as schools or colleges were provided.

(c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available for all staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(4) All staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) There was 1 validated reference available for 2 staff members employed at service. A second reference was not available.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) A second reference was placed on file for the required staff members. All references were validated.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of the required references were forwarded to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified has been adequately addressed.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The service operates a morning sessional service, an afternoon sessional service and a part-time service. There were 13 preschool children attending the morning session with 10 of these preschool children staying for part time care up to 1.00pm. There were 3 additional children attending the afternoon session. There were 3 staff working at the preschool for the full duration of the service. This met the requirements of Regulation 11.

(2) At all times the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service for the duration of both the sessional and part time services.

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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

BASIC NEEDS:

A healthy eating policy was maintained, with parents supplying the children with nutritious snacks and drinks for lunch each day. Inspection observations noted a variety of healthy snack options in the children's lunch boxes.

Those availing of the part-time service received a second snack each day after the morning session concluded. All perishable foods were safely stored in a fridge and drinking water remained accessible at all times.

Children maintained unrestricted access to bathroom facilities, which were fully stocked with hot water, liquid soap, and paper hand towels to ensure hygienic handwashing. If children became tired or needed time away from active play areas, they could move to the library reading space for quiet time.

A second preschool room was available in the basement floor of the building, offering the children a change of environment each day.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The large preschool room provided a good range of developmentally appropriate and challenging experiences for the children. The room was divided into various interest areas, facilitating opportunities for small and large group activities. Low level tables and chairs were accessible to facilitate tabletop activities and dining at mealtimes. Play equipment and materials were grouped to provide specific interest areas and appealing places for children to play and explore. Imaginative play areas with a home corner and kitchen props were accessible.

Children also had access to a second room in the basement of the premises. In this space equipment to support gross motor development was available such as trampolines, hoola hoops and tunnels.

Non-Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

The pre-school children did not have access to any outdoor facilities on the day of the inspection. All children must have the opportunity to play outside each day at the service.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The outdoor play area was reopened and is accessible to all children for a play period each day at the facility

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of the outdoor area equipped with play materials and ready to use were forwarded to the Office of the Early years' inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified has been adequately addressed.

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 front door of the facility was secure and locked, and a staff member was required to facilitate access to all entering the building.

Suitable handrails were provided on all staircases, and all stair flooring was in good condition and non-slip.

All waste was disposed of safely in foot pedal operated lidded bins.

All emergency exits and fire doors were unobstructed.

All toys, furniture and play equipment were in good condition and free from sharp edges or corners. No broken toys were noted on the premises.

Infection Control:

A high standard of operational hygiene was observed in all areas of the premises occupied by the children.

All tabletops were adequately cleaned before and after mealtimes.

Adequate handwashing facilities were provided for all adults and children.

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Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The fire escape door at the rear of the building presented a safety hazard because the switch to release its lock was located at a height accessible to a pre-school child. This positioning created a risk since the door opened directly onto a public street.
2. The gates at the bottom and the top of the outdoor stairs did not have secure locks in place. This could pose a risk of unauthorised exit from or unauthorised access to the area.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The release switch to open the fire exit door was relocated to a higher level, well out of reach of all children.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence of the relocated switch was forwarded to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified has been adequately addressed.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) Records were available to show that fire drills were carried out monthly, and a written record of all drills was maintained at the service.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment was available on the premises with the most recent service having been completed on the 18th of March 2026. All smoke alarms were serviced on the 12th of June 2026.

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Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure. No identification of any building defects were observed on inspection.
- (b) The entrance to the service was secured and all visitor access was managed appropriately. A key pad system was used for authorised persons to enter the building.
- (c) Protective covers were provided on all light fittings.
- (d) The premises throughout appeared clean with a high standard of operational hygiene noted in all internal areas of the premises.
- (e) Adequate and suitable sanitary accommodations were provided next to the preschool room. A nappy changing facility was provided if required.