

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020WD001
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Name of Service:	Tir na Nóg
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Address of Service:	Carrowleigh, Carrick-on-Suir, Co Waterford
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Eircode:	E32 Y796
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Name of Registered Provider:	Barbara Byrne
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	29/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	14
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher and D Prendergast
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

The Tir na Nóg service is located in Rathgormack in Waterford. This multiple service offers sessional, part time and full day care to children aged between 1 and 6 years of age. The service operates from Monday to Friday between 07:30 and 18:30 with a sessional service from 09:00 to 12:00 for 38 weeks of the year. A school age care service is also offered. The service is located in a detached premises with three early years care rooms, a sleep room, a kitchen and sanitary facilities for both children and staff. There is a large outdoor play area to the rear and side of the building.

Staffing

There are nine staff employed by the service, including the register provider, who is service based. On the day of inspection, seven were present in the service. Six staff were working directly with the children on the day of 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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, registered provider, person in charge and staff who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN 1886	29/06/2026	On review of the staff files, it was noted that the Garda vetting on file in respect of one staff member, who had access to children, had not been obtained by the registered provider, as the current employer.
Status	The registered provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

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 provider had appointed a person in charge of operating the service and deputy persons in charge were also allocated.
 - (b) The deputies were on duty at the service when the inspectors arrived. The person in charge and the registered provider arrived within five minutes. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or a deputy was consistently available at the childcare facility, during operational hours.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that three new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. All three staff members worked directly with the children. A total of three files were assessed. In addition, Garda vetting for one staff member, whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal, was

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requested for review.

- (a) Five written and validated references had been provided by past employers.
 - (b) There was one written and validated reference on file from a source other than a previous employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for two of the adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Not applicable. Following a review of the staff files, there was no evidence that international police vetting was required.
- (4) There was evidence that one of the adults had achieved a major award in early childhood care and education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications. A letter of temporary qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) was in place in respect of a second adult.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(c) See statutory notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IAN1886 served.
- (4) Evidence was unavailable to demonstrate that the qualification held by one of the adults met the minimum requirement of a level 5 award in early childhood care and education.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff member is assigned to work with school age children until evidence of a minimum of a level 5 qualification is received.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the school age roster with the staff members name on it was received.

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 9.

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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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care of the children in attendance at all times.

(2) The service maintained the minimum ratio required as per regulation in the care rooms. The ratio was as follows:

- The First ECCE room was used for school age children in the morning and afternoon.
- The Second ECCE room, there was one adult caring for six children in the morning and one adult caring for six children in the afternoon.
- The Baby and Toddler room, there was two adults caring for eight children in the morning and two adults caring for eight children in the afternoon.

8 (a) The service operated with at least two adults present at all times. This was observed on the day of inspection and was evident through examination of the staff roster.

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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,

Compliance Information

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of relevant documents.

Basic needs:

- The main hot meal and snacks were provided by the parents and guardians. These were observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- Children were observed eating snacks which consisted of sandwiches, cheese, a variety of fruit, yogurts and waffles. Examples of the hot meal were potatoes, pasta, a variety of mixed vegetables, burgers and sausages. The service had alternative food to offer to children if needed on the day of the inspection.
- Cutlery and crockery were available and provided to the children.
- Staff interacted with the children during snack time and were observed helping and assisting the children where necessary. Children in the Baby and Toddler room were encouraged to self-feed and were assisted as needed.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children, stored in the shelving area in the Baby and Toddler room and on a table outdoors for the ECCE rooms.
- A relaxed unhurried atmosphere was evident at snack time, as the children chatted and interacted with one another. The ECCE rooms had there snack outdoors and the Baby and Toddler room returned indoors for their snack.
- On the day of inspection, the care rooms had access to the outdoors and staff stated they encouraged outdoor play as much as possible. The children from the ECCE rooms remained outdoors for the duration of the inspection.
- Children's independence was promoted by staff. Examples of this were when children tidied up after snack and the younger children were encouraged to self-feed.

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- Nappy changing was carried out at regular intervals and as required. Each child's dignity and privacy were observed to be respected with one child being changed at a time. Supervision and assistance were provided for the children who accessed the sanitary facilities.
- Children had the opportunity to rest or relax in an area with cushions or mats in each care room.

Supporting relationships:

- The staff were observed to show positive regard for the children from all the care rooms on the day of inspection. The children were encouraged and praised during tasks in a warm and caring manner, for example when they played soccer, on the swings, with diggers and climbed slides in the outdoor area.
- The staff were observed to sit with the children at their level and interact with them. This was observed during both indoor and outdoor play when children were playing with toys and staff were reading to the children.
- Staff were observed to partake in group activities outdoors with the children by playing soccer, tug of war and with a rainbow parachute.
- Parents or guardians were communicated with at pick up and drop off and with phone contact. A learning journal was kept for each child in the service. Children's progress throughout the day was recorded in a notebook and sent home daily to share with parents, who documented information from the evening or the night that staff may benefit from knowing.
- The atmosphere was observed to be relaxed during the inspection, and teamwork was evident between the staff and the children.
- The inspector observed an upset child outdoors from the Baby and Toddler room to be comforted by a staff member who responded positively to the child.
- Family photos and birthday calendars for the children were displayed on the walls in all the care rooms, encouraging a sense of belonging and identity.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The service consisted of three care rooms which were well resourced to cater for a variety of age-appropriate activities. Examples of toy items available indoors were dolls, diggers, blocks, magnetic bricks, cars, puzzles, art supplies and books. The toys available outdoors were a large swing and slide set, a small slide for the babies and toddlers, a sand pit, a selection of ride on toys, a goal post, diggers and a playhouse.
- The care rooms had low-level open shelving units which displayed materials and resources which children could freely access as they were easily accessible.
- Children in the Baby and Toddler room were observed to choose what to play with, which promoted independence and decision making.
- The equipment used in both the indoor and the outdoor area were in good condition.
- The outdoor area had two large, roofed areas and toys were able to be stored under the roofed area or in the shed when not in use.
- Indoor furniture included child height tables, low level chairs and highchairs for the younger children. Adult chairs were also available.
- Child sized bench seats and adult chairs were also available outdoors.

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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. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children in the care rooms.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor area was a safe and secure space for the children with a metal fencing surrounding the boundaries and a timber and metal gate at both sides of the building. This prevented children gaining unsupervised access to an unsafe area.

Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children and the children from the ECCE rooms were observed to wash their hands after using the sanitary facilities, outdoor play and before eating.
- Staff cleaned the outdoor tables before snack and lunch time.
- Children's bags were stored off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available in the ECCE care rooms and in the kitchen for the Baby and Toddler room for the storage of perishable foods.

Safe sleep:

- Staff in the Baby and Toddler room were noted to maintain sleep records in relation to the children's colour, breathing and position at 10-minute intervals while children were sleeping. The inspector reviewed 10 sleep records, and these were recorded correctly.

Fire safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- Fire extinguishers were secured to the walls.

Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection. The person in charge informed the inspector that they take one yearly outing with a risk assessment completed prior to this occurring. On review of the risk assessment, a number of strategies were in place to mitigate identified risks to the children.

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Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

1. Three children in the Baby and Toddler room were observed to have their hands cleaned with baby wipes after outdoor play and before snack time. This practice of using baby wipes to clean hands was also observed during two nappy changing procedures. On discussion with a staff member, the inspector was informed that baby wipes are used to clean the younger children's hands. This posed a risk of inadequate hand washing.
2. On the day of inspection, the staff toilet was observed to be used as a storage area and contained a child's sensory light, toys and other boxed items. This posed an infection control risk.

Safe sleep:

3. The air temperature of the Baby and Toddler room which was used for sleep was recorded at 23.5°C while two children aged between 1 and 2.5 years were sleeping. This exceeds the recommended temperature range of 18°C to 22°C for children of this age. It is acknowledged that staff had opened the windows and turned on a fan, but temperatures were unable to be reduced to below 23.5°C.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was received from the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection control:

1. Staff were advised to use soap and water. A reminder was sent to all staff and hand-washing observations will be carried out to ensure the correct procedure is being followed.
2. The toilet area is now cleared. This area will not be used for storage in the future.

Safe sleep:

3. Windows are opened all day, and additional fans have been provided to maintain the temperature below 22°C. The service plans to send children home if the sleep room temperatures cannot be maintained below 22°C.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection control:

1. A copy of the reminder email sent to staff received.
2. A photograph of the toilet area cleaned and a copy of the reminder email sent to staff was received.

Safe sleep:

3. A photograph of a fan and a copy of the reminder email sent to staff received.

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Summary Comment

The action taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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-

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

Compliance Information

(1) The person in charge ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service.

(3)

(b) A daily record of visitors to the premises was kept in a check in and out book. The inspector was requested to signed in and out from 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.

Compliance Information

(1) The service provided evidence that four staff members held up to date First Aid Response (FAR) training. The staff roster indicated that at least one of these adults was available onsite, while the service was in operation.

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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 firefighting 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) According to the fire drill record, the most recent fire drill took place on 8 June 2026.
 - (b) A list of the number and type of firefighting equipment on the premises was available. Records from fire safety companies indicated that the firefighting equipment was last serviced in September 2025 and that the wired smoke alarm was tested on 14 May 2026.
- (4) The service's fire evacuation procedure was displayed in the main entrance area and in the care rooms.