

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE104
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Name of Service:	Naionra Ceimeanna Beaga Teo
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Address of Service:	Gaelscoil Mhichil Ciosog, Bothar an Ghoirt, Inis, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 DW35
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Name of Registered Provider:	Katie Ui Chaoimh
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	24/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	43	PM	27
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E
Inspection undertaken by:	J Hayes
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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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).

Description of service

Naíonra Ceimeanna Beaga Teo was established in 2014, as a privately operated sessional service operating each morning and afternoon. The service is operated from two classrooms within Gaelscoil Mhíchil Ciosóg, on the outskirts of Ennis town. Care and education are facilitated through the medium of the Irish language for children ranging from two years and eight months to five years. The service operates two sessions Monday to Friday, from 08:40 to 11:40, and 12:00 to 15:00. Outdoor play areas are available to the rear, front and side of the premises.

Staffing

Eleven staff are employed in the service. On the 24 June 2026 the person in charge and eight adults were present in the service between the morning and afternoon sessions. The registered provider was not present during the 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

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This inspection was announced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety and premises and facilities.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (3)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance (1)

Regulation 25- First aid (1)(2)(a)(b)

Regulation 28 - Insurance

Regulation 29 – Premises (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)

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.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN 2981	24/06/2026	Evidence of International Police Vetting was not available for one staff member who had access to children.

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Status	Action was taken by the service immediately following service of the Notice and a response to the IAN was received on 25 June 2026 which detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted. The outstanding National police certificate was submitted to the early years inspectorate on 26 June 2026.
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art 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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)

A designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available throughout the inspection.

(b)

The designated person in charge was available in the service during the inspection.

(2)

Eleven files were available in respect of the registered provider and ten adults working in the service. The findings included the following:

- (a)
Eighteen written and validated references from past employers in respect of adults working in the service were available.
- (b)
Four written and validated references from a source other than a past employer in respect of adults working in the service were available.
- (c)
Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for eleven adults working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (4)
The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications from Level 5 to Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(d)
See Statutory Notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IAN 2981 served.
- (3)
The vetting procedures outlined in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to all adults commencing in the service. This posed a potential risk to the safety of children attending the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(d)
Immediately following the inspection, the service ensured that the staff member concerned had no access to, or contact with, children pending completion of the required overseas police vetting process. The Police vetting was applied for on 24 June 2026. The Police vetting certificate was received on 26 June 2026 and reviewed by the registered provider. The certificate has been placed on the staff member's personnel file in accordance with the Early Years Regulations.
- (3)

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The service has reviewed and strengthened the Recruitment and Garda Vetting Policies. A revised Recruitment & Vetting Checklist is now used for every new employee. This checklist requires confirmation of

- all Garda Vetting requirements;
- any periods of residence outside Ireland;
- whether overseas police vetting is required;
- receipt and review of all overseas police disclosures before employment commences; and
- final approval by the Registered Provider before any staff member is permitted to have access to children.

The updated policy and checklist will be applied to all future recruitment to ensure continued compliance with Regulation 9(3).

Supporting documentation submitted

International police vetting certificate.

Updated Staff Recruitment and Vetting Checklist.

Updated Garda vetting policy

Summary Comment

The actions taken have addressed the non compliances under Regulation 9(2)(d) and (3).

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)

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During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the service.

(3)

On the 24 June 2026 the adult to child ratio was maintained in the service. Eight adults cared for forty-three children in the morning, and six adults cared for twenty-seven children in the afternoon.

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 children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the indoor and outdoor environment through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment, having regard to the age and level of development of the children. Two rooms were in operation during the inspection.

Basic Needs of the Children:

Healthy eating was promoted within the service. The healthy eating policy of the service was available and shared with parents, which supported children and parents to choose healthy foods. Drinking water was available throughout the day if a child was thirsty and needed a drink.

The snacks and drinks provided were adequate, suitable, nutritious, and varied for each pre-school child attending the service. The children were given sufficient time to eat and enjoy their snacks and drinks without being rushed. The children from seomra a haon were observed to enjoy their lunch in the outdoor environment.

The children toileted independently, with assistance given to those who needed it. Children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day, such as after toileting and outdoor play and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation areas accessed directly from the pre-school rooms. The children could rest and relax as desired in the designated quiet spaces in the service or in the quiet room accessible from seomra a haon. A supply of tissues and wipes were accessible to the children. The children were

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encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their level of independence. Lidded bins were available for the safe disposal of waste.

The staff members responded to the children's cues for assistance in a prompt and sensitive manner. The children were supported as they played individually and as part of a group. The staff were observed to be kind and caring in all their interactions with the children. Each child was treated as an individual and had their likes, abilities and natural tendencies understood and respected.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

The adults interacted with the children in a kind and respectful manner. The adults listened attentively and conversed with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance. Positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions, and the children were offered praise and encouragement. The adults demonstrated an awareness of the children's preferences, personal interests and capabilities. The adults supported the children in individual and group play based activities throughout the programme and engaged in open ended discussions. The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the playrooms and in the outdoor areas and were active and engaged in learning throughout the morning and the afternoon sessions. Play activities were child led for the most part.

The children very happily engaged in a variety of activities in the well-resourced outdoor spaces such as water play, and imaginative and manipulative play. Children could move about freely and develop their coordination, balance and strength through running, jumping and climbing and using a variety of ride on toys and equipment. The children were notified in advance of transitions in activities, and their social interactions were supported by adults through turn taking, collaboration and group games. Staff were observed to be interested in the children, listened to them and spoke to them using soft tones of voice and positive language, engaging them in conversation through the Irish language and gave each child the opportunity to express themselves. Children's opinions were sought, and their decisions respected which reflected that they were valued. An open-door policy for parents/guardians was in place for the service. An informal communication approach was observed during interactions with parents/guardians. The adults were warmly welcomed into the service at collection time and the children's activities of the day, and observations were shared with them.

Photographic evidence of activities undertaken, and art portfolios were available to share with parents and helped support a sense of working in partnership with parents.

Individual booklets for children were developed by the service to help share each child's learning journey as they move from pre-school to primary school.

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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.

Compliance Information

(1)
A daily attendance record of each child's arrival to and departure from the service was maintained by the adults working in 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)
Four adults working in the service held a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)(a)
An adequately stocked first aid box was readily accessible in the playrooms.

(b)
The first aid box was available to the children at all times.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for forty-four children attending on a sessional basis. The policy is valid until 27 March 2027.

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 well maintained with no visible structural issues.
- (b)
The entrance to the service was secured and all visitor access was managed appropriately. The outdoor areas were safe and secured preventing any unauthorised access to or exit from the area.
- (c)
Natural lighting was provided through windows in the playrooms, and this was supplemented with artificial lighting. A room temperature of 21.8°C was recorded which was within the appropriate temperature range of 18 °C to 22 °C. All windows in the service were openable to provide natural ventilation.
- (d)
The service was clean and well maintained with records of daily and weekly cleaning schedules in place.
- (e)
The children had access to sanitary facilities adjacent to the pre-school rooms. The sanitary facility was appropriately equipped with toilets and wash hand basins which were accessible to the children. A sanitary facility was also available for use by the adults. The water temperature at the wash hand basins was recorded at a safe

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temperature of 30°C. Liquid soap and paper towels were provided for handwashing and drying and a pedal operated, lined, lidded bin was provided for the safe disposal of waste.