

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015GY266 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Tigh na nOg Community Creche |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Connemara West, Letterfrack, Co. Galway |
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| <b>Eircode:</b> | H91 R928 |
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| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Caroline Heanue |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|

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| <b>Service type:</b> | Full Day |
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| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 08/06/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 30 | PM | 16 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

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|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate,<br>Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building,<br>Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | F. Kelly.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | 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

This service opened as a community childcare service in 2008. They operate as a Full Day Care Early Years' Service for children aged from 6 months to 5 years old. The service operates from 08:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday and can cater for a maximum of 65 preschool children. The service is also registered to cater for school aged children.

### Staffing

There were 15 adults employed in the service which included the registered provider and the cook. On the day of inspection, there were seven adults working directly with the preschool children, which did not include the person in charge; this person worked solely as an administrator.

### 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.

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

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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.*

*(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*

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*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 manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the manager was in charge and facilitated the inspection.

Following a review of the service files and discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that there were 15 adults employed in the service. The registered provider did not work in the service on a daily basis.

These files were reviewed on the day of inspection

(2)(a) Twenty-two of the required 30 written and appropriately validated references available were from the adult's most recent employer.

(b) Four of the required 30 written and appropriately validated references from another source were on file for the staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 15 of the adults employed in the service and they did adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years.

(d) Police vetting was required and was available for one adult working in the service, as they lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six months as an adult.

(4) Twelve adults working directly with children had obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education ranging from level 5 to level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a)(b)

Two validated references from past employers or a reputable were not available on file for two adults working in the premises.

(3) The correct vetting procedures specified in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) One adult working in the service was unable to provide evidence that they had obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or equivalent

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### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The required references were obtained.

A letter was requested from the department recognising the staff members qualifications.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

The required documentation was submitted to the Early Years inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 9(2 a & b)(3)(4) have 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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.  
On the day of inspection, the person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and facilitated the inspection.
- (2) On the morning of the inspection there were children present.
  - Wobbler room- Five children were aged between 1 and 2 years and cared for by 1 adult.
  - Toddler room- Five children were aged between 2 and 3 years and cared for by 1 adult.
  - Pre-school- Ten children were aged between 3 and 4 years and were cared for by 2 adults.

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- ECCE playroom- Ten children were aged between 4 and 5 years and cared for by 2 adults.

The person in charge was responsible for the administration function of the service and was not available to provide relief cover in the care rooms.

### 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

##### Basic Needs:

- Children were independent with their toileting needs. However, on occasion children needed a reminder from staff. Children were observed using the sanitary facilities throughout the session.
- Children were observed washing their hands prior to lunchtime and after using the toilet. The children used the low-level sink that was conveniently adjacent to the playroom. The children used warm water, liquid soap and used paper towels to dry their hands, which were disposed of in a foot pedal operated waste bin.
- Mealtimes were observed to be a social event; the children ate their snacks at the low-level tables in suitable chairs in the dining room. The staff sat with the children, speaking and interacting in a positive manner with the children.
- Children had the opportunity to move freely around the indoor play areas during the period of the inspection. The children did get an opportunity to play in the outdoor area on the day of inspection
- The staff were observed to use positive approaches and praise when speaking to the children. This was observed while the children were playing in the outdoor play area.

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### 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 provider ensured that a person trained in first aid was immediately available to the preschool children attending the service. There was evidence available for inspection to acknowledge that nine adults were trained in First Aid Responder.
- (2)(a) There was suitably equipped first aid box available to the children, the contents were checked on a regular basis by a staff member.
- (b) The first aid boxes were conveniently located in the playrooms of the service.

### 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.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

The Preschool playroom, ECCE, Wobbler and Toddler playrooms were not supplied with adequate materials to support children's play and learning. There were not enough toys and equipment available to the children to provide rich and varied environment for the children to play. For example:

1. The play kitchen areas were poorly stocked with accessories; one the kitchen unit doors were broken and it was void of toys.
2. The dress up clothes were not available to the children at all times. They were stored in the corridor and the children did not have access to them throughout the inspection. The children were asked by the inspector if they liked dressing up and the children in the Toddler room all answered "Yes" but the children were not given access to the dress up costumes throughout the session.

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3. The books in the library areas were in poor condition, many were ripped and torn. A child in the Preschool room was heard asking a staff member for a book, that was stored in a high shelf out of the children's reach. The staff informed the inspector that he was looking for his favourite book that was stored out of the children's reach.
4. The dolls houses were void of any suitable furniture or toy accessories. The dolls that the children could use to play with, were stored in a plastic box that was stored nearby, however these dolls were presented in a poor condition.
5. Puzzles and games were stored out of the children's reach, a young child in the preschool room was observed asking a staff member for a jigsaw puzzle that was stored on a very high shelf. There were only 2 puzzles on a low-level shelf for the children to play with.
6. There were four "cause and effect" toys in the Wobbler room that were not working.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

All educators have provided lists of items that need to be replaced in the playrooms. These items will be purchased by Management. The statement from the registered provider was accepted.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted, the noncompliances identified under regulation 21 have been adequately addressed. This regulation will be reviewed at the next inspection.