

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019DR009SA
Name of School Age Service:	Sherpa Kids (Good Shepard NS)
Name of Registered Provider(s):	John Miles
Address of School Age Service:	Good Shepard School Whitehall Road Churchtown Dublin 14
Eircode:	D14Y448

Date of Inspection:	04 March 2025
Number of school age children present during inspection:	PM 15
Registration status:	Registered for school age care

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Saint John's Road West, Dublin 8. D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	R Duff L O Connor
Title:	Early years inspectors

Authority to Inspect

Tusla's 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:

Sherpa Kids School Aged Service is registered school age service located in Dublin 14. It is part of a chain of school age services located throughout the country. The school aged service is based in a primary school and has use of one room, a sports hall and a large secure outdoor area.

The service is registered to accommodate up to 24 school age children between the ages of 4- 15 years at any one time. Opening hours are 12:00- 18:00 term time and 8:30-17:30 out of term time.

Staffing:

There are a total of 3 staff members employed in the service. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. On the day of the inspection, there were 3 staff caring for 15 children.

Additional Information:

The inspection was completed on foot of information received by the inspectorate.

Legislation

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of School Age Services in Ireland, and its role is to promote and monitor the safety and quality of school age care provision in accordance with the following legislation:

- The Child and Family Agency Act 2013, Part 12.
- Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2022.
- The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Registration of School Age Services Regulations 2018 (S.I. 575 of 2018).

A school age service means any early years service, play group, day nursery, crèche, day-care or other similar service which:

- caters for children under the age of 15 years enrolled in a school providing primary or post-primary education,
- provides a range of activities that are developmental, educational and recreational in manner, which take place outside of school hours, the primary purpose of which is to care for children where their parents are unavailable, and
- the basis for access to which is made publicly known to the parents and guardians of the children referred to in point (a) above.

It is the responsibility of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of school age children and the above legislation authorises Tusla to assess compliance with the Regulations.

Inspection Methodology:

The inspection is unannounced to assess compliance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Registration of School Age Services Regulations 2018 (S.I. 575 of 2018), Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2022, and the Child Care Act 1991, Section 58 as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013.

The findings on inspection are gathered through a triangulation method, including:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation.
- Direct observation.
- Discussion with relevant staff.

This inspection aims to determine the extent to which service is appropriate for the care, safety, and wellbeing of children in accordance with the regulations cited above.

Inspection findings are documented in the School Age Services 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 corrected the non-compliance and how they will prevent them 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 CAPA 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.

Acknowledgements:

The inspectors wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the children, registered provider, person in charge, and staff who were present on the day of inspection.

Summary of Findings:

On the day of inspection, the registered provider was found to be compliant in:

- Regulation 8: Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1)(2): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 10: Policies
- Regulation 12: Insurance;
- Child Care Act 1991, Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013.

On the day of inspection, the registered provider was found to be non-compliant in:

- Regulation 10: Complaints

Conclusion and follow up actions:

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have adequately addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.

Regulation 8: Vetting disclosures

(1) A registered provider of a school age service other than a childminding service 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.*

(2) The procedures specified in paragraph 1 shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the school age service.

Regulatory Requirement Met

(1) (a)(b)(c)

Documentation relating to six staff files was reviewed. Six validated references were available. The required Garda vetting disclosures were available for the six staff members. It was demonstrated that the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Twelve references were available and were validated as required. Police vetting was required for five adults, and it was available for review.

(2)

It was demonstrated that the required documentation was in place prior to six adults being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the school age service.

Regulation 9: Staffing levels

- (1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider of a school age service other than a childminding service shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of competent and suitable adults on the premises while the service is operating.*
- (2) Without prejudice to paragraph (1), a registered provider of a school age service other than a childminding service shall ensure that there is a minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children at all times while the service is operating.*
- (4) A registered provider of a school age service shall ensure that the school age children attending the service are appropriately supervised at all times.*

Regulatory Requirement Met

(1)(2)(4)

During the inspection, the registered provider ensured that appropriate staffing levels were maintained. The 15 children attending the service were supervised directly by 3 staff.

There were an adequate number of adults available during the inspection to meet the needs of the children present. The staff members were observed to work with small groups of children for the afternoon. For example, at snack time the staff members were observed to sit with the children at a table. This supported the building of relationships and also for the staff members to provide additional support, if required.

Throughout the inspection, the children were supervised through sight and sound. The adults were observed to move to different areas of classroom and observe the children from a reasonable distance. The children appeared familiar with the boundaries of the service regarding supervision also. For example, the children's school bags and personal items were stored in the hallway. The children were overheard on many occasions to request to go to their school bags. during this time, a staff member remained close-by to observe the child and ensure they returned into the classroom.

Regulation 10: Policies of a school age service

A registered provider of a school age service shall ensure that the policies and statements specified in Schedule 6 are in place for the service.

Regulatory Requirement Met

The inspectors reviewed the behavioural management policy, child safeguarding policy, the recruitment policy, staff training policy and the staff handbook. Staff in the rooms confirmed electronic receipt of the policies. Hard copies of the service policies were held in the service for reference purposes. The area manager of the service advised that policies and procedures were available in the service for parents and were supplied electronically to parents on request.

Minutes of a staff meeting held on 24 September were reviewed, the minutes were inclusive of the refresher training conducted in the service in relation to the service policies and procedures.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service is insured for 24 children to attend at any one time. The policy was dated from 28 March 2024 to 27 March 2025.

Regulation 13: Complaints

- (1) A registered provider of a school age service other than a childminding service shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies—
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider of a school age service other than a childminding service shall ensure that—
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the school age service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall—
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.
- (4) A registered provider of a childminding service shall ensure that the parents or guardians of children attending the service are aware of the service's complaints policy.

Regulatory Requirement Met

(1)(b)(c)

The service had a complaints policy in place which was located in an accessible place for staff and parents. The policy detailed how the service would manage a complaint received to the service and outlined how the person(s) would be kept informed of how the complaint was managed within the service. It was outlined that parents are provided a copy of the service's complaints policy via email.

(2)(a)

The service's policy outlined that the service would retain the record of complaint and the timeframe of retention.

(3)

In discussion with the area manager of the service, it was confirmed that the service has not received a written complaint. Therefore, records were not available for review.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(1)(a)

While it is noted that the service's complaint policy set out the procedures which detailed how a complaint can be made. Within the policy, it named two named adults with corresponding contact information to contact in the case where a person wants to make a complaint. It was confirmed that one of these adults has ceased their employment within the service in the last 2 years and does not work within the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider verified the person named as the contact person on the complaints policy has been removed and contact details have been updated.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted by the registered provider and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

Child Care Act 1991, Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013

It shall be the duty of every person providing an early years service to take all reasonable measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending the service and to comply with regulations made by the Minister under this Part.

Regulatory Requirement Met

During the inspection, the inspectors observed the health, safety and welfare of children being supported by the following:

On arrival at the service the younger children were observed to be engaged in a variety of age-appropriate activities in their room. The activities the children took part in were varied throughout the day and reflected the children's stage of development. For example, one child was colouring with markers, pencils and crayons, two children played a board game with a member of staff at the table while two others played with building blocks and beads on the floor. At 2:30 the older children arrived from school and all children left the room to go to the garden. Three staff accompanied them to the garden. When children returned from the garden, they were offered a nutritious snack consisting of cold meats, cheese, bread, crackers and fruit. At a later part of the day children engaged in an art activity with a member of staff while other children played with figures and blocks on the floor. Children completed homework independently and with the support of the staff. The staff members were observed to move freely between the different groups of children and provide the children with guidance and support, as required. Interactions between staff and children was observed to be friendly, supportive and consistent.

The induction procedures of the service was reviewed. The service's induction policy detailed the measures which the service has in place for the induction of new staff within the service. It outlined that the service has a 'structured approach to induction'. The policy outlined that prior to working directly with the children, staff received training on various areas and time to read the service policies. In discussion with staff, it was confirmed the policies and training was provided prior to them working directly with the children. The service maintained a training induction checklist which was available for review. This demonstrated that that staff completed the training including

Children's first and the service's policies. In discussion with staff, the procedures as set out within the services complaint policy and behaviour management policy was familiar. It was outlined by the area manager that staff in a management role receive an 8-week induction which includes extended training and support from the area manager.

The service's support and supervision policy outlined that support and supervision ensured that staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. In discussion with the area manager, it was outlined that staff receive a one-to-one meeting when they start with the service. Alongside this, a weekly meeting occurs with the service between the person in charge and the area manager.