

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019GY010SA
Name of School Age Service:	Blath Beag Creche
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Aoife O'Driscoll
Address of School Age Service:	Unit 5 and 6 Castlecourt, Castle road, Oranmore Co. Galway
Eircode:	H91 PK02

Date(s) of Inspection:	18 December 2024			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	N/A	PM	80
Registration status:	Registered			
Conditions (if applicable):	NA			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	K Folan & S O'Brien
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

Description of Service:

Blath Beag Creche is based on the second floor of a commercial building in the village of Oranmore, Co. Galway. The service provides care to children aged 4 to 12 years old. A breakfast club is provided from 07:30 to 09:00 and an afterschool club is provided from 13:20 to 18:00. The service has access to an outdoor area offsite to the premises. A small kitchen and sanitary facilities are available onsite.

Staffing:

The registered provider does not work in the service. There are 9 staff members employed by the registered provider to work directly with the children. On the day of the inspection one student was present.

Additional Information:

This inspection was completed as a result 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 wish 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 9 (1)(2)(4): Staffing levels
- 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 8 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d) (2): Vetting disclosures

Conclusion and follow up actions:

The inspectors reviewed the registered providers response, documented and photographic evidence that was submitted. The non- compliances found on inspection have been adequately addressed.

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) Eleven files were reviewed including the registered provider.

(a) Eight of the twenty-two references were available from a past employer and were validated.

(b) Thirteen of the twenty-two references were available from a reputable source and were validated.

(c) Eleven adults including the registered provider had Garda vetting disclosures available for review.

The service demonstrated compliance for ten of the eleven vetting documents with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(1)

(a)(b) One of the twenty-two references from a past employer or a reputable source was not available for one adult that was working directly with the children.

(c) One of the eleven adults did not have a Garda Vetting disclosure that was dated within the last three years therefore posed a risk to the safety of the school age children.

(d) One vetting disclosure for one adult who had lived outside of a state for longer than six months and required vetting, was not available.

(2) The registered provider had not ensured that vetting procedures had been completed prior to adults being employed and working directly with the children as a validated reference was not in place.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

1. The registered provider submitted documentary evidence to confirm that a validated reference has been obtained for the relevant adult.
2. The registered provider submitted evidence of a Garda Vetting disclosure that had been obtained for one of the adults.
3. The registered provider submitted evidence of police vetting which was obtained for one adult who had lived outside of the state or longer than six months.

Preventative Action

1. The registered provider advised in their response that references will be obtained for all potential employees prior to their commencement in the service
2. The registered provider advised that they would conduct regular checks on staff files to ensure Garda Vetting disclosures are dated within the required timeframe.
3. The registered provider advised that a checklist has been added to the front of files to ensure all required records are in place prior to the appointment of new employees.

Summary of Findings

The documented and photographic evidence submitted has been reviewed by the inspectors and has met the regulatory requirements.

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)

The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults on the premises. There were ten adults working directly with 80 children. The children were appropriately supervised. The adults supported the children to complete art and craft activities. The children were given choice over their activities with some children dancing and playing while others chose to rest. The adults spoke to the children about their day and facilitated a birthday celebration for one of the children. There were seven care rooms in operation on the day and each of the rooms had various activities available for the ages and interests of the children.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service had insurance cover for a maximum of eighty-five children in daily attendance in a school age service. Insurance was valid from the 28 March 2024 to the 27 March 2025.

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

Out of the ten adults employed in the service including the registered provider two adults had completed First Aid Responder training and five adults had completed Paediatric First Aid training.