

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019WX005SA
Name of School Age Service:	Bright Start Creche and Afterschool Club
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Mary Whitney
Address of School Age Service:	C/O The Maldron Hotel, Ballindinas, Barntown, Co. Wexford
Eircode:	Y35 E8KT

Date of Inspection:	12 March 2024			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	Not Applicable	PM	16
Registration status:	Registered			
Conditions (if applicable):	Not Applicable			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Primary Care Centre, Castle Park, Arklow, Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	L O' Connor
Title:	Early years inspector

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:

Bright Start Creche and Afterschool Club is located on the outskirts of Wexford Town. It caters for a maximum of 60 children aged 4 to 12 years. The service operates a breakfast club from 7.30am to 9am and an afterschool club from 1.30pm – 6pm from Monday to Friday during term time. It operates from 7.30am to 6pm outside term time and operates for 51 weeks of the year.

The service is located within a multi-use premises. There are two care adjoining care rooms with a kitchenette. The children's sanitary facilities are located between the two care rooms. An outdoor area is located at the front of the service providing a grass area and playground.

Staffing:

There are six adults employed within the service, including the registered provider.

On the day of inspection, there were five adults present in the service, including the person in charge and the registered provider.

Additional Information:

The inspector conducted a planned focused inspection of the service.

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

Summary of Findings:

The inspector planned to focus on Regulation 8; Vetting disclosures, Regulation 9(1)(2)(4); Staffing levels and Regulation 12; Insurance.

On inspection, the registered provider was found to be compliant in relation to the following:

- Regulation 8: Vetting disclosures (1)(2):
- Regulation 9 (1)(2)(4): Staffing levels:
- Regulation 12: Insurance:
- Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013.

Conclusion and follow-up actions:

The service was compliant with the regulations examined and there are no follow up actions following the 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)(2)

Six staff files were reviewed. Garda Vetting was in place and available for review for the six adults. The required validated references were in place for the files reviewed. Documentation and discussion with staff demonstrated Police vetting was not required for the adults within the service. The service carried out the above procedures prior to the commencement of the employment of adults within the 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)

There was at all times an adequate number of adults working with the children. The adult to child ratio was maintained throughout, at 2.20pm, there was 10 children present with 2 adults, and at 4.00pm, there was 16 children present with 4 adults.

The children were appropriately supervised throughout the inspection.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service was insured for 60 children to attend at any one time.

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

Reasonable measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending the service were observed during the inspection as follows:

- The interactions between the staff members and children were playful, responsive and reciprocal. Staff members were overheard to engage in meaningful conversations with the children regarding their school day and upcoming sporting events. During the inspection, the staff members demonstrated familiarity with the children and their individual traits. For example, a staff member recognised one child as tired, and the staff member encouraged the child to sit on the couch for a rest with a book. The staff members were observed to sit with the child during this time. These responsive relationships support children's well-being.
- The two care rooms were reflective of the interests of the children and the age of the children present. The following was noted:
 - Children were provided with equipment which was appropriate to their age. In one care room, there was three couches for rest or reading, low level tables for building blocks, tall doll houses and mixed sized tables and chairs. In the other care room, there was appropriately sized tables and chairs for the children to complete their homework and eat their snack.
 - In discussion with a staff member, individual children's interests was described. The supporting equipment and materials to reflect individual interests was identified within the care rooms. The staff member outlined the equipment changes based on the children's interests.

- Children's individual choices were encouraged and respected by the staff members throughout the inspection. The staff members were observed to actively listen to the children and sought their opinion. For example:
 - Children's individual food preferences were recognised throughout the mealtime. On the day of inspection, the snack was pizza wraps and fruit. One child expressed to one of the staff members that they did not like the snack. The staff member reassuringly responded outlining there was something else for them. During the snack time, the child was provided with an alternative. During the snack time, the staff member preparing the food actively engaged with the children on their preferences and each child was provided with their choice regarding their preference for pizza sauce or various meats. The practice of respecting children's food preferences supports a sense of independence and choice for children.
 - In discussion, a staff member outlined the children's interest in books and explained through this, the children recently carried out book reviews. The book reviews were on display within the care room with children's illustration of their favourite book and key facts. On the day of inspection, the children were provided with an opportunity to make a bookmark. Many of the children were observed to engage in the activity and created bookmarks with their favourite sporting teams, their names or designs. The practice of recognising children's interests supports children's sense of well-being.