

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020DY024SA
Name of School Age Service:	Seafort Afterschool
Name of Registered Provider:	Ulla McCarthy
Address of School Age Service:	Seafort Avenue, Sandymount, Dublin 4.
Eircode:	D04 F8P5

Date of Inspection:	10 April 2024		
Number of school age children present during inspection:	PM	27	
Registration status:	Registered		
Conditions (if applicable):	N/A		

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Saint John's Road West, Dublin 8. D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Bradshaw
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).

Description of Service:

Seafort Afterschool is a school aged service owned by the registered provider. It is based in Shellybanks Educate Together National School in Sandymount village. The service has the use of two classrooms once the school day is over.

The service is registered to accommodate up to 40 children aged between 4 and 12 years old. On the day of the inspection there were 27 children present.

The service is registered to operate from 1.25 to 6.30pm during the school term and from 8.30am to 6.30pm outside of the school term.

However, the person in charge informed the inspector that currently the service closes at 6pm and does not offer care outside of the school term.

The children have access to a large schoolyard and a small, fenced garden area.

Staffing:

There are five staff members employed in the service. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. On the day of the inspection, there were 4 staff members caring for 27 children.

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:

- a) caters for children under the age of 15 years enrolled in a school providing primary or post-primary education,
- b) 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
- c) 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, the person in charge, and the staff who were present on the day of inspection.

Summary of Findings:

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

- Regulation 8(1)(a)(b)(c)(d): Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1)(2)(4): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 12: Insurance.

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

- Regulation 8(2): Vetting disclosures.

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)(d)

The inspector reviewed five staff files. Ten validated written references from past employers were available. Five Garda vetting disclosures were on file. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Records demonstrated that two staff required police vetting and this was available on the day of inspection.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(2) The evidence available demonstrated that relevant Garda vetting disclosure procedures had not been carried out before two staff members worked directly with the children. Two

Garda vetting disclosures were dated after the start date of the staff members.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated that they had updated the Recruitment policy on 7 October 2024 to include the step where Garda Vetting will be sought for all employees prior to their employment. They stated a memo was circulated to all staff to remind them that this is the procedure for recruitment.

A copy of the updated recruitment policy was submitted as evidence.

Summary of Findings

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

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 27 children attending the service were supervised directly by 4 adults. Discussion with staff members and a review of the staff and children's attendance records from 26 February 2024 to 9 April 2024 demonstrated the minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was maintained during this period.

During the inspection, staff were observed to engage with children. One staff was observed explaining the rules of a game of cards to the children, playing a game with a group of children, and also engaging with other children who asked them a question.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service was insured for afterschool only from 28 March 2024 to 27 March 2025 for a maximum of 36 school age children.