

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020LS006SA
Name of School Age Service:	Mountmellick Youth and Family Resource Centre
Name of Registered Provider:	Alan Dunne
Address of School Age Service:	C/O MDA Irishtown Mountmellick Laois
Eircode:	R32Y191

Date of Inspection:	24 July 2024			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	14	PM	Not applicable
Registration status:	Registered			
Conditions (if applicable):	Not applicable			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Early Years Inspectorate Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35K1W4
Inspection undertaken by:	A Spain
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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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:

Mountmellick Youth and Family Resource Centre is a school age service and part of integrated family support services provided in Mountmellick town, Laois. The school age service operates from a sports complex located at the grounds of a school building in the town area. The service cares for children between the ages of 4 and 15 years and during the hours of 9.00am and 6.00pm. The service operates between the hours of 2.15 and 6.00pm during school terms. Rooms in use by the service include an activity room, a kitchen and seating area and a second classroom if required for use by the service. Sanitary accommodation is provided in the hallway. The service has the use of a large hall for energetic play. An enclosed playground directly outside of the service is available for outdoor play after school hours in the adjacent school building.

Staffing:

The service is staffed by 10 adults which includes the person in charge of the service. The registered provider does not work directly in the service.

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, 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 relation to:

- Regulation 8: Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1)(2)(4): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 12: Insurance;

Conclusion and follow-up action:

The service was compliant with the regulations inspected under the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Registration of School Age Services Regulations 2018.

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)

Fifteen validated references from past employers were held on file with respect to the 10 staff members working in the service. Five validated references from sources other than past employers were held on file with respect to the 10 staff members. A Garda vetting disclosure was held on file in respect of all staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. A Police vetting was held on file in respect of one staff member who had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as an adult.

(2)

Documented evidence was available to confirm that vetting procedures were conducted for staff prior to their appointment to work in 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)

Three staff members cared for a total of 14 school age children in the activity hall in the service on arrival of the inspector at 11.15am and for the duration of the inspection. The inspector reviewed both the sign in and sign out sheets for staff and the corresponding attendance records for children for the day of inspection and the week of the 15 July 2024. The review confirmed that the minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was maintained in the service for this period.

(4)

Staff supervised the children present by sight and by participating in activities with the children present. The staff were observed to engage in conversations with children while they sat and had a snack at 11.15am. Children provided the inspector with an outline of “tricks” a magician played on a visit to the service the day before the inspection was conducted. Staff were observed to play a ball game with the children in the large hall after break time.

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Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

Insurance cover for the services provided in the family resource centre included cover for a maximum of 60 children in daily attendance in a school age service. Insurance was valid from the 29 September 2023 to the 28 September 2024.