

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020WH015SA
Name of School Age Service:	Dunaree Childcare & Preschool LTD
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Mairead Hyland
Address of School Age Service:	Unit 5 Bagnells Shopping Centre Rochfortbridge Co Westmeath
Eircode:	N91 AV67

Date(s) of Inspection:	25 June 2024
Number of school age children present during inspection:	PM 14
Registration status:	Registered
Conditions (if applicable):	Not applicable

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive Airside Business Park Swords Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. McDonnell A. Bradshaw
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:

Dunaree Childcare & Preschool LTD is a school age service based in a converted ground-floor commercial building in a residential area in Co Westmeath. The service caters for children aged 4 to 12 years old. The service is open Monday to Friday between 7 to 9.00am for a breakfast club and 2 to 6.00pm for the afterschool service. The service operates from a large room to the front of the property. There is access to an outdoor area, sanitary facilities and a small kitchen. There is a registered pre-school in operation on the site.

Staffing:

The registered provider works in the service in a supernumerary capacity. The registered provider employs five staff members who work directly with the children.

Additional Information:

This inspection was triggered following 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, 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)(4): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 10: Policies etc. of school age service;
- Regulation 12: Insurance;
- Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(c): Complaints;
- Child Care Act 1991, 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

The inspector reviewed the staff files of the five staff members and the registered provider. There were two written references available for the registered provider. There were two written and validated references available for the five staff members from a previous employer or source other than a previous employer. A Garda vetting disclosure, dated within the last three years, was available for the five staff members and the registered provider. The service had therefore demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. A review of documentation demonstrated that police vetting was either not required or was available for review as required. The registered provider had ensured that vetting procedures had been completed before the staff members or others had commenced employment in 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)

There were 3 staff members were working directly with the 14 children who attended the service on the day of the inspection.

(4)

The inspector observed appropriate supervision of the children during the inspection. For example, whilst some children finished their dinner, other children were supported by staff in play activities as required.

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 inspector reviewed the service's behaviour management policy, the drop-off and collection policy, and the complaints policy. These documents contained information as per Schedule 6 of the regulations to support staff in their practice.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service was insured from 28 March 2024 to 27 March 2025 for 35 children. On the day of the inspection, there were 19 school age children in attendance.

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.*

Regulatory Requirement Met

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

The complaints policy detailed the procedure for making a complaint and how verbal and written complaints would be dealt with. There was an informal, formal, and escalation process documented in the policy. The policy referenced how a complainant would be kept informed of the complaints procedure and the appeals process. The registered provider and staff informed the inspectors that there had been no complaints.

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 inspector observed the health, safety and welfare of children being supported by the following:

- The service had a behaviour management policy in place which was accessible on site to staff. Staff spoken with were aware of the policy and the strategies within. There were records showing that staff had read and reviewed the service policies. Staff were observed to interact with the children in a kind and gentle manner. For example, all children were asked if they wanted more dinner and whilst the children ate staff chatted with the children. Whilst no incidents were observed on the day of inspection, staff described how they would take time with children to discuss issues and support children in solving problems together.
- A sample of children spoke with the inspectors about the activities they were able to do in the service. They described how they had a choice in what they did and that this choice was facilitated. For example, one child spoke of how they were allowed to build forts in different areas of the room. The staff spoke of how they discussed with the children what they wanted to do and two children spoke of how they could join in activities if they chose to. As children finished lunch the inspectors observed that whilst some children were eating, others went to different areas of the room. For example, a small group of children, consisting of school age and pre-school children went to a reading area and chatted together whilst picking books to read to each other. In another area, children played with action toys and construction blocks. The children were observed to have space to do these different activities.
- The inspector observed staff collecting children from a local school in the service vehicles. The service had dedicated staff to complete the collections. These staff discussed the

collection procedure with the inspector which included a set collection list. The collection was completed by two staff members. This collection list had a maximum of 10 children for collection on any given day. The inspector observed that capacity in the service vehicles would accommodate the maximum number of children on the collection list. The staff discussed the procedure should there be parental requests for collections that are not on the collection list. They explained that these changes were recorded in a communication document which is reviewed by the organiser of the collections on a daily basis. The staff members completing the collection are then informed of changes. On the day of the inspection, nine children were collected from the school. Each child was secured in a booster seat, if required. Children who were able to sit in the front seat were identified clearly on the collection list and parental consent for this was available for this.