

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021DS002SA
Name of School Age Service:	Little Harvard Childcare Ltd (Rathfarnham)
Name of Registered Provider:	James Hargrave
Address of School Age Service:	Taylors Hill, College Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14
Eircode:	D16 P599

Date of Inspection:	12 September 2024
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM 5
Registration status:	Registered
Conditions (if applicable):	Not applicable

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

Little Harvard Childcare Ltd (Rathfarnham) is one of 16 school aged services owned and operated by the registered provider.

The service is based in a purposely built premises in Dublin 14. The younger school age children share care room with sessional preschool children and the older school age children have the use of a dedicated wooden building at the side of the main building.

There is an outdoor area at the front of the building.

The service is registered to care for up to 44 children aged from 4 to 12 years old. The registered operating hours are 7.30 to 9.15am and 7am to 7pm during holiday periods.

The service also operates a full day care service for pre-school children from this premises.

Staffing:

The registered provider employs five staff members to care for the school age children. The registered provider does not work with the children.

Additional Information:

The 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, 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 8: Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1)(2)(4): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 10: Policies etc. of school age service;
- Regulation 12: Insurance;
- Regulation 13(1)(2)(3): Complaints;
- 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 7(1): Notification of change in circumstances.

Conclusion and follow-up actions: The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Regulation 7: Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a school age service shall, subject to paragraph (2), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the school age service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C (2) of the Act or Regulation 6(2) or 6(3) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(7)(1)

The registered provider had not informed Tusla in advance of an addition to the operational hours of the service.

The service was operating outside the registered operating hours of 7.30 to 9.15am and 7am to 7pm during the school holidays. During a discussion with a staff member and on a review of documents, it was confirmed that the service operated from 7 to 8.50am and 1 to 6.30pm during the school term.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

A change in circumstances application was submitted to the agency and was approved on 25 September 2024. The service is now registered to operate from 7.30am to 9.15am and 1.30pm to 6.30pm, and 7am to 6.30pm out of term time.

The registered provider stated that, if the service opening hours change, local management will submit a change in circumstances to reflect the same and senior management will ensure compliance with all aspects of Regulation 7.

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 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. Documentation available demonstrated that relevant vetting disclosure procedures were carried out before any person began working directly with the children. Garda vetting was in place for six staff members and the service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. The records reviewed demonstrated that four police vetting disclosures were required and these were available to the inspector for review.

References for six staff members were reviewed and these were validated where required.

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)

On the day of the inspection, there were five school age children and one staff member supervising the children. An additional staff member was available for support if required. Discussion with staff members and a review of the staff and children's attendance records from 29 July 2024 to 30 August 2024 demonstrated the minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was maintained during this period.

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 complaints policy and the service's statement of purpose and function. 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 44 children.

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)(2)

There was a complaints policy in place which detailed how to make a verbal or written complaint and how these would be dealt with. The policy referenced how a complainant would be kept informed of the complaints procedure. During a discussion with a staff member, they stated that no formal complaints had been received in the service.

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

Children were being served breakfast on the inspector's arrival. There were two staff members available to all the children with an additional staff member greeting the children on their arrival. Staff names and photographs were displayed on the wall in the school-age rooms. A staff member described how the school age children are cared for in two rooms by two staff members with a third moving between both groups as required during the day.

A staff member stated that the service policies and procedures, which had been updated in 2023, were available to parents on the company's website. Hard copies were on display in the service for staff members.

The services Child and Adult Protection policy included details of the recruitment and selection process which included records about each staff member, completed induction records, and supervision and support records, which had been signed by staff and management. It stated that staff members and students were trained, selected carefully and supervised. A staff member described how the induction process was for six months from the date of employment, with planned appraisals and scheduled supervision meetings.

A staff member stated that formal staff supervision meetings were scheduled four times a year and there was a monthly team meeting. The inspector reviewed written records of these meetings. The staff member also stated that informal support for staff members occurs as required by staff or management.

Evidence was available to demonstrate that all staff members had read the services Code of Behaviour.

The services Child Safeguarding statement was reviewed in line with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and included the services' principles concerning the protection of children. This document contained a risk assessment of potential risks to the child and procedures in place to mitigate these including the risk of harm of to a child.

Procedures included the description of the vetting procedures for staff members, no unsupervised access by unauthorised personnel, staff training, a named designated liaison person (DLP) and mandated persons. The evidence reviewed demonstrated that all staff members had completed Tusla's Children First E-learning training. During discussions with staff members, they demonstrated they were aware of their responsibilities and the requirements of mandated persons and the DLP. This was in line with the Child Protection procedures displayed in the hallway of the building. Evidence was available to demonstrate that the service had followed these procedures following a reported incident.