

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021LK018SA
Name of School Age Service:	Munroe Kids Club
Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Roche
Address of School Age Service:	Fr. Russell Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick City.
Eircode:	V94 A4TO

Date of Inspection:	15 April 2024		
Number of school age children present during inspection:	PM	20	
Registration status:	Registered		

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
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:

Munroe Kids Club is one of two services operated by the registered provider. It is a private school age and early years service based in an adapted residential property on the outskirts of Limerick city. The school age service is registered to accommodate up to 20 children from the age of 4 up to 12 years of age. On the day of inspection, there were 20 school age children present.

The service is registered to operate from 7:15am to 9am and 1pm to 6pm. The service is open from 7:15am to 6pm outside of the school term. The younger school age children are cared for in the shared senior preschool room. The older children have two dedicated rooms on the first floor of the building.

There is a large outdoor space available to the children at the rear of the house.

Staffing:

On the day of the inspection, there were three staff caring for the school age children, with three additional staff responsible for school collections and a chef. The registered provider was not rostered to work directly with the children but is available to provide support if required.

Additional Information:

The inspection was completed on the receipt of a feedback and concern 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:

- 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, registered provider, person in charge, and staff who were present on the day of inspection.

Summary of Findings:

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

- Regulation 8(1)(a)(b)(c): Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1)(2)(4): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 10: Policies of a school age service;
- Regulation 12: Insurance;
- Regulation 13: Complaints.

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

- Regulation 8(1)(d) 2: Vetting disclosures;
- 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 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)

The inspector reviewed eight staff files, including the registered provider and an auxiliary staff member's files. The registered provider had ensured that validated references were available and that all staff had Garda vetting in place.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(1)

(d) Police vetting was not available for three staff members. The documentation reviewed showed that five staff members required police vetting of which two were available.

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

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

(1)(d) The registered provider submitted a copy the the required police vetting for three staff members.

(2) The registered provider stated that management has been reminded of the recruitment policy which was in place which included the procedure for completing Garda vetting disclosure documents before new staff commenced employment. A copy of the meeting notes were 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

On the inspection day, the registered provider ensured that appropriate staffing levels were maintained. Twenty children attending the service were supervised directly by three adults and three staff additional were available to collect the children from school.

Staff were observed to engage with the school age children. One staff member was observed to facilitate the children who were overheard requesting to continue an activity outdoors.

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

On the day of inspection, the following policies and statements were in place for the service: a child safeguarding statement, a statement of purpose and function, infection control policy, medication policy, behaviour management policy, drop off/collection policy, fire safety policy, and complaints policy which met the requirements of the regulations.

The registered provider stated that the policies and procedures document was available to parents and staff on the services online portal. The registered provider submitted a template of a form to be signed by all staff confirming they have read and understood the service's policy and procedures.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service had insurance cover in place for a maximum of 45 children at any one time. The insurance was valid from 28 March 2024 to 27 March 2025.

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.
- (2) A registered provider of a school age service other than a childminding service shall ensure that—
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the school age service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.

Regulatory Requirement Met

(1)(2)

There was a comments and complaints policy in place which detailed how to make a complaint. This policy also detailed how verbal and written complaints would be dealt with. It also referenced how a complainant would be kept informed of the complaints procedure. The policy names the service manager as the person to whom complaints can be made in writing or verbally. During discussions, staff indicated that no formal complaints had been received or processed for the school age 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

The inspector observed children being collected from a local school. Two staff members met seven children at the school at two designated meeting points. The children appeared to be familiar with the routine and waited until the staff member had checked the names on the collection list and assured themselves that all children were present. This procedure was in line with the services drop-off and collection policy. The children then walked to the service, accompanied by the two staff, crossing the road at a pedestrian crossing manned by a school traffic warden. A staff member led the group, with the second staff staying at the back of the group. Staff verbally described the procedures in place if a child was not at the school at collection time or if a child, who was not on the list, was at the designated collection points. Through discussion with the registered provider it was acknowledged this policy had not been followed on a previous occasion. However the day of the inspection these procedures were in place.

Regulatory Requirement not met

1. While it is acknowledged that the registered provider submitted evidence of Garda Vetting renewal forms on 16 April 2024. However, on the day of the inspection, of the Garda vetting available for eight staff members, three of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. Staff were not aware of how many children they were caring for at a particular time. The absence of such information created a risk to the safe evacuation of children in the event of an emergency. At 2.30pm, during a conversation with two staff members caring for up to 16 children, it was evident that they did not know how many children were in the room. When asked about the number of children in their care, a staff member attempted to open an application on an electronic tablet. However, this would not connect to the internet and the staff had to count the children in the room.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

1. The registered provider stated that management has been reminded of the recruitment policy which was in place which included the procedure for completing Garda vetting disclosure documents before new staff commenced employment. A copy of the required vetting which were renewed for three staff and meeting notes were submitted as

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

evidence.

2. The registered providers stated that they have discussed with the staff the importance of knowing how what children are under their care. They stated that a reminder notice has been displayed in the care rooms and the manager will be responsible for completing spot checks

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 and will be reviewed on the next inspection.