

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021MH035SA
Name of School Age Service:	Giggles Childcare Centre
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Marie Daly
Address of School Age Service:	Woodgrove Ballivor Meath
Eircode:	C15 EH67

Date(s) of Inspection:	26 March 2025
Number of school age children present during inspection:	PM 29
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. Spain
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:

Giggles Childcare Centre is located in a purpose-built two-storey building in a residential area of Co Meath. The school-age children have access to five care rooms on the upper floor and a designated outdoor area directly across from the main building. There is access to sanitary facilities and a kitchen area on the ground and first floor. The service operates a breakfast club from 7.00 to 9.00am, an afterschool service from 2.00 to 6.00pm and during holidays from 7.00 am to 6.00pm. The service provides care to children aged 4 to 15 years old and there is a registered preschool in operation on site.

Staffing:

The school age service is staffed by seven adults working with the school age children, which includes a manager for the service. The registered provider does not work directly in the service.

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 commence.

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, managers 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)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b): Complaints.
- Child Care Act 1991, Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013.

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 files of seven staff members. Two references from past employers were held on file in respect of two staff members working in the service. A reference from a past employer and a reference from a reputable source was held on file in respect of four staff members. Two references from reputable sources were held on file in respect of one staff member. 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. International police vetting was not required as none of the staff had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as adults.

Records confirmed that the necessary procedures were conducted prior to the appointment of staff to work 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.*
- (3) Without prejudice to paragraph (1), a registered provider of a school age service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service singlehandedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance in operating the service to the person in charge is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge or the registered provider of the childminding service in the event of an emergency.*
- (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

The 29 children in attendance on the day of inspection were supervised by 5 staff members. A review of the attendance records for children and the staff roster for a sample week of 10 March 2025 confirmed that the appropriate adult-child ratios were maintained.

During the inspection appropriate supervision of the children was observed. Following lunch staff members supported children with their homework or completing activities in small groups. Other staff members, including the assistant manager, were available to help with activities, cleaning and food preparation. Later in the afternoon, all children went outside to play where appropriate supervision was also observed with staff being attentive to the location of the children in their care.

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 service's 'supporting positive behaviour' and 'complaints and compliments' policies were reviewed. These documents contained the required 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 had insurance cover for a maximum of 120 children in daily attendance in a full day care service. Insurance cover was valid from the 28 March 2025 to the 27 March 2026.

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.*
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall—*

(a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and

(b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person

Regulatory Requirement Met

The complaints policy detailed the procedure for making a complaint and how verbal and written complaints would be dealt with. The policy referenced how a complainant would be kept informed of the complaints procedure and the appeals process.

The were details of a recent incident which had been recorded and was being processed in line with the service's complaints policy alongside other relevant policies.

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

- Following a recent incident, which was notified to the inspectorate, the inspectors found that procedures, risk assessments and staff awareness were in place to minimise the risk re-occurring. There was a written record of the procedures and policies, which had been updated in February 2025, that were followed and relevant risk assessments in relation to the incident. There was also a signed record available of this information being disseminated to staff members. Staff spoken with were aware of procedures in place to support the children's safety in outdoor areas which included where staff were located, the provision of high visibility jackets for children and continuous head counts of children when playing outdoors. These measures were observed in place on the day of inspection.
- During the inspection staff members were observed interacting kindly with the children. There were numerous conversations with different staff members concerning children's

days at school, families and activities the children took part in. The staff were observed implementing positive behaviour management by responding to children's queries and questions and providing opportunities and space to relax in the games room. Staff members were knowledgeable about individual children and how to support them, with key staff working with various children.

- The children were observed spending time in the outdoor area specifically assigned to the school-age children attending the service. There was a variety of large, wooden play equipment available alongside a football net, balls and picnic tables. The children were observed enjoying all areas of the outdoor area, with staff playing games and chatting with the children whilst supervising them. The children were observed leaving this area on collection by the parents, with staff signing the children out of the service's online application and completing headcounts.
- There was documentation in place showing signed evidence of communication with parents regarding events which occurred in the service.