

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022DS002SA
Name of School Age Service:	Little Harvard Childcare
Name of Registered Provider:	James Hargrave
Address of School Age Service:	1 The Lodge The Crescent Scholarstown Wood Rathfarnham Dublin 16
Eircode:	D16 C3H2

Date of Inspection:	8 February 2024
Number of school age children present during inspection:	PM 11
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

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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:

Little Harvard Childcare operates several school age care and pre-school services, which are based in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow. The school age service inspected is located in a residential area of South Dublin and there is a pre-school service on the site. The service caters for children aged 4-12 years old. The service is open Monday to Friday and provides a breakfast club from 7.00 to 9.00am and afterschool care from 1.30 to 7.00pm. The service operates from a single-storey building. School age care is provided in one of the ground-floor rooms. Sanitary facilities for the use of the school age children are available off the main care room and there is an office, outdoor play area and a kitchen on the site.

Staffing:

The registered provider does not work in the service. The registered provider employs 12 staff members who work in the service. This includes two staff members who directly work with the school age children, and a manager and a regional manager who work in a supernumerary capacity. There is also a dedicated bus driver and a cook. The other six staff members work with the school age children as required.

Additional Information:

The inspection was completed on the receipt 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:

- 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 the inspection.

Summary of Findings:

One 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;
- Regulation 12: Insurance;
- Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(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 registered provider's file and the staff files of the 12 staff members who worked with the school age children. There were written references available for the registered provider. There were two written and validated references available for all 12 staff members from a previous employer or a source other than a previous employer. A Garda vetting disclosure was available for all 12 staff and the registered provider. The documentation demonstrated that police vetting was available for review if required.

An examination of the vetting procedures and start dates for new staff indicated that these were carried out before staff members worked 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 was 1 staff member working directly with the 11 children who attended the service on the day of the inspection. A review of staff attendance records and rostered working times indicated that there were sufficient staff rostered to work with the children throughout the afternoons of the 6 and 7 February 2024.

(4)

The inspectors observed appropriate supervision of the children during the inspection. For example, during lunch and homework time, one of the managers assisted the staff member in the room with the children. This provided support to supervise the children whilst they ate and allowed for support with their homework.

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 September 2023 to 27 March 2024 for a maximum of 77 children. On the day of the inspection, there were 11 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.*
- (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)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(b)

The inspector reviewed the service's complaints policy. 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. There was a child-friendly version of the complaints policy available for children in the service.

There was a record of a complaint on file which was reviewed by the inspector. The documentation reviewed demonstrated that the complaint was ongoing and was being dealt with in line with the service's complaints policy.

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 inspectors observed the children arriving at the service using the service's transport vehicle. The inspectors observed that the bus had been driven by the dedicated bus driver employed by the service. There was documentation available which demonstrated that the bus and the driver were insured. A member of staff discussed the contingency measures in place should the dedicated driver not be available. This included the use of another bus and driver which was available and managed from another of the Little Harvard sites. Drivers of the service's smaller vehicles were insured to drive the vehicles that had been previously available.
- The inspector reviewed a sample of accident and incident records available specifically for school age children since August 2023. The sample reviewed demonstrated that parents had been informed of the incident as copies of written records of the incidents had been signed by staff and parents. A staff member discussed the procedures should a child be involved in an accident or incident and referred to phoning the parents to inform them of what had occurred. This was reflective of the service's accident and incident policy. The sample also demonstrated that risk assessments had been completed and preventive actions had been implemented as required, which staff were aware of.

- The registered provider ensured that there was a staff member with certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training available at all times to the children attending the service on the day of the inspection and for the week of the inspection as demonstrated by the roster.
- The inspector reviewed the service's behaviour management policy which had been updated in January 2023. The policy outlined the supports in place for positive behaviour management and there was evidence that staff had received training and understood the policy. Staff were observed implementing the supports as described in the policy. A staff member discussed with the inspector a recent incident in which the children had been encouraged to discuss issues with peers and find a solution. On the day of the inspection, the staff member was able to provide support to the children as required and provided equipment for activities that were suggested by the children.