

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022KE003SA
Name of School Age Service:	Cairdeas Afterschool Club
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Mary Sherlock
Address of School Age Service:	St Joseph's National School, Halverstown, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare.
Eircode:	R56 W950

Date(s) of Inspection:	14 November 2024			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	N/A	PM	12
Registration status:	Registered for School Aged Care			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Saint John's Road West, Dublin 8. D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Duff 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).

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School Age Services

Description of Service:

Cairdeas Afterschool Club is a registered school age service in Halverstown Co Kildare. The school aged service is based in a primary school and has use of two rooms. The fifth and sixth class classrooms are available to the children outside school hours. The school age service also has the use of a large secure outdoor area.

The service is registered to accommodate up to 12 school age children between the ages of 4- 15 years at any one time. Opening hours are 13:40- 18:00 from September to June.

Staffing:

The registered provider is the sole operator of this service.

Additional Information:

The inspector conducted a planned, focused inspection of the service.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the co-operation of the children, registered provider, who were present on the day of inspection.

Summary of Findings:

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

- Regulation 8 (1) (c): Garda Vetting
- Regulation 9(1)(2)(3)(4): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 12: Insurance.

On the day of inspection, the registered provider was found to be non-compliant in:

- Regulation (8): (1) (a)(b)(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-compliances 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) (c)
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure, dated within the last three years, was available for the registered provider and the person appointed by the provider to assist in the event of an emergency. The service had therefore demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

Regulatory Requirement not met

- (1)(a)(b)
- (a) There were no validated references available for the person appointed by the registered provider to assist in the event of an emergency.
- It is acknowledged that two written references were available for the registered provider.
- (d) Documentation was unavailable for the person appointed by the registered provider to assist in the event of an emergency to affirm whether police vetting was required.
- (2) The procedures, as required, were not carried out prior to the commencement of employment of staff within the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

(1)

(a)(b)(d) The registered provider has submitted two validated references and a CV for the person registered to assist in the event of an emergency. The documentation reviewed demonstrated that police vetting was not required for the person registered to assist in the event of an emergency. The registered provider has also appointed two further contacts to assist in the case of an emergency. The inspectorate has received vetting disclosure documents to confirm that the additional emergency people have completed and returned their vetting forms. The Inspectorate has also received CVs, Identification and verified references for both additional emergency people.

The registered provider has stated that they are more aware of all the documentation required to be compliant under regulation 8 Vetting Disclosures. They stated that a recruitment Policy for emergency supervision has been implemented, which includes a risk assessment. The registered provider has stated that a procedure to combat the risk has been also identified and included in the services' Safeguarding Statement. The inspectorate has received a copy of the risk assessment and safeguarding statement.

Summary of Findings

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 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

(1)(2)(3)(4)

During the inspection, the registered provider ensured that appropriate staffing levels were maintained. The 12 children attending the service were supervised directly by the registered provider. Discussion with the registered provider, and records of the children's attendance from 30 September to 25 October 2024 demonstrated the minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was maintained during this period. The registered provider confirmed they have appointed a second person who lives close by to assist in the event of an emergency.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service is insured from 29 March 2024 to 28 March 2025 for a maximum of 12 school-age children at any one time.

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:

- The children were observed to be engaged in a variety of activities and reflected the children's stage of development. For example, one group of children took part in a game of snakes and ladders with the registered provider and other children played with Lego. At a later part of the day some children engaged in Christmas craft activities while others played with a fairy garden. Children also completed homework with support of the registered provider. Children spoke of how there were activities on offer and that they had a choice in what they did.

Regulatory Requirement not met

The registered provider did not ensure that the safety of the children attending the service was maintained. It is acknowledged there were attendance records available. However, these were prepopulated and not an accurate record of children present in the service. This poses a risk to children's safety in case of emergency evacuation from the building.

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Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered Provider has confirmed that they will record the exact arrival and departure times of the children, they have stated that the register will not be pre-populated, and an extra column has been added to the attendance register against each child's name to indicate whether they are present or absent each day. The inspectorate has received a copy of the register which includes the changes. The registered provider has reported that a roll call will be carried out every day at the beginning of each session to ensure children's attendance is accurately recorded therefore ensuring safety in case of emergency evacuation from the building.

Summary of Findings

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.