

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022MO011SA
Name of School Age Service:	Louisburgh Childcare
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Barbara Daly
Address of School Age Service:	Louisburgh National School Tooreen Road Louisburgh Co Mayo
Eircode:	F28T189

Date(s) of Inspection:	16 July 2024			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	4	PM	8
Registration status:	Registered			
Conditions (if applicable):	Not applicable			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Early Years Inspectorate Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35K1W4
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Spain
Title:	Early years inspector

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

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:

Louisburgh Childcare is temporarily located in a residential housing estate on the outskirts of Louisburgh, southwest of Co. Mayo. The community run service is located in a purpose-built single storey childcare service. Children in the age range 4 to 12 years are cared for between 1.40 and 5.30pm.

Rooms in the school age service include a playroom, a kitchenette off the playroom and a toy storeroom. Sanitary accommodation for adults and children is provided. The service has access to outdoor play areas directly off the playroom and in a Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) all-weather astroturf pitch across the road from the service.

Staffing:

The service is staffed by four adults. The registered provider does not work directly in the service.

Additional Information:

The inspection was conducted 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:

- 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, 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 relation to:

- 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): 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 relation to:

- 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 inspector reviewed the actions and evidence that the registered provider submitted. The non-compliance found on inspection has been adequately addressed.

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)(d)

Two validated references from past employers were available in respect of three staff members. A validated reference from both a past employer and a reputable source was available in respect of the fourth staff member working in the service. A Garda vetting disclosure was held on file regarding the four staff members employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. A Police vetting was held on file in respect of two staff members who had lived outside of the State for over six consecutive months as adults.

(2)

A review of the staff files confirmed that vetting 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.*
- (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)

Two staff members cared for four school age children on the morning of the inspection. The two staff members cared for a total of eight school age children in the afternoon in the service. A review of the staff roster and corresponding records of attendance for the children for the week of the 24 June 2024 demonstrated that the minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was maintained during this period.

(4)

Children were observed to be appropriately supervised by both sight and sound by the staff while in the GAA grounds, in the playroom and in the outdoor area directly off the playroom. The adult: child ratio maintained in the service was observed to allow children to have free access to both the indoor and outdoor areas under direct staff supervision at all times.

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 complaints policy, the policy on accidents and incidents and the behavioural management policy for the service. The policies were observed to be in keeping with the requirements of Regulation 10 and Schedule 6 of the regulations. A record, dated the 27 October 2023, was held in the service to confirm that all staff had read, understood and agreed to follow the policies in the service. In addition, a hard copy of the service policies was available in the service. The person in charge confirmed that this copy was available as a reference point for both staff and parents if required or requested.

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 12 children in daily attendance with two staff members present. Insurance cover was valid from the 15 July 2024 to the 02 August 2024 covering the provision of a summer camp.

The person in charge confirmed that the service will operate from a room in a school building at the beginning of the new school term.

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)(a)(b)(c)

The complaints policy for the service included the procedure for making a complaint. It outlined how complaints were dealt with and the manner in which the complainant was kept aware of the complaint investigation. The policy included an appeals provision should the complainant be dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint investigation. The person in charge of the service confirmed that no complaints were received by 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

During the inspection, the inspector observed the health, safety and welfare of the children being supported as follows:

- On the inspectors arrival to the service, it was observed that the entrance was secured with a keypad. A high level door handle was on the door leading from the playroom to the adjoining hallway to guard against unsupervised exit by children.
- Staff in the school age room were observed to support positive behaviour by listening to the children and responding to their needs. Children were encouraged to take turns and this was supported by offering children alternative activities as necessary.
- The service had introduced an afterschool diary in May of 2024. This diary was used to record staff comments and observations about the children and communications with parents. The person in charge advised that the diary was used at monthly meetings to support staff training and learning exercises. An example of a training exercise in relation to an incident in the service was recorded for a meeting held on 28 May 2024.
- The service's inclusion policy outlined the measures taken by the service to ensure the needs of all children in attendance were met. Records held in the service confirmed that staff received the policy on 17 April 2024. Staff in the service confirmed receipt of the policy. The policy was updated on the 15 April 2024 to advise of the service measures introduced to ensure that children with a disability and/or additional needs could "meaningfully participate in the setting". The person in charge of the service advised that staff training on the policy will be conducted in August 2024 and that the policy will be included in the parent handbook for September 2024.
- In the parents handbook, it was noted that information in the handbook was a "condensed version" of the full service policy document. In the handbook, it was

documented that the full childcare policies were available to parents in the service. This was confirmed by the person in charge to the inspector. Parental signed records were held in the service as confirmation that parents had read and agreed to abide by the conditions outlined in the handbook.

- The person in charge of the service furnished the inspector with written documentation to outline the additional measures taken by the service to support staff training exercises. These measures were introduced in the service in May 2024. The training exercises comprised of sample documented scenarios in the service and also documentation the steps advised by the staff to address same. The person in charge of the service advised that the staff training exercise was introduced for staff to implement should the scenario take place in the service. A copy of the staff training exercise document was furnished to the inspector.

Regulatory Requirement not met

1. Records of some documented risk assessments conducted in the service following accidents and incidents were not recorded in the accident and incident book for the service. This posed a risk of parents and guardians not receiving information about the accidents and incidents as they arose.

It was acknowledged by the person in charge of the service and the staff present, that the failure to record and communicate accidents and incidents to parents as they arose was not in keeping with the accident and incident policy for the service.

It was observed by the inspector that any records of accidents and incidents as recorded in the accident and incident book included a record of parental signature to confirm parental knowledge of recorded accidents or incidents.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

1. The registered provider advised in the CAPA response to the inspection report that additional training and support were provided to staff to emphasise the importance of maintaining accurate records and ensuring that parents receive copies of all accidents and incidents. As a preventive measure, the registered provider advised that staff training and monthly team meetings will be conducted to support staff and provide ongoing training.

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Summary of Findings

The registered provider submitted actions to correct and prevent the reoccurrence of the non-compliance identified on inspection. This will be reviewed on the next inspection of the service.