

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023GY021SA
Name of School Age Service:	Spraoi Early Learning Centre
Name of Registered Provider:	Theresa Murphy
Address of School Age Service:	Church Street Gort Co. Galway
Eircode:	H91 EK54

Date of Inspection:	08/10/2025			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	N/A	PM	31
Registration status:	Registered			
Conditions (if applicable):	Not applicable			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	K Folan
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).

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Description of Service:

Spraoi Early Learning Centre is a standalone school age service, located in Gort, Co Galway. The service operates from 08:00-09:00 and 13:30-18:00, Monday to Friday. The service is in a terraced former dwelling house which has been refurbished for the provision of a school age service, in the centre of Gort. On the ground floor of the service there is one playroom, a kitchen and sanitary accommodation for children. On the first floor there is one playroom and sanitary accommodation. An outdoor area is available at the back of the building.

Staffing:

The service employs 5 adults to care for school age children. The registered provider does not work in the service.

Additional Information:

The inspection was completed 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 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 9(1)(2)(4): Staffing Levels
- Regulation 12: Insurance
- Child Care Act 1991, Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013

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

- Regulation 7: Notification of Change in Circumstances
- Regulation 8: Vetting Disclosures
- Regulation 10: Policies of a school age service in relation to managing behaviour

Conclusion and follow up actions:

The inspector reviewed the registered providers response, documented and photographic evidence that was submitted. The non- compliances found on inspection have been adequately addressed.

Regulation 7: Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a school age service shall, subject to paragraph (2), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the school age service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C (2) of the Act or Regulation 6(2) or 6(3) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Regulatory Requirement not met

The registered provider had not informed Tusla of a change to the person in charge. The manager confirmed to the inspector that the person in charge had ceased working in the service and a new person in charge would be appointed.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted documentary evidence to confirm that a change in circumstance form was submitted to Tusla and subsequently approved. The registered provider stated in future the appointed person in charge will be notified to Tusla.

Summary of Findings

The documented and photographic evidence submitted has been reviewed by the inspector and has met the regulatory requirements.

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

On the day of inspection, 5 staff files were reviewed and the following information was available:

- (1)(a) Nine references were available from past employers and were validated by the registered provider.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 5 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

Regulatory Requirement not met

- (1)(b) One reference was from a source not listed on the employment record.
 - (1)(d) International police vetting had been obtained in respect of 3 staff who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- However, it could not be established if police vetting was required in respect of 1 staff member due to gaps in the employment record.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

- (1)(b) The reference source was added to the employment record. In future the registered provider will ensure employment records are complete with no gaps.
- (1)(d) The employment record was amended to include incomplete information. In future, all employment records will be completed before a any staff member begins their employment.

Summary of Findings

The documented and photographic evidence submitted has been reviewed by the inspector and has met the regulatory requirements.

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)
- The registered provider ensured that adequate staffing levels were maintained during the inspection.
- (2)
- On the afternoon of the inspection:

Thirty-one children aged between 4 and 12 years old attended the service and were supervised by 4 adults.

In the “drop zone” room, 3 adults cared for 19 children aged between 4 to 7 years old.

In the “kids lounge” room, 1 adult cared for 12 children aged 8 to 12 years old.

(4)

Children were adequately supervised by adults in the care rooms during activities and at snack time. In the outdoor area, staff positioned themselves to ensure children were supervised by sight and sound at all times.

There was documented evidence of a roster available for the staff with start and finish times recorded.

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 following policy was assessed and contained information to meet the regulatory requirement:

- Complaints policy

The inspector reviewed the above policy and it contained information required as per Schedule 6 of the regulation.

Regulatory Requirement not met

The managing behaviour policy was assessed and did not meet the requirements for the managing behaviour policy for school age children.

The policy did not specify approaches for managing bullying by a school age child attending the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The managing behaviour policy has been reviewed and adjusted to meet the requirements for the managing behaviour policy for school age children. Policies will be reviewed continuously to allow for further policy development.

Summary of Findings

The documented and photographic evidence submitted has been reviewed by the inspector and has met the regulatory requirements.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service had adequate insurance in place for 36 children to attend a school age service and was valid from 28 March 2025 to 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

(1)(a)(b)(c)

The complaints policy was available for review by the inspector. The policy detailed the procedure of how to make a complaint and how the service would respond to the complaint. It outlined that the complainant would be kept informed of the complaint's procedure. There was a child friendly complaints policy that was given to the children at the beginning of the term outlining how they could make a complaint if required.

(2)(a)(b)

The service had kept a written record of a verbal complaint it had received in relation to the school age service. Details of the steps taken by the service to address the complaint were on record and in adherence to the services complaints policy.

(3)(a)(b)

The service had recorded the nature of the complaint and how the service addressed the complaint. A record of the complaint was made available to the inspector.

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 staff were observed speaking kindly to the children and engaging respectfully with them.
- Staff supported the children's needs by ensuring individual water bottles were available to the children at all times, both indoors and outdoors.
- Snacks were provided to the children at regular intervals. Children brought a snack to the service and the service provided a snack of rice cakes and fruit in the evening.
- The children appeared happy in the service and were observed playing energetically in the services outdoor area. During homework time, staff ensured the environment was calm while also supporting children who required it.
- A person trained in first aid for children was available to the school age children at all times, as evidenced by the roster.
- External and internal doors were secured in the service throughout the inspection, preventing unauthorised access to the service or a child leaving the service unsupervised.
 - The registered provider had safety measures in place throughout the service such as handrails on the stairs both indoors and outdoors, blind cords had been secured to the wall, cleaning materials were kept out of children's reach and all toys and equipment were in good condition.