

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024DL001SA
Name of School Age Service:	Creelough Community Childcare
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Sarah Lafferty
Address of School Age Service:	St. Michael's Terrace Creelough Co. Donegal
Eircode:	F92 XF61

Date of Inspection:	17/02/2026			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	NA	PM	12
Registration status:	Registered			
Conditions (if applicable):	Not applicable			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	K Folan
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:

Creeshlough Community Childcare is a combined school age service located in Creeshlough Co. Donegal. The service is located in purpose-built premises comprising of three care rooms, one of these rooms is used for school age care, and two for preschool aged children. The service is registered to provide care for 36 school age children aged 4 to 12 years of age from 08:00-09:10hrs and 14:00-18:00 hours, Monday to Friday. A kitchen, office and storage facilities are also available on site. A spacious fully enclosed outdoor play area is provided to the side and rear of the premises subdivided into three separate areas for each age group.

Staffing:

There are six adults working in the service. Four of these adults work directly with the children. The person in charge is supernumerary and can provide cover in the event of staff absences. One adult is employed for kitchen duties. 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, person in charge, 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 8: Vetting Disclosures
- Regulation 12: Insurance

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

- Regulation 10: Policies of a school age service
- 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 registered providers response, documented and photographic evidence that was submitted. The non- compliances found on inspection have 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 Síochana 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, six staff files were reviewed and the following information was available:

- (1)(a) Eleven written and validated references were available from past employers.
- (1)(b) One written and validated reference was available from a reputable source.
- (1)(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for six staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (1)(d) International police vetting had been obtained in respect of one staff who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

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 registered provider ensured that adequate staffing levels were maintained during the inspection.

(2)

On the afternoon of the inspection:

Twelve children aged between 4 and 12 years old attended the service and were supervised by three adults.

At 2:00p.m. Two adults cared for twelve children aged 5 to 6 years of age.

At 3:20p.m. Two adults cared for nine children aged 5 to 6 years of age.

(4)

Children were adequately supervised by adults in the care rooms during activities. 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 above policy was reviewed and it contained information required as per Schedule 6 of the regulations.

Regulatory Requirement not met

The drop off and collection policy was reviewed. The policy did not describe the procedures to be followed when children were departing the service for transportation onwards via the school bus. This posed a risk to the safety of the children.

However, the policy did describe the procedures carried out by the service to ensure the safety of the children departing the service to travel to school and being collected from the service by a parent or authorised adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The service responded with evidence of the updated policy including procedures to be followed when dropping children to the school for collection by parents and for onwards transport to the school bus.

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.
- (4) A registered provider of a childminding service shall ensure that the parents or guardians of children attending the service are aware of the service's complaints policy.

Regulatory Requirement Met

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

The complaints policy was available for review. 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.

The person in charge confirmed that no complaints had been received by the service to date.

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.
- A snack of pancakes and fruit was provided to the children.
- The children appeared happy in the service and were observed playing energetically on balance bikes, swings and climbing frames in the services outdoor area. The children had choice to remain indoors or access the outdoors.
- 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,

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.

- The weather on the day of the inspection was cold and frosty; staff had undertaken a risk assessment of the outdoor area and closed off areas that were slippery and posed a risk to the children.

Regulatory Requirement not met

It is acknowledged that the service kept a list of children who are to be collected from the local school each day. However, this list did not detail children who were required to return to the school grounds to access school transport home. Also, the list did not identify which bus a child was to travel on. Both issues caused an incident of risk to a child departing the service on the incorrect day.

It is acknowledged that the service has taken measure to mitigate this risk and a new daily list containing the accurate information is in place.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The service responded with evidence of newly implemented collection and transport procedures. A new collection and transport register is in place with a clear list of names for bus collection.

Summary of Findings

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