

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024FL005SA
Name of School Age Service:	Small Steps Together Hansfield
Name of Registered Provider:	Hayley Devlin
Address of School Age Service:	Barnwell Road, Clonee, Dublin 15.
Eircode:	D15 H1FC

Date of Inspection:	14/05/2026			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	N/A	PM	55

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Early Years Inspectorate, 7th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	L.A Webster
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).

Description of Service:

Small Steps Together is a standalone school age service operating within Hansfield Educate Together National School located in North Dublin and provides care and education to children aged 4-15 years. The service operates from 07:30am-08:30 am in the morning and 13:00pm-18:30pm in the afternoon. It is comprised of three large care rooms, namely Room 2, Room 3 and Room 4.

Staffing:

The registered provider does not work directly within the service and employs nine staff members. On the day of inspection, there were eight adults present, including the deputy person in charge. Shortly after the inspection commenced, the registered provider and area manager arrived to help facilitate the inspection process.

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, area manager, deputy person in charge, and staff who were present on the day of inspection.

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Statutory Notices		
Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN 0324	14/05/2026	Police vetting that was required for a staff member was not available. The staff member was on site during the inspection.
Status	Action was taken on the day of inspection, and an email response was provided on the day following the inspection. The response included a corrective and preventive action which addressed the statutory notice and these actions were accepted by the inspectorate.	

Summary of Findings:

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

- Regulation 8(1)(a)(b)(c): Vetting disclosures.
- Regulation 9 Staffing levels.
- Regulation 11 (a) premises.

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:

- Regulation 8(1)(d)(2): Vetting disclosures.

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 files of the registered provider, area manager and eight staff members that are employed within the service. There were two written and validated references available for the registered provider and two written and validated references available for the area manager, and each of the nine staff members from either a previous employer or source other than a previous employer. Garda vetting disclosures were available for all nine staff members, area manager and the registered provider. These Garda Vetting disclosures available were dated within the last three years, demonstrating compliance with the Renewal of Garda Vetting regulatory notice. Documentation available demonstrated that police vetting was not required for the registered provider or six staff members. The inspector was able to review the police vetting for three staff members who had lived outside the jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.

Regulatory Requirement not met

- (1) (d) See Statutory Notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IAN0324 served.
- (2) The registered provider had not ensured that vetting procedures had been completed prior to staff being employed and working directly with the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

Vetting has now been obtained, and management will ensure that all forms and documents for staff are on file prior to employment with the service.

Summary of Findings

The corrective and preventative actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 8 (2).

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) There were eight adults working with fifty-five children across three care rooms on the day of inspection.
- (2) The adult to child ratio remained consistent throughout the inspection.
- (4) Appropriate supervision of children was maintained at all times throughout the inspection.

Regulation 11: Premises

A registered provider of a school age service shall ensure that-
(a) an outdoor space to which the school age children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Regulatory Requirement Met

(a) A secure outdoor space was available toward the rear of 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

The registered provider ensured that seven staff held up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training and were immediately available to the children within the service.