

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024FL014SA
Name of School Age Service:	The Little Peter After School LTD
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Aleandro Silva Mendes Santos
Address of School Age Service:	The Old Borough National School Church Rd Windmill Lands Swords Co Dublin
Eircode:	K67 Y179

Date of Inspection:	12 February 2025
Number of school age children present during inspection:	PM 10
Registration status:	Registered
Conditions (if applicable):	Not applicable

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive Airside Business Park Swords Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. McDonnell R. Duff
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).

Description of Service:

The Little Peter After School is located on the ground floor of a National School in Co Dublin. The service uses rooms within the school that directly access the outdoor area. The service provides care to children aged 4 to 12 years old. An afterschool club is provided from 1.00 to 6.00pm during term time. There is a kitchen and sanitary facilities available.

Staffing:

The registered provider works in the service with two other staff members.

Additional Information:

This inspection was completed as a follow-up to an inspection completed on 18 November 2024.

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:

- caters for children under the age of 15 years enrolled in a school providing primary or post-primary education,
- 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
- 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, 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:

- Regulation 8(1)(a)(b): Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1)(2): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 10: Policies etc. of school age service;
- 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:

- Regulation 9(4): Staffing levels;
- 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 registered provider submitted actions and evidence in their corrective and preventive action plan which 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)(a)(b)

The registered provider had not employed any new staff members following the last inspection in November 2024. The registered provider had the outstanding reference validations available at this 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.*
- (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)

There were 2 staff members working directly with 10 children. A sample of work schedules and collection lists reviewed for January 2025 demonstrated that there were sufficient staff available for the children attending.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(4)

The registered provider did not ensure that children were appropriately supervised at all times. This was observed by the following;

- A staff member was unable to provide appropriate supervision to seven children between 2.25 pm and 2.48 pm. Two children were playing fighting in a corner which could not be observed by the staff member in the room. At this time the staff member was providing comfort to one child and helping another with homework. During this time the registered provider completed a collection, and one member of staff was required to prepare lunches.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

(4)

The registered provider stated that they had hired a new staff member. A Garda Vetting disclosure and staffing schedule was submitted demonstrating the new employee's attendance. The registered provider has stated that two staff members will be in the room assisting the

children and one staff is responsible for collection, preparing the lunch, and snacks and assisting the teachers when required.

Summary of Findings

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance and this will be examined on the next inspection.

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 service's managing behaviour and collections policy were reviewed. These documents contained required information as per Schedule 6 of the regulations to support staff in their practice.

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)(c)(2)(3)

The complaints policy detailed the procedure for making a complaint and how verbal and written complaints would be dealt with. The policy referenced how a complainant would be kept informed of the complaints procedure.

The registered provider had initial communication regarding a recent issue that was in line with the complaints policy.

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 staff were observed to interact kindly with the children. During the school collection and whilst in the service the staff discussed with the children their day and upcoming activities. Throughout the afternoon staff were observed providing comfort and reassurance as required.

Regulatory Requirement not met

1. The registered provider did not ensure that collections were completed in a manner to ensure the children's safety. This was observed by the following;
 - There was no robust system in place to share communication between staff about changes to the collection schedule. This increases the risk of a child not being collected from school. During the collection observed, three children on the collection list were not collected by staff members at the designated collection point. A staff member informed the inspector that they were unsure why the children were not there, however, the staff members left the collection area. The changes to collections, as notified to the registered provider, had not been notified to the staff members.
 - The transition from the school to the service was not observed to support the children's safety. On the day of the inspection, three staff were available for the collection of seven children. The inspectors were advised that normally there were two staff members available for the collection and there could be nine children being collected. During the collection, two children were observed to be pulling away from the staff members. For one child this was for 10 minutes. Another child was observed to purposely walk into a small sign and into a small wall. This was initially unobserved by the staff members with these children.

2. The registered provider did not ensure that appropriate actions to minimise risk were taken to ensure a safe environment was available to the children attending the service. This was observed by the following;
 - The registered provider did not ensure that rooms used by children during their attendance to the service were risk-assessed before use. A room made available to the children had an open door, leading to the staff carpark, which the children could access and potentially access the main road. After the children had already entered the room a staff member of the service made a request to a member of the primary school staff, if the door to the outside could be closed.
 - The registered provider did not ensure that actions were taken to minimise risk following a previous incident in the service. The incident referred to above, where

children had access to rooms where risk was present, occurred despite a previous critical incident where a child left the service unsupervised.

- The inspectors observed that staff failed to adequately assess and address risk during the inspection. The children were observed running around a room, between the chairs and tables, and increasing their speed. Chairs and boxes were stacked on some of the tables. This increased the risk of a serious injury to a child. It was the intervention of a member of the school staff, not employed by the registered provider, who stopped the children from running around in an unsafe manner.

On the previous inspection on 18 November 2024, the service was non-compliant in relation to incident identification and risk management.

3. The registered provider did not ensure that parental communication was completed to support children's development. The registered provider did not have records available to demonstrate communication with parents regarding children's development and behaviour in the service. This was a non-compliance identified in the last inspection. Following the last inspection the registered provider submitted in their corrective and preventive action that a parental communication application would be in place from 25 January 2025. On the day of inspection, this was not in place.
4. The registered provider did not ensure that a planned programme of age-appropriate activities was available for all the children attending the service to support the children's welfare. Whilst one member of staff was available in the room two children, who attended second to fifth class, were not provided with guidance or activities on entering the service. One child was observed sitting on the floor under a table and another rocking on a chair. Two younger children were again running around the room around the tables with the stacked chairs.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

1. The registered provider stated that they had had a meeting with the parents and a new system had been implemented for collection. The system included a walking line, whereby the children hold the line. The registered provider stated that some children may walk with the teachers at this time. The registered provider submitted a photograph of the system in place. An additional incentive scheme has also been implemented to support the children's behaviour, which the registered provider has stated has been shared with parents.

The registered provider submitted a protocol for staff should a child not be present, this included improving communication with parents prior to collection and steps to be taken in the event a child is not present at the collection location.
2. The registered provider stated that they had met with the school principal as different rooms are required. Following this a room transition protocol was devised to ensure staff made the rooms safe prior to the children gaining access to the room. The room protocol was submitted and included ensuring that the door to the outside was locked and that the chairs were not on tables.
3. The registered provider stated that there were a variety of ways the service could communicate with parents, including;
 - Tea With Teachers, parents can book short meetings with teachers.
 - Newsletters to keep the parents updated about the monthly activities.
 - Specific messaging application for childcare whereby parents can get information and send a message in a real-time. The registered provider provided an email stating the date of implementation as the 16 March 2025.
4. The registered provider submitted a weekly plan which has activities for two main age groups 4 to 6 years old and 7 to 12 years old. The registered provider informed the inspector that a weekly meeting takes place to plan activities. Following a recent meeting the staff discussed using alternative activities should a child not wish to engage.

Summary of Findings

The registered provider submitted actions and evidence in their corrective and preventive action plan which addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection.