

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024LK016SA
Name of School Age Service:	Millfarm Afterschool
Name of Registered Provider:	Veronica Leddin
Address of School Age Service:	Millfarm Hospital Limerick
Eircode:	V35RK18

Date of Inspection:	13 August 2025			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	Not applicable	PM	9
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

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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

Description of Service:

Millfarm Afterschool is an afterschool service located at the registered provider's private residence in a rural village in south Limerick. The service provides care for school age children in the age range 4 to 12 years. The service is registered to operate between the hours of 2.30 and 6.00pm. It was found during inspection to be operating between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm during non school term. The service has the use of two outdoor rooms and sanitary accommodation for children off one of the rooms. An outdoor play area is provided directly outside the service. There is also a childminding service operating at this address.

Staffing:

The service is staffed by a person in charge and the registered provider also operates a childminding service from the domestic residence on site.

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:

- 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the children, registered provider and person in charge, 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(1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(2): Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1)(2)(4): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 10: Policies etc. of school age service;
- Regulation 11: Premises;
- Regulation 12: Insurance;

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

- Regulation 7: Notification of change in circumstances;
- Regulation 9(3): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 10: Policies etc 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 actions and evidence that the registered provider submitted as part of the Corrective and Preventive Action process (CAPA). 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

(1)

The school age service was operating outside of its registered hours. The service is registered to operate between the hours of 2.30 and 6.00pm. It was found during inspection to be operating between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm during non school term.

The registered provider did not submit a change in circumstances application to the inspectorate to advise that the operational hours of the service were extended to from 9.00 am to 6.00pm during non school term. It was acknowledged that a change in circumstances application was submitted to the inspectorate on the 15 August 2025 subsequent to the inspection of the service to reflect this change.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

(1)

As a corrective measure, the registered provider submitted confirmation of approval by Tusla registration office to change the operational hours of the service to from 2.30 to 6.00pm and to 9.00am to 6.00pm during school breaks as secured on 25 August 2025. As a preventive

measure, the registered provider advised in the CAPA response to the inspection report as received on 8 August 2025 that approval for all changes to the operations of the school age service will be secured prior to implementation of the proposed change.

Summary of Findings

The actions taken by the registered provider have been accepted by the inspector and address the non-compliance found 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)

Two written references from reputable sources were available for the registered provider.
Two written and validated references were available for the person in charge of the school age service.

(c)

A Garda vetting disclosure was held on file in respect of the registered provider and the person in charge of the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as neither the registered provider or the person in charge of the school age service had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as adults.

(2)

Records confirmed that the necessary vetting procedures were conducted prior to the appointment of the staff member to work in the school age 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.*
- (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

(1)

An adequate number of adults were available to the school age children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

The required adult to child ratio was maintained, evidenced by the following examples on the day of inspection.

One adult was caring for nine school age children on arrival of the inspector and for the duration of the inspection. A review of the children's attendance record and staff roster for the week of the 28 July 2025 confirmed that the maximum number of children in daily attendance was 9 children on the 29 July 2025 with one adult present.

(4)

Children were observed to be appropriately supervised while having dinner and an afternoon snack and while playing outdoors for the duration of the inspection. The staff member was observed moving to different areas of the outdoor play area where the children were playing and to engage in friendly conversation with the children.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(3)

A second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to assist the person in charge who was single handedly caring for the school age children, was not available in the event of an emergency. The registered provider is currently listed as the emergency person however the registered provider currently operates a childminding service and therefore is not available.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

(3)

As a corrective measure the registered provider advised in the CAPA response to the inspection report that three emergency contacts have been nominated and Garda vetting has been applied for in the case of all three proposed emergency contact persons. As a preventive measure, the

registered provider has advised that the service will ensure that an emergency contact person is available at all times during operational hours of the service.

Summary of Findings

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

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 registered provider submitted the supervision policy for the service. The policy included detail of the procedures in place in the service for both on-site and off-site supervision of school age children.

Regulatory Requirement not met

The service did not have a drop off and collection policy which described the following.

- Describes the procedure carried out by the service to ensure the safety of children arriving to the service.
- Describes the procedure carried out by the service to ensure the safety of children departing from the service.
- Includes the policy in relation to persons authorised to collect a child from the service.
- Details of whether and under what circumstances, children are permitted to leave the service unaccompanied.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider advised in the CAPA response to the inspection report that a drop off and collection policy has been drafted and communicated to all parents. A copy of the drop off and collection policy was submitted with the CAPA response and was accepted by the inspector as meeting the requirements of Regulation 10.

The registered provider advised that a copy of the policy is on display in the service. The registered provider also advised that staff have received training on the policy and its procedures. As a preventive measure, the registered provider advised in the CAPA response that quarterly audits will be conducted to ensure the procedures outlined in the policy are followed and parents will be reminded each term to update the list of authorised collectors of children.

Summary of Findings

The drop off and collection policy and measures outlined in the CAPA response were reviewed by the inspector. The non-compliance found on inspection has been adequately addressed.

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)

Children had access to an enclosed outdoor play area outside of the rooms in use in the service and to a separate spacious green area attached to the outdoor play area.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service had insurance cover for a maximum of 22 children in daily attendance in a school age service. Insurance cover was valid from the 28 February 2025 to the 27 March 2026. The service had motor insurance to cover the transport of children from the local school to the service after school hours. Motor insurance was valid from the 8 February 2025 to 27 February 2026.

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 not met

1. The absence of availability of an emergency contact person to the school age service could pose a risk to the safety of the children for example in the event of an emergency or during organised outings from the service for example when some children from the service are taken to the local shop under supervision while younger children remain in the service.
2. The gap leading from the passageway to the entrance to the green area used for outdoor play was not safely secured to guard against unsupervised exit by children from the green when playing in this area.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

1. In the CAPA response to the inspection report, the registered provider advised that three designated emergency contact persons have been assigned to the service. It was also advised that a rota system has been put in place to ensure an emergency contact person is always available during operational hours including during outings. As a preventive measure, the registered provider advised that a monthly compliance check will be carried out to confirm contact information and rota coverage remain current and all persons providing cover will receive refresher training on emergency procedures annually.
2. The registered provider advised in the CAPA response that a gate had been provided on the open gap leading to the green area used for outdoor play. Picture evidence to confirm that the gate was securely in place was submitted to the inspector on the 2 September 2025. As a preventive measure, the registered provider advised that daily outdoor safety checks are now conducted as part of the service's risk assessment routine.

Summary of Findings

The measures taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances observed on inspection of the service and will be observed on the next inspection of the service.