

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025CC013SA
Name of School Age Service:	Curious Minds Dromore
Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Sheehy
Address of School Age Service:	St Joseph's National School, Dromore, Aghaville, Co Cork
Eircode:	P75 VX24

Date of Inspection:	26 March 2026			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	N/A	PM	5
Registration status:	Registered			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick, V94 XT5F
Inspection undertaken by:	S O'Brien
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:

Curious Minds Dromore is a privately operated school age service based in St. Joseph's National School in Aghaville, Cork. The service caters for children aged 4 to 12 years. The service is registered to operate from 7am to 9.20am and 2pm to 6pm. The service is currently operating between 2pm to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The service operates from one small care room between 2pm and 3pm and a larger care room between 3pm to 6pm. The service is currently operating single handedly. The registered provider is a multiple provider.

Staffing:

There are four staff members employed in the service. The registered provider is not based in the service. On the day of inspection, one staff member was present.

Additional Information:

This inspection was triggered by 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 person in charge 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: Staffing levels
- Regulation 10: Policies of a school age service
- Regulation 12: Insurance
- Regulation 13: Complaints
- Child Care Act 1992, 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 8: Vetting disclosures

Conclusion and follow up actions:

The registered providers response and documented evidence was submitted to the inspectorate 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

(1) Three staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a) Four of the references available were from a past employer and were validated.

(b) Two of the references available were from another source and one reference was validated.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) A Police vetting disclosure was available in respect of one staff member who had lived outside of Ireland for longer than six consecutive months.

Regulatory Requirement not met

- (b) One reference did not have a validation available on file.
- (d) On review of one staff members curriculum vitae, it was observed that the staff member had lived outside of Ireland for longer than six consecutive months and a police officer vetting disclosure was not available for this state.
- (2) The procedures outlined above were not carried out prior to one staff member being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with the school age children.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response:

Corrective action

- (1)
- (b) A reference validation was submitted in respect of one staff member.
- (d) Police vetting has been obtained in respect of the one staff member.
- (2) A check list has been developed to ensure that all documents are in place.

Preventive action

All staff files have been checked, and a checklist has been put in place to ensure that all documents are in place.

Summary of Findings

The registered providers response and documented evidence was submitted and reviewed by the inspectorate 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.*
- (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) The registered provider ensured there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) At 3.05pm, there were five children being cared for by one staff member.
- (3) The registered provider ensured there was a second staff member available and familiar with the operation of the service and was within a close distance to the service in the event of an emergency occurring.
- (4) The children were supervised by both sight and sound on the day of inspection in the care room and outdoor area.

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 policies were reviewed:

- Complaints policy
- Drop off and collection policy

The policies were observed to contain the relevant information to support the staff in their care practices.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured. The insurance policy commenced 15 August 2025 and expired on 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) The complaints policy outlined the procedure to follow by a person making a complaint in relation to the service.

(b) The policy outlined the manner in which the complaint will be dealt with.

(c) The policy outlined the manner in which the person who made the complaint will be informed on how the complaint is being dealt with.

(2)

(a) A record of the one complaint received was available in writing.

(b) The evidence reviewed demonstrated the service adhered to their complaints policy.

(3) A record of the one complaint received by the service included:

(a) The nature of the complaint and how the complaint was dealt with.

(b) The record was available to be reviewed by the inspector.

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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 person in charge was observed chatting and supporting children with homework. Interactions between the children and person in charge were respectful. The person in charge was observed showing a child empathy when they displayed signs of upset.
- The children were observed freely moving around the care rooms and outdoor areas partaking in activities of choice. The children were observed painting, colouring and playing with plastic bricks.