

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025KE001SA
Name of School Age Service:	Sherpa Kids Newbridge ETNS
Name of Registered Provider	Jennifer Lee
Address of School Age Service:	Green Road Newbridge Kildare
Eircode:	R56YC60

Date of Inspection:	10 December 2025			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	Not applicable	PM	35
Registration status:	Registered			
Conditions (if applicable):	Not applicable			

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Tusla Early Years Service Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R3KIW4
Inspection undertaken by:	A Spain
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:

Sherpa Kids Newbridge ETNS is a standalone school age service located in a primary school building on the outskirts of Newbridge town in Co Kildare. The service cares for children in the age range of 4 to 13 years between the hours of 1.10 and 6.00pm during term time and from 8:30am to 5:30pm during school holidays. The service has the use of the school hall on the school grounds, the "corner room", a second separate classroom after school hours and the school library room. All rooms with the exception of the school hall are located on the first floor of the school building. Sanitary accommodation for children and adults is available in the school hall and in the school building. A nappy changing room is also available in the main school building. Children have access to the school yard for outdoor play.

Staffing:

The service is staffed by five staff which includes the person in charge of the service. The area manager and registered provider do not work directly in the service.

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:

- 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, area manager, person in charge, 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 relation to:

- Regulation 8(1)(a)(b)(c)(d): Vetting disclosures.
- Regulation 9(1)(2)(4): Staffing levels.
- Regulation 10: policies of a school age service.
- Regulation 12: Insurance.
- Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a): Complaints.

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

- Child Care Act 1991, Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Act, 2013.

Conclusion and follow up actions:

The inspector reviewed the actions and evidence that the registered provider submitted. The non-compliance found on inspection has 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 Met

(1)

The registered provider had notified the agency and secured approval to change the age profile of children cared for in the service from age 4 to 12 years to 4 to 13 years.

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 staff files for the five staff members working in the service and the area manager who was present on the day of inspection.

(1)(a)(b)

Two validated references from past employers were held on file in respect of five staff members. A validated reference from a past employer and a validated reference from a reputable source was held on file in respect of the remaining staff member.

(c)

A Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána was held on file in respect of all staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff working in the service.

(d)

Police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as an adult.

(2)

Records confirmed that the necessary vetting procedures were conducted prior to the appointment of staff to work in the 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.

(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 cared for the children present in the service on the day of inspection. Five staff members cared for 33 children in the school building at 1.40pm. At 3.05 pm, 3 staff members cared for 14 children in “the corner room” while the remaining 2 staff members cared for 11 children in the library room. At 4.22pm, the 34 children who remained in the service were cared for in the school yard by the 5 staff members present in the service. A review of the childrens attendance records and staff roster for the week of the 3 November 2025 confirmed that the maximum number of children present on the 6 November 2025 was 49 children with 5 adults rostered in attendance and 54 children on the 4 November 2025 with 5 adults rostered in attendance.

(2)

The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was maintained on the day of inspection.

(4)

Children were observed to be supervised by both sight and sound in the corner room, the library room and the school yard on the day of 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 inspector reviewed the following policies and procedures for the service.

Policy on staff training.

The policy on staff training advised of the induction, online and in service training conducted by staff in the service. Certification was available to confirm that all staff present in the service had completed “Introduction to Children First” training online. The policies and procedures for the service were available onsite. Staff in the service confirmed that time was allocated to read the

policies and that they sign off on having read the policies as part of their induction training. The training records held on site confirmed that 3 staff members had completed their reading of the policies and two newly appointed staff were progressing through this training.

Child Supervision Policy.

The child supervision policy advised of maintaining ratios in the service, allocation of staff to areas of the service where children were cared for and ensuring a wide view of children at all times.

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 60 children in daily attendance. Insurance cover was valid from the 11 August 2025 to the 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)(b)(c)

The service had a complaints policy which outlined the procedure for making a complaint, the manner in which complaints were dealt with and the procedure for keeping the complainant informed of the complaint investigation. The policy included an appeals provision and a child friendly version of the policy should a child in attendance in the service voice a complaint to a parent or staff member in the service.

(2)

The inspector reviewed a record of a complaint held on file. The record was observed to comply with parts (1)(a)(b)(c) of this regulation.

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 inspector reviewed a nappy changing diary held in the nappy changing area for a child present in the service. The diary advised of the dates, times and staff members who changed the child. Three staff working in the service confirmed that they had received refresher training in nappy changing and records were available on site to confirm delivery of training. A nappy changing protocol was also on display in the nappy changing area. A staff member was observed to follow the protocol which included handwashing of both the child and the staff member after a nappy change.
- An updated risk assessment for the nappy changing area was reviewed by the inspector. The risk assessment included details of safeguards introduced to protect the privacy of children during nappy changing, prevention of inappropriate practices, provided details on supervision and child safety, infection control and manual handling training provided to use specific equipment if necessary. A completed daily risk assessment checklist for 8

and 9 December 2025 was reviewed by the inspector.

- The service held records of accidents and incidents in the service. Five records were reviewed of incidents that occurred from 1 September 2025 to 10 November 2025 advised of the remedial measures taken by the staff to reduce the risk to children in attendance.

Regulatory Requirement not Met

A staff member was not present in the service with up to date FAR (first aid response) training. It was acknowledged that confirmation was submitted by the area manager to confirm that a staff member was booked into FAR training and 3 staff members working in the service had in date workplace first aid with an expiry date of 18 August 2028.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response Submitted by the Registered provider

The registered provider confirmed in the CAPA response that the designated person in charge of the service had successfully completed FAR training on 15, 16 and 17 December 2025. Email confirmation of completion was included in the response from the relevant training body.

As a preventive measure, the registered provider furnished a copy of a memo as directed to area managers requesting that managers ensure that the person in charge of services has up-to-date FAR training before commencing work in the service. The memo also advised that relief cover is to be available to ensure that a staff member trained in FAR is present at all times in Sherpa Kids services.

Summary of Findings

The service has addressed the non-compliance identified, no follow up actions required.