

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019LS004SA
Name of School Age Service:	Barrowhouse Afterschool
Name of Registered Provider:	Siobhan Lacey
Address of School Age Service:	Barrowhouse Community Hall Barrowhouse Laois
Eircode:	R14E981

Date of Inspection:	3 June 2026			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	Not applicable	PM	30

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	Tusla 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).

Description of Service:

Barrowhouse Afterschool is a school age service for children between 4 and 15 years. Children currently in attendance are in the age range of 4 to 13 years. The service provides a breakfast club between 8.00 and 9.00am and cares for children after school between 2.00 and 6.00pm. The service operates during school terms only. Rooms in use in the leased building include a playroom with sanitary accommodation for both children and staff located off the playroom. The service is based in a community hall adjacent to a primary school and has use of the school playground for daily outdoor play. The registered provider also provides an early years service between 9.20am and 12.20pm.

Staffing:

The registered provider employs four staff members. All staff members were working in the service on the day of inspection. The registered provider also works directly with the children in the service.

Additional Information:

The inspector conducted a planned focused inspection of the service.

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 staff who were present on the day of inspection.

Summary of Findings:

On inspection, the registered provider was found to be compliant in relation to the following:

Regulation 8 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d) (2): Vetting disclosures;

Regulation 9(2): Staffing levels;

Regulation 11: Premises;

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

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)

Two written and validated references from past employers were held on file in respect of three staff members. Two written references from past employers were also held on file in respect of the registered provider.

(a)(b)

A written and validated reference from a past employer and from a reputable source were also 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 the registered provider and all 4 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in respect of all staff members.

(d)

A Police vetting disclosure was held on file in respect of a 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 directly with the children in the service.

Regulation 9: Staffing levels

(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.

Regulatory Requirement Met

(2)

The minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was maintained on the day of inspection. On arrival of children from junior and senior infant classes in the adjoining school, 2 staff members cared for 7 children. On the arrival of children from the senior classes in the adjoining school at 3.00pm and by bus from two nearby schools, 5 staff cared for 30 children in attendance.

The inspector reviewed the children's sign in and out records and the staff roster for the week beginning 18 May 2026. Records confirmed that the maximum number of children in daily attendance was 29 children on the 19 May 2026 with 5 staff members in attendance.

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, or*
- (b) where no such space is provided, the school age children attending the service have access on a daily basis to an outdoor space.*

Regulatory Requirement Met

(b)

There was a direct pathway from the entrance to the service to the adjoining school grounds used by the service after school hours for daily outdoor play. The entrance to the outdoor play area and from where some of the children in attendance were collected, was secured with a keycode. The outdoor area was secured with a concrete wall and by heavy duty wire fencing on the side boundary to prevent Children having access to the roadway. Children had access to a concrete covered area with goal posts and to an all-weather surfaced area with coloured tyres safely anchored to the ground and a wooden open toy shelter.

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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

Four of the staff members working in the service had up to date first aid responder (FAR) training with expiry dates of 31 January 2027, 28 February 2027, 20 March 2028 and 23 March 2028, respectively. The remaining staff member had paediatric first aid training with an expiry date of 12 December 2027.