

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021DY021SA
Name of School Age Service:	Cooperative Housing Ireland
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Catherine O'Brien
Address of School Age Service:	166 Island Key East Wall Dublin
Eircode:	D03 EW60

Date(s) of Inspection:	22 October 2024
Number of school age children present during inspection:	PM 31
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
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:

Cooperative Housing Ireland is located in a purpose-built ground-floor building in a residential area in Co Dublin. The service provides care to children aged 4 to 12 years old. The service provides an afterschool club from 1.30 to 5.15pm. The children have access to three care rooms in the service with direct access to an outdoor area. There is a kitchen and sanitary facilities available. A sessional pre-school service is in operation in the morning.

Staffing:

The registered provider does not work in the service. There are six staff members employed by the registered provider to work directly with the children.

Additional Information:

This inspection was triggered following 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, 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:

- Regulation 8: Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1)(2)(4): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 10: Policies etc. of school age service;
- Regulation 12: Insurance;
- Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(3)(a)(b): 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 13(2)(b): Complaints;
- 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 actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their preventive and corrective action plan, have 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

The staff files of the registered provider, six staff members and a student were reviewed. There were 16 references available for the 8 adults from a previous employer or source other than a previous employer. These references were validated by the registered provider as required. Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the eight adults working in the service. These Garda Vetting disclosures were dated within the last three years demonstrating compliance with the Renewal of Garda Vetting regulatory notice. The documentation reviewed demonstrated police vetting was available as required. These documents were in

place before the staff members commenced employment as required by legislation.

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)(4)

There were 5 staff members working with 31 children. Staff were observed providing appropriate supervision to the children. The children were supervised in different rooms depending on their age with different staff members. Staff members were observed taking part in various activities with the children, such as playing with slime, doing homework and doing arts and crafts.

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 complaints policy were reviewed. These documents contained required information as per Schedule 6 of the regulations to support staff in their practice.

Regulation 12: Insurance

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service was insured to provide care for 50 children. The insurance was valid from 1 July 2024 to 27 March 2025.

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)(2)(a)(3)(a)(b) 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 and the appeals process. The registered provider had evidence of a recent complaint.
Regulatory Requirement not met
(2)(b) The registered provider submitted an internal investigation, which acknowledged that they had not followed its complaints procedure.
Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider
(2)(b) The registered provided stated that staff working on the phones have had the necessary guidance to redirect complaints to the appropriate management to avoid a delay in response time.
Summary of Findings
The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their preventive and corrective action plan, have addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection.

Child Care Act 1991, Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013
<i>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.</i>
Regulatory Requirement Met
During the inspection, the inspectors observed the health, safety and welfare of children being supported by the following: The registered provider had service policies available on-site, including a child-friendly version of the complaints policy and the behaviour management policy. Staff discussed

their understanding of the behaviour management policy and there was written evidence that staff had been trained in the service's policies and procedures. Staff and children discussed how there were regular meetings with staff and children to discuss issues that may have arisen. There was documentation available regarding a recent circle time discussion between the staff and children about using positive language and children's questions and queries were recorded. A sample of children in each room stated that they felt comfortable talking to staff about any issues which may arise. Following a recent complaint the registered provider implemented a system to record and monitor peer interactions. The registered provider had completed an investigation and had plans in place to support the children's development and improve communication with parents.

Regulatory Requirement not met

1. The registered provider did not ensure that all incidents and/or accidents were communicated to parents to ensure the children's safety. The accident and incident records between July 2023 and October 2024 were reviewed. The sample of records showed that 10 of 13 were not signed by a parent to ensure that they had been informed of the incident.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

1. The registered provider stated they had ensured that all current forms were updated and copies were provided. As a preventive action, the registered provider stated that the completion of the accident/incident forms process and policy was discussed with the team at staff meetings and the accident/incident books will be regularly audited. A copy of the minutes was provided.

Summary of Findings

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