

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022DS011SA
Name of School Age Service:	Sherpa Kids Scoil Áine Naofa
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Emma Campbell
Address of School Age Service:	Scoil Áine Naofa, Esker, Lucan, Co. Dublin
Eircode:	K78 PF57

Date of Inspection:	13 May 2026			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	N/A	PM	83

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Duff
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:	Sherpa Kids School Aged Service is registered school age service located in Lucan Co. Dublin. It is part of a chain of school age services located throughout the country. The school aged service is based in a primary school and has use of four rooms, the school library, a sports hall and a large secure outdoor area.
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The service is registered to accommodate up to 108 school age children between the ages of 4- 12 years.

Staffing:

The school age service employs 10 adults. The registered provider does not work in the service. On the day of inspection, there were 10 adults present working directly with the children. The area manager and deputy area manager arrived subsequent to the start of the inspection.

Additional Information:

This inspection was scheduled as a planned, focused inspection.

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, person in charge, area manager, deputy area manager and staff who were present on the day of inspection.

Statutory Notices		
Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN 0066	13/05/2026	International Police vetting was not available for one adult who was working with the children on the day of inspection
Status	The area manager took immediate corrective action which addressed the risk identified. Preventative actions were submitted by the area manager which were accepted and addressed the statutory notice.	

Summary of Findings:

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

- Regulation 9(2): Staffing levels.
- Regulation 11(a): Premises.
- Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013.

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

- Regulation 8 (1)(2) Vetting disclosures.

Conclusion and follow up actions:

The actions taken, and evidence submitted by the registered provider, in their corrective and preventive action plan for Regulation 8 have adequately addressed the non-compliance 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 not met

- (1) The inspection included a review of the required documentation for 10 adults directly employed in the service plus the area manager and deputy manager. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for each of the 12 adults present. The following documentation was available;
- (a)(b) Although it is acknowledged that 18 written and validated references were available, 6 written and validated references were not available for 4 adults employed to work directly with the children.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for 10 adults employed to work in the service plus the area manager and deputy manager. Garda vetting disclosures from all adults were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Garda vetting which was dated within the last three years was available for all adults present.
 - (d) See Statutory Notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IAN 0066 served.
- (2) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 8 (1)(a)(b)(d) had not been carried out prior to 4 adults commencing employment in the service.

- 6 written and validated references were not available for 4 adults employed to work directly with the children.
- Written and validated references had been sought following one adult commencing employment in the service.
- See Statutory Notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IAN 0066 served.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider has stated:

(1)

(a)(b) All staff files with non-compliance issues were reviewed. Reference checks had been completed by phone, but the templates lacked full detail. The service sourced the previous area manager's paper notes and added the missing information to bring the templates into compliance. A comprehensive procedure has been put in place with regards to the reference process. This ensures the correct steps are taken and all reference validations are completed fully and before the staff member starts.

(d) The service had Spanish vetting on file for this employee; however, were not aware that Spain has two distinct types of vetting. The employee had provided the type required to work with children in Spain, but were only informed that a different type is required for vetting purposes in Ireland. Immediate action was taken and the correct vetting was applied for and received the next day. The employee returned to work once the service received approval from the Inspectorate. HR and Management have since been informed of the two types of Spanish vetting to ensure this is understood going forward.

(2)

The service has since tightened their procedure to ensure reference checks are fully completed and verified before any new employee's start date, and this has not reoccurred. The service became aware of this issue and had put corrective measures in place prior to this inspection. All new staff files, including reference checks and vetting, are signed off by both the Area Manager and HR Admin before the employee's start date is confirmed. This two-person check ensures all required documentation is returned and correct in advance

All staff involved in the vetting process have been issued a copy of the Tusla Vetting Guidance for Providers of Early Years Services. As part of the services procedure, the service will also verify that all international vetting includes confirmation of full criminal clearance, to ensure equivalence with Irish Garda vetting standards.

Summary of Findings

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The regulation has been met. This regulation will be assessed on the next inspection.

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

During the inspection, the person in charge ensured that appropriate staffing levels were maintained. The 83 children attending the service were supervised directly by 10 adults. The minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was adhered to at all times.

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

Regulatory Requirement Met

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The service has shared access to a fully enclosed school yard and sensory area during the primary schools' operational hours and sole use of the school yard outside the schools operating hours. On the day of inspection, the children were observed to use one half of the school yard from 1:40pm until 2:15pm.

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 service provided evidence that an adult trained in First Aid Response was available at all times to the children attending the school age service. Suitably equipped first aid boxes and bags were available and safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the service.