

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024CE006SA
Name of School Age Service:	Polybus T/A Lyons Den Barefield National School
Name of Registered Provider(s):	Malgorzata Krystyna Zgora
Address of School Age Service:	Drumquin, Ennis, Co. Clare
Eircode:	V95 FD28

Date of Inspection:	10 June 2026			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	N/A	PM	62

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate	2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick, V95 XT5F
Inspection undertaken by:	S O'Brien & P Magner
Title:	Early Years Inspector and Inspection and Registration Manager.

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:	Polybus T/A Lyons Den Barefield National School is a privately owned school age care service based in the Barefield community centre and Barefield national school, Ennis, Clare. The service caters for children aged
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4 to 12 years. The service operates from 7.45am to 9am and 1.50pm to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday. The service has the use of the community centre which consists of 2 care rooms, sanitary facilities and a kitchen area. The service also has access to two prefabricated care rooms on the grounds of the national school and one care room located in the main building of the national school. The registered provider operates multiple school age care services.

Staffing:

There are 21 staff members employed in the service. The registered provider is not based on the service. On the day of inspection, there were 18 staff members present, which included school age practitioners, kitchen staff and an area manager.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the co-operation of the children, person in charge, and staff 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 8(1)(c)(d): Vetting disclosures
- Regulation 9(2): Staffing levels
- Regulation 11(a): Premises

The registered provider was found non-compliant under the following:

- Regulation 8(1)(a)(b)(2): Vetting disclosures
- Section 58(G) as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013

Conclusion and follow up actions:

The registered providers response and documented evidence was reviewed by 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) Twenty-one staff files were reviewed which included the registered providers file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 21 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting disclosures were available for seven staff members who had lived outside of Ireland for longer than six consecutive months.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(1)

(a)(b) It is acknowledged that 32 references were available from a past employer, however two reference validations were not available in respect of two staff members. It is acknowledged that nine references were available from a source other than a past employer, however one reference and validation were not available in respect of one staff member.

(2) The procedures specified above were not carried out prior to the staff members being

appointed, assigned or allowed access to the school age children.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response:

Corrective action

(1)

(a)(b) The outstanding references and validations were submitted to the inspectorate. This was carried out in line with the organisations recruitment policy.

(2) The HR team have retrained and resigned the recruitment policy and procedures with focus on the requirement to obtain validate, verify and document all references as part of the recruitment process. The training reinforced the importance of having all references and validations documented prior to staff starting employment. A recruitment policy training card has also been developed.

Preventive action

(1)

(a)(b) To prevent reoccurrence, the HR team have retrained and resigned the recruitment policy and procedures with focus on the requirement to obtain validate, verify and document all references as part of the recruitment process.

(2) The service will use the recruitment policy training cards as part of the induction process for any new employee joining the HR team. Training will be provided during the induction to ensure all staff involved in recruitment fully understand the recruitment policy and compliance requirements.

Summary of Findings

The registered providers response and documented evidence was reviewed by the inspectorate and has met the regulatory requirements.

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 following adult to child ratio were observed and met the required minimum adult to child ratios for the duration of the inspection. There were 62 children being cared for by 13 adults.

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

(a) The service has access to a large school yard and a field which were located on the premises. The children were observed spending time in the outdoor areas during the inspection.

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 staff members held an in-date certificate in first aid and were available to the children in the event of medical attention being required.

Regulatory Requirement not met

1. In the Junior and Senior care room, staff belongings were observed to be stored on windowsills which were easily accessible to the children. This posed a safety risk to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response:

Corrective action

A meeting was held with the team to reinforce the requirement that personal belongings must not be stored within reach of children. The importance of maintaining a safe environment and preventing potential health and safety risks was discussed with the team.

Preventive action

To prevent reoccurrence, an additional task has been added to the daily manager checklist requiring managers to check that no staff personal belongings are left in rooms or accessible to children every day.

Summary of Findings

The registered providers response and documented evidence was reviewed by the inspectorate and has met the regulatory requirements. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.