

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report School Age Services

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024WH002SA
Name of School Age Service:	Polybus T/A Lyons Den St. Ethen's NS
Name of Registered Provider:	Malgorzata Krystyna Zgora
Address of School Age Service:	Mullingar Road Kinnegad Westmeath
Eircode:	N91CV96

Date of Inspection:	2 June 2026			
Number of school age children present during inspection:	AM	Not applicable	PM	18

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:

Polybus T/A Lyons Den is a standalone school age service located in a classroom on the ground floor of St. Ethen's national school. The service cares for children in attendance in the school, in the age range 4 to 12 years and is operational between the hours of 2.00 and 6.30pm during school term. The service also provides a breakfast club between the hours of 7.45 and 9.00am. During non-school terms, the service is operational between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm. Rooms in use in the service include a school age room with sanitary accommodation directly off the room for the use of children. Staff have access to sanitary accommodation in the school hallway and to the kitchen in the school to reheat dinners provided by an outside catering company. Children have daily access to the school grounds for outdoor play and to the school hall indoors. The service is located in a residential area on the outskirts of Kinnegad in south Westmeath.

Staffing:

The service is staffed by four staff members, which includes the person in charge of the service. The registered provider does not work directly 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:

- 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, 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): 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.

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

Regulation 8(2): Vetting disclosures:

Conclusion and follow up actions:

The registered provider submitted actions to correct and prevent the recurrence of the non-compliance identified on inspection under Regulation 8.

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 were held on file in respect of the 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 a written and validated reference from a reputable source were 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 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.

(d)

Police vetting 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.

Regulatory Requirement not met

(2)

Records held on file confirmed that all of the necessary vetting procedures in respect of validation of staff references were not completed before the staff were appointed to work directly with the children in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

As a corrective measure, the registered provider advised in the CAPA response submitted on 24 June 2026 that all staff references will now be obtained, validated, and verified before any employee commences employment within the service.

To reinforce compliance with the existing policy and prevent recurrence, it was also advised that;

- A Recruitment Policy Training Card was developed and implemented to re-train the HR Team on the organisation's recruitment procedures and compliance requirements.
- The training reinforced the requirement that all references must be obtained, validated, and documented prior to a staff member starting employment.
- The HR Team re-read and re-signed the Recruitment Policy to confirm understanding of their responsibilities and commitment to following the recruitment procedures correctly.

The registered provider advised that the above actions have been implemented to strengthen compliance, improve oversight, and ensure the organisation's recruitment procedures are consistently followed in practice.

As preventive measure, it was advised in the CAPA response that going forward, the

recruitment policy training cards will be used as part of the induction process for any new employees joining the HR and Recruitment team. It was further advised that training will be provided during induction to ensure all staff involved in recruitment fully understand and follow the organisation's recruitment policy and compliance requirements, including the validation of references before commencement of employment.

Summary of Findings

The registered provider submitted copies of the signed recruitment policy and signed recruitment policy training cards introduced in the services HR department. The response and evidence submitted by the registered provider have met the requirements of Regulation 8(2).

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)

On arrival of the inspector at 2.40pm, three staff members cared for the 9 children present from junior and senior infant classes. At 3.10pm, the three staff members were present with the 18 children in the room, following the collection of additional children from the school's senior classes.

The inspector reviewed the childrens attendance records and the staff roster, held electronically in the service for the week beginning 23 February 2026. Records held on file, confirmed that the maximum number of children in daily attendance was 20 children on 24 February 2026 with 3 staff members rostered in attendance. Four staff were rostered in attendance for 23 February 2026 and 3 staff were rostered in for the remainder of the week.

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.

Regulatory Requirement Met

The service had access to the enclosed school grounds after school hours in the service. Outdoor play areas included separate smooth enclosed tarmac surfaced areas to play with balls, a basket ball area and an area with ground play markings. A separate enclosed area with an all weather surface was provided with a large climbing frame and a wooden vehicle for imaginative play. The service had access to the school pitch and a green also located on the school grounds. Play areas were secured with heavy duty wire fencing and secured gate access.

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

Three staff working in the service had up to date first aid response (FAR) training with expiry dates of 22 February 2027, 31 January 2028 and 4 February 2028.