



Children's Services Regulation Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1 2019 Edition

If you have anything that you would like included in our next newsletter, please contact the Early Years Information Team by email at eyiit@tusla.ie.

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A Message from Mike Corcoran, Head of Regulatory Enforcement.

I am delighted to get the opportunity to say hello and introduce myself to those of you who I may not have met or come in contact with to date. I was a member of the joint Tusla / DCYA Early Years Regulation Reform Team and as such was responsible for the creation of the Early Years Services Registration Project in 2015.

I have long experience in the area of registration and inspection of children's services and was recently appointed to the newly created post of Head of Registrations and Regulatory Enforcement. I have been working in this capacity since early January of this year. Tusla's Children's Services Regulation Department has been undergoing some substantive structural reform and this new post is one of those designed to improve our own governance and quality assurance functions. I will be responsible for the leadership and management of all of Tusla's registration and compliance enforcement functions. I will be working alongside my other colleagues in senior management and the early years registration office to ensure that all our engagement with you on registration matters are prompt and efficient.

Since coming into post, my core function has been on the creation of systems for the registration of school age services. As many



Working in Collaboration: *Fiona McDonnell, National Service Director, Children's Services Regulation, Tusla, at the Policy Residential Seminar for the MA in Leadership and Advocacy in Sligo Institute of Technology welcomed the opportunity to engage with students, policy makers, third level educators and early years stakeholders, to discuss the current challenges within early years and to recognise the commitment of all stakeholders in this evolving and dynamic sector.*

Pictured above: *Collette Saunders, Dr Catherine Mc Guinn, Aoife Gallagher, Roisin Mc Gloine, Lorraine Farrell, Fiona McDonnell and Professor Mathias Urban*

of you are aware, and as discussed later in this issue, such services are now required to be registered as a result of the creation of new regulations in this area. These regulations were commenced on February 18th this year. I am now focusing on the registration of school age services that some of you are operating within or alongside your early years' service. I will be communicating with you shortly in respect of this process. In addition, I have been busy working collaboratively with the DCYA and other government agents in designing the re-registration process for the sector. At the end of this year, we will have reached the end of the first three-year cycle of registration for Early Years Services and many of your services will be required to apply for renewal. Again I will be communicating with you in due course to outline the process and the specific requirements for this.

Another area of concern that many Early Years providers have brought to our attention has been the matter of securing Garda Vetting for members of boards of management and certain categories of ancillary staff. We understand your concerns and I have been engaged in a process with the DCYA and Garda Vetting Bureau to resolve this issue and provide clarity in respect of the matters that pertain to this challenge for you as providers. Very shortly I will be issuing you a memo on this matter which will outline how this is to be considered in the interim.

I am looking forward to meeting you all in due course and wanted to thank those of you who have sent messages of welcome and general good wishes are most appreciated. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to quality service provision to children.

Registration of School Age Childcare:

On the 18th February 2019, the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018 came into effect. All individuals operating a school age childcare service are now legally required to register their service with Tusla Child and Family Agency. School Age Childcare Services have not to date been subject to registration, so this is a significant step forward in ensuring quality school-age childcare provision.

A School Age service is a service which;

Caters for children **under the age of 15 years** who are enrolled in an educational setting. School age services provide a range of



activities that are developmental, educational and recreational in manner and take place outside of school hours. The primary purpose of the school age service is to care for children where their parents are unavailable.

The following services are exempt from registering as School Age services. These include services that solely provide activities relating to—

The Arts — Youth work — Competitive or recreational sport — Tuition or Religious teaching – Temporary Services eg. summer camps (Age 6 – 15 years).

Registration of School Age Services:

Registration of School Age Services is being processed on a phased basis. All applications are processed on the Tusla School Age Services online portal.

Phase 1: Registration of existing Stand-alone School Age Services.

Standalone School Age Services wishing to register with Tusla are invited to send their intention to register by email to the School Age Team at: sac.registration@tusla.ie. The School Age provider will then receive an email from the School Age Team, which will include:

- ◆ A link to the Tusla online School Age child registration portal
- ◆ An individual username
- ◆ A temporary password
- ◆ A six-digit personal access code.

When the School Age service provider logs on to the portal for the first time, a step by step guidance document is available to assist with the online registration process. The deadline for registration of stand-alone School Age service registration is the **18th May 2019**.

Phase 2: Registration of a School Age Service operating from a Tusla registered Early Years Pre-School services:

An invitation to register email will be forwarded from Tusla to registered early years' services also operating a school age service, from May 2019. The registered provider will then receive login details to the Tusla School Age online registration portal. The deadline for the registration of School Age Services operating from a Tusla registered Early Years service is the **18th August 2019**.

New School Age Services:

Individuals who propose to open a new School Age Service (regardless of whether they already have a Tusla registered pre-school service) are required to send their intention to register by email to the School Age Team at sac.registration@tusla.ie. **at least 3 months** prior to commencement.

The intention to register email forwarded to Tusla should include the following details.

- DCYA reference number (if already registered with the DCYA, otherwise not required)
- Organisation Name
- Name of the School Age Service
- Full address of service including eircode
- Proposed Registered Provider Name
- Direct phone number of the Proposed Registered Provider
- Email Address

The newly established School Age Childcare Team in Tusla is responsible for promoting the quality, safety and appropriate care of school age children by assisting in the registration of services within the sector. The School Age section of the Tusla website provides a number of useful documents which will assist with preparations to register a School Age Service. <https://www.tusla.ie/services/family-community-support/school-age-services/>



TUSLA School Age Team



Recruitment of Early Years Inspectors

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate commenced a recruitment campaign in late 2018 for Early Years Inspectors, with the intention of increasing the numbers of inspectors and in doing so also increase the diversity of qualifications among the inspectors. The criteria were expanded from Public Health Nurses to also include candidates with a minimum of a level 8 qualification in any of the following, Social Care, Social Work, Early Years Care, Education, Bachelor of Education or Child Psychology. Each candidate required a minimum of five years satisfactory experience to be eligible to apply.

The first seven of the successful candidates on the recruitment panel are now in post. This recruitment process brings a significant increase to the numbers of Early Years Inspectors with the number now standing at 57. The current Early Years Inspectors come with a wealth of knowledge and experience as ECEC service managers, teaching, public health nursing, inspectorate and early years specialist roles.

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate annual reports identify the link between compliance and the inspection process. It is expected that increased inspections of Early Years Services will further promote and support the quality of ECEC provision and young children's early years experiences in Tusla registered early year's settings. Pictured below are the seven new Early Years Inspectors attending induction training.



From left; Ciarán Daly, Dublin North; Michelle McDonnell, Dublin North; Fiona Carty, Dublin South; Deirdre Prendergast, South West; Elizabeth McGarry, South East; Sarah Quigley, Dublin



Third Level Information Session

Early Years Inspectorate Information Session; *for Third Level Colleges.*

On Tuesday 19th February over fifty tutors, trainers and lecturers from Early Childhood Education and Care courses across the country were invited by Tusla Early Years Inspectorate to attend an information session in Dublin on current updates and developments in the inspectorate. A total of twenty-eight colleges from across the length and breadth of the country were represented on the day. Trainers who deliver Early Childhood Education and Care programmes from level four to level ten on the National Framework of Qualifications participated in the information session.

Tusla Early Years Specialist Rita Melia, introduced the speakers on the day. Rita acknowledged the correlation between the qualifications and experience of early year's professionals working in practice and the quality of young children's experiences in ECEC settings. The primary aim of the day was to provide an overview of the Quality and Regulatory Framework to tutors, trainers and lecturers teaching on ECEC programmes, the link between quality provision and compliance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 was the focus of the information session.

Fiona Mc Donnell; National Service Director; Children's Services Regulation, provided a comprehensive overview of the work of Tusla, Children's Services Regulation and the Early Years Inspectorate. For many attendees Fiona's presentation highlighted the breadth of the work of Tusla Children's Services Regulations. Helen Rouine; Quality Improvement Manager, Early Years Inspectorate made a presentation on the Quality and Regulatory Framework and the supports which will be provided to the sector in order to meet compliance with the regulations. The attendees highlighted the value of the Quality and Regulatory Framework as a support in their teaching on ECEC programmes. The timing was perfect to present an overview of the Registration of School Age Childcare which had just commenced. Denise Collins, National Registration Manager with the Early Years Inspectorate, provided hot off the press information on the processes of registration of school age childcare services. A lively discussion followed and it was agreed that Tusla Early Years Inspectorate will provide two information sessions annually for the third level training and education sector. A Terms of Reference document is being developed to promote further collaboration with the third level educational sector.



FAQs

Question: *Why do I have to provide single use disposable aprons for each nappy change in my childcare service? In my medium sized service, we change approximately 120 nappies per day, that is 120 aprons per day, 600 per week and 28,000 plastic aprons per year all going into landfill. The use of single use aprons for nappy changing is a grave environmental concern to us.*

Answer: The use of single use plastic aprons is a requirement under Regulation 23, which states that “a registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable means are taken to safe guard the health safety and welfare of the preschool child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe”. The Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings booklet confirms that staff undertaking nappy changing should wear disposable gloves, aprons and wash their hands. There is recognition of the importance of environmentally friendly practices, however as the Early Years Inspectorate, we have a duty of care to health, safety and wellbeing of children in registered Early Years settings.

Some reasons why prevention of infection in early years settings is crucial.

There have been 49 E. coli outbreaks in childcare settings between 2010 and 2018 as per the recent Safe Food campaign; this does not include other types of outbreaks such as Rotavirus which have not been specified.

The purpose of the use of disposable aprons when undertaking nappy changing is to minimise the risk of the spread of infection, particularly when children are being looked after in a group situation. Infectious diseases are transmitted in three ways, direct contact such as skin to skin contact, indirect contact such as being carried on clothing, work surfaces etc. and faecal / oral transmission which can be minimised through effective hand washing practices.



Tusla Early Years Inspector Deirdre Molloy and colleagues Helen Rouine; Quality Improvement Manager and Rita Melia; Early Years Specialist, presented three research papers at a self-organised symposium at the recent Early Childhood Ireland Research Conference 2019.

The three Tusla Early Years Inspectorate presentations were titled;

- ◆ *Development of a Quality and Regulatory Framework (QRF); From Inception to Implementation.*
- ◆ *Enhancing Quality Provision; Through Supporting Regulatory Compliance.*
- ◆ *Taking account of the voice of the child within the regulatory inspection process of early year's services.*

The presentations were very well received and feedback from attending delegates was very positive.

Disposable aprons are therefore preventing the spread of infection by indirect contact. They also protect staff members clothing from becoming a source of infection. If staff clothing is long sleeved, then sleeves should be rolled up to minimise risk of cross infection.

To comply with the regulations, the registered provider has a duty to care for the health, welfare and development of the child. Minimising and prevention of the spread of infection is a regulatory requirement and in the best interest of children's health, safety and development.

Effective hand washing is essential to minimise the spread of infection in Early Years settings. The poster below provides guidance for effective hand washing procedures. The following links also provide downloadable hand washing posters for adults and children.

Hand Hygiene Tips

See <https://www.hse.ie/handhygiene/> for helpful videos and information about good hand hygiene. Have a look at the video on proper hand washing.

<https://youtu.be/3PmVJQUCm4E>

We often think we have washed our hands properly but have a look at this short experiment and you will be surprised.

<https://youtu.be/apV7iYRqfxo>

www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HCU00410.pdf

<https://www.safefood.eu/Food-Safety/Handwashing-for-children.aspx>