



Early Years Inspectorate

School Age Registration and Early Years Re-registration Question & Answer document

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Introduction

The role of Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (EYI) role is to promote the quality, safety and appropriate care of children by robust inspection of the sector. In 2016, the revised [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations \(2016\)](#) and the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) \(Amendment\) Regulations \(2016\)](#) came into effect.

This Question & Answer document was developed to support the Early Years Inspectorate webinar which was delivered in March 2021. The webinar covered;

- School Age Service Registration
- Early Years Services Re-Registration

The webinar was attended by more than 150 people from across the early years sector and has been made available on the [Early Years Inspectorate website](#) along with the accompanying presentations

Before and during the webinar questions were submitted by participants. These questions have been turned into a Q&A document which is below.

DISCLAIMER: This document is not designed to be a comprehensive set of procedures. The purpose of the document is to support understanding of the requirements of School Age Registration and Early Years Re-Registration

Child Minding

Q1. Can you please advise childminders of the documentation they need to submit/ and those they are exempt from submitting for school age registration?

A. Childminders must submit all documentation as outlined in Schedule 3 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age services) Regulations 2018.

- Garda vetting/Police vetting for proposed registered provider
- Garda vetting/Police vetting for the "second person" referred to in Regulation 9(3)
- Garda vetting/Police vetting for persons over the age of 18 normally present in the house during times when the service is operating
- Two references in respect of the proposed registered provider
- Proof of identity of the proposed registered provider (copy of passport or driving licence or Public Service Card are the only acceptable documents)
- Copy of the Certificate of Insurance or written confirmation of insurance cover
- Statement of Purpose and Function
- Copy of Child Safeguarding Statement
- Copy of Policy on Managing Behaviour
- Copy of Policy on Administration of Medication
- Copy of Policy on Infection Control
- Copy of policy on the Dropping Off and Collection of Children
- Application Fee Due

Ratios

Q1. Why is the ratio for school age care settings is half the ratio for preschool sessional for 2.5 year olds? 1:6 compared to 1:11?

A. As regulatory requirements are not prescribed by Tusla, we are unable to comment as to the rationale informing the precise detail of any of the regulations.

Q2. Do I have to reapply for planning permission based on the new ratios under the 2016 regulations?

A. If you are currently operating within the terms of your planning permission, it is not necessary to re-apply. You will need to contact your local authority for advice if you are operating a service outside of conditions attached to your planning.

Policies and Procedures

Q1. Can I ask why Tusla accept policies that are prepared by third party childcare support companies, rather than policies that are prepared by the actual provider and are directly connected to the individual service?

A. Tusla has provided clear guidance to providers to assist them in relation to developing their policies and the requirements for policies. A Policy checklist is available at this link on the Tusla website

Tusla does not accept “off the shelf” documentation, if a provider has purchased templates from a third party, it is expected that they are amended, and adapted to the setting within which they will be applied.

Q2. Does every page of the policy need to be signed by the Registered Provider?

A. Each policy should be signed and dated by the person with ultimate responsibility for them. It is not necessary to sign every page of the policy, a signature at the end of the document will suffice.

Q3. What happens if the re-registration takes several months to get approved and one of the documents initially submitted becomes out-of-date, such as insurance or Garda vetting?

A. In the unlikely event that a document becomes out of date during registration application assessment, the matter be assessed on a case by case basis. If for any reason that the delays were caused by the application team then the provider will not be subject to delay but will be asked to supply updated documentation. If the documentation was nearing expiry at the time of initial application, this would have been identified upon assessment and you would have been asked to resubmit.

Q4. When will the new Tusla Registration Certificates be issued?

A. The issuing of certificates is not a legislative requirement, all applicants are provided by Tusla with a written statement confirming their registration. Certificates are issued to provide additional assistance to providers who for different reasons require additional proof of registration. School age care certificates are issued following the registration of a service. The preschool registration certificates will issue from end of April 2021.

SAC & Preschool Application Deadlines

Q1. Are applications required to be submitted by April 16th or approved by that date?

A. All completed applications must be submitted by 16th April 2021. All applications received that are incomplete upon assessment after that will be closed if not amended as requested within a specified time frame.

Q2. If you have a submission in early but you are asked to resubmit a particular document do you go back to the bottom of the list?

A. Resubmissions are assessed as received by the applications team, applications are revisited systematically.

Q3. If everything is submitted and all documents are in order what's Tulsa's deadline for approval of documents?

A. All applications will be assessed according to date of submission of a complete application with all the required documentation. However a completed application will be process usually within 48 hours and be ready for registration panel.

Q4. Is there different deadlines for SAC in a combined service and stand-alone services ?

A. No, deadline for both service types is April 16th, 2021.

Q5. Does the 1st of November 2021 deadline apply to my early years preschool and my school aged childcare service that have been in operation for the same length of time ?

A. You must have your school age service registration application submitted by April 16th, 2021, and your preschool submission made by November 1st, 2021.

Preschool Submission of Outstanding Documents

Q1. Can you please explain why Tulsa request and retain floor plans?

A. Floor plans must be submitted as set out in Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. They are used to cross check against the room specifications as set out in the application form and to determine the space available to accommodate the proposed number and age range of children.

Outdoor Pre- Schools

Q1. When can we expect regulations on outdoor pre-schools?

A. This is a matter for the Minister for Children and his colleagues. The current regulations make no distinction between indoor and out-door child care.

New Registrations

Q1. If registering a new SAC and early years service, I appreciate we must do it at least 3 months in advance but I wonder how long does it take for an application to be processed?

A. Applications will be assessed according to submission date. A complete application with all the required details will be assessed very quickly by the applications team. Incomplete applications are the most prominent cause of delays in registration.

Registration beyond 2021

Q1. Can you please clarify when we will have to re-register for both EYs and SAC now that the processes have been delayed etc.? If SAC registration and EYs Re-registration are both completed in 2021, when will we be expected to complete these re-registration processes again?

A.

- All Early Years preschool services that submitted part A of their re-registration application in December 2019 received a letter of registration from 1st January 2020. These services will have to re-register again in three years and make an application not less than two months prior to the expiry of the previous registration date.
- Services registered 1st January 2020 will have to re-register before end December 2022.
- The registration of the school age service expires 3 years from the date of registration. Application for re-registration will have to be submitted not less than two months prior to that expiry date.
- A reminder for re-registration will be sent to all services in the year in which re-registration is due.

Q2. What will this process involve ?

A. Information will be provided later this year on this process for those that are due to re-register in 2022. Services who were registered for the first time in 2017 re registered this year. The process is very easy for those who have previously made a completed application with all required documents submitted. It will involve submission of an application with a reduced amount of supporting documentation in most instances.

General Registration Queries

Q1. For services based in a primary school. Is the school Fire Cert acceptable?

A. The local authority will advise you in relation to your requirements for a fire safety certificate. This will vary depending on the type of service and age range of children you are caring for within the primary school.

Q2. Will services be able to make change of circumstances applications in the portal ?

A. Tusla are currently working towards facilitating applications for change in circumstances to be applied for through the portal. It is hoped that this facility will be in place early next year.

Q3. When will regulations for SAC staff qualifications be introduced ?

A. This will be the decision of the Minister for Children. However in their absence staff members employed to work in SAC settings should be suitability qualified and experienced to do so.

Q4. Is vetting still required for members of Board of management if those persons have no access to children in the service?

A. The National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána will only provide vetting clearance for those who have access to and contact with children in accordance with the existing legislation. The onus remains however that members of boards of management are assessed as suitable via assessment of references and overseas police vetting for those who have spent time outside our jurisdiction. It is imperative that Chairpersons act consistently as an agent of quality assurance and routinely visit premises whilst children are present to satisfy themselves that children are well cared for and the service is operating within the remit of the regulations. As such those who act in this capacity are eligible to be Garda Vetted