

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR076
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Name of Service:	The Park Academy Childcare Cherrywood
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Address of Service:	Tullyvale, Cherrywood, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D18 YX28
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Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Barrett
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	26/02/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	74	PM	75
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
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Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty and E Mulhern
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Title:	Early Years Inspectors
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Authority to Inspect

The Tusla 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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

The Park Academy Childcare Cherrywood is one of 8 privately owned childcare services operated by the registered provider. The service provides full time and part time care and education to preschool children from 0 – 6 years.

The service operates from 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday – Friday.

The service is located in a purpose-built facility in a residential area in Cherrywood, South Dublin. There are four care rooms in operation for the pre-school children, Jellytots, Rascals, Appledrops and Smarties. There one separate sleep room and a large outdoor area to the rear of the property which is divided into areas for each age group.

Staffing

There were twenty-two adults present on the day of inspection including a cook, area manager and centre manager. The service has a designated person in charge and a deputy that is not assigned to a care room, but is available to assist across the care rooms as required. All staff members working directly with children hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework for Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to be equivalent.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, information and records and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focussed on the following Regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and Recruitment

Regulation 11 – Staffing Levels

Regulation 15 – Record of a Preschool Child

Regulation 19 – Health, Welfare and Development of the Child

A sampling process was used in respect of Regulation 15, a sample of 12 children’s records were reviewed.

Inspection findings are documented in the 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 rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance 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 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, *person in charge and* staff who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(2) A registered provider 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.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

The inspection focused on the recruitment records of all twenty-three staff who were employed in the service.

The following vetting documentation was reviewed by the inspectors and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements:

- (2)
- (a) Forty-one written and validated past employer references were available for inspection.
 - (b) Five written and references from a source other than a past employer were available.
 - (c) Garda vetting records were available for all staff.
 - (d) Police vetting records were available for twenty one staff members who had lived abroad for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.
- (4) Records were available detailing that all staff members had achieved the required level of qualification at a minimum level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) There was an adequate number of adults working with the children. On the day of inspection there were seventeen adults caring for seventy-five children on both the morning and afternoon of the inspection.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratio was met in all care rooms at all times during the inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

A sample of twelve records were reviewed by the inspectors.

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), (h), and (i) of the above Regulation for all of the records reviewed.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A record was available in each care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
- (i) An accurate staffing roster was available in the service detailing hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection.
- (j) Written records of medication which was administered in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed on the day of inspection documented necessary details, including parental signatures.
- (k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed on the day of inspection documented necessary details

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and the manager reported that all meals are provided by the service. Children are offered breakfast on arrival and a snack is provided during the morning. A hot lunch was served between 11:30 and 11:45 and a further hot meal was served at 3.30pm. All food was prepared on site by a chef. Drinking water was available to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their meals. Younger children were provided with bibs for dinnertime. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported younger children who needed assistance with their dinner.

Additional servings of dinner were available in all rooms and staff were observed offering more food to children. Mealtimes were observed to be a sociable occasion and some staff in these rooms were observed eating dinner with the children.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's noses as required. Children were assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times.

Infants brought bottles of milk from home and were given these according to their individual routines.

Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including using the toilet independently and cleaning up after their play. Children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care.

There was a designated nap time in the Rascals and Appledrops rooms. Younger children in the Jellytots room were placed to sleep when they displayed signs of tiredness. The sleep rooms were calm and conducive to sleep. Soothers were offered to children who used them when they were being placed to sleep. Staff provided the children with reassurance and comfort where required when they were settling them to sleep, speaking gently to them. Areas were provided within the care rooms where children could rest or take a break from activities as desired.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour management policy. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes.

The children were provided with the opportunity to play outside and were appropriately dressed to the weather in rain suits, coats and hats.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using an online application detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities. Parents were observed in the service during drop off and collection times and staff shared information about the children with their parents at these times.