

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR077
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Name of Service:	The Park Academy Cabinteely
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Address of Service:	The Park Business Centre, Glen Drive, Cabinteely, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D18 PY77
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Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Barrett
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Service type:	Full Day Care
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Day 1 of Inspection:	29/11/2023
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Day 2 of Inspection:	30/11/2023
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No of pre-school children Day 1:	AM	75	PM	70
No of pre-school children Day 2	AM	79	PM	80

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park Bray, Co Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	Mary Redmond / Fiona Carty
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

This private childcare facility has been operated by the current registered provider since December 2022 and is one of eight services operated by the registered provider. Full day care is provided for children aged six months to five and a half years of age. The hours of operation are between 7.30am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. The service operates from a purpose-built unit at ground floor level located adjacent to retail units in a residential area of south county Dublin. Five care rooms were available and were in use for the care of pre-school children on the day of inspection. One cot room was provided adjacent to care rooms where the youngest children attending the service were accommodated. The Bunnies and Jellytots rooms catered for the youngest children who were aged from nine months to twenty-two months. The Rascals room catered for children aged two to three years of age and the remaining two rooms accommodated the older children attending. There were three enclosed outdoor areas with natural and artificial coverings provided; a variety of play equipment and materials were available in these areas. The outdoor spaces were accessible directly from four of the five care rooms.

Staffing

There were twenty-four adults employed to work with pre-school children including the manager and deputy manager who were not assigned to care rooms but were available to provide cover; a cook was also employed. The registered provider does not work in the service. Adults employed to work with pre-school children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY) 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 areas of governance and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may focus on other areas as required.

The inspection plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 15 Record of pre-school child

Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of child

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 reoccurring. 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 co-operation of the service manager, area manager and staff members who facilitated the inspection and children who were present on both days of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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

- (1)
- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place which identified the roles and responsibilities of each employee.

The files for twenty-eight adults who had access to children were reviewed, including the cook, two adults who were providing relief duties from other services and another adult who was present during the inspection.

- (2)
- (a) There were written validated references available from previous employers for adults employed in the service.
 - (b) Suitable references from other sources were available for adults who had no previous employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting was available for all adults.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for twenty-two adults who had resided outside the State for a period longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) There was evidence that twenty-six adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to meet the regulatory requirement. A childcare qualification was not required for two adults.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the service. There were nineteen adults working directly with seventy-five children on the first day of inspection and twenty adults working directly with seventy-nine children on the second day of inspection; this did not include the service manager.

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;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend 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

(1) A random selection of records was reviewed for twenty-seven children who were attending the service. The records reviewed contained the following particulars:

- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
- (b) The date on which each child first attended the service.
- (c) There was an area on the registration form where the date when a child would cease to attend the service will be recorded.
- (d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service were also available.
- (e) Names and contact details of other adults who were authorised to collect children were available.
- (f) The documentation available supported the recording of specific illnesses, allergies, disabilities and dietary preferences for children.
- (g) The name, address and telephone number of each child's general practitioner (GP) was recorded.

(h) Parents had indicated which immunisations their children had received, or had indicated reasons why their child may not have received immunisations.

(i) There was written parental consent for medical treatment of children in the event of an emergency.

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

(1) (b) The registered provider ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place.

Nutritious and varied food was offered to children at regular intervals throughout the day and extra portions were readily available. Children were offered a drink with their meals and food choices were appropriate to their individual dietary and cultural needs. Mealtimes were relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience for children as adults engaged with them helping when required. Young children were encouraged to feed themselves appropriate to their age and stage of development and were helped when needed. An adult couch and chair were available to facilitate the feeding and nurturing of babies and young children, if required.

Drinking water was readily available to children throughout the day.

Children who wore nappies had them changed regularly throughout the day and at other times when required and adults were observed to engage attentively with children during the procedure.

Children's hands were washed after outdoor play and before eating. Care was given to young children's comfort as their noses were cleaned in a timely manner and they had bibs put on before eating and their hands and faces were cleaned afterwards.

Sleep routines were reflective of children's needs which promoted good habits around sleep. Babies attending the Bunnies room had individual sleep needs accommodated. There was a prescribed sleep time for children attending the Jellytots room who slept in cots in the care room, but children had the option to sleep outside of the prescribed time as four cots were available in the cot room. Children attending the Rascals and Appledrops rooms slept on low beds in their care rooms and had the option of resting or being facilitated with an activity in the garden or another care room.

Safe sleep practices were adhered to, and children had heavy clothing and shoes removed before being put down to sleep and rest.

There were specific plans available for children with additional care needs and adults demonstrated through discussion and practice that they were familiar with all aspects of delivering the required care.

All children (except children attending the Bunnies room) were observed in the outdoor play areas and wore appropriate clothing when outside.

Appropriate interactions between adults and children were observed during the inspection. Children's choices were respected, for example, children in the Smarties room who did not want to play outside were facilitated to stay inside.

Adults used effective information sharing processes, such as care plans and a mobile tablet application which recorded children's food intake, nappy changing and sleep times. This promoted consistency and continuity of care for children attending the service.