

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:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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Service type:	Full Day Care
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Date(s) of Inspection:	01/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	69	PM	70
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	N McEndoo and O Quill
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

The Park Academy Cabinteely is one of a multiple of services operated by the registered provider. Full day care is provided for children ranging in age from 0-6 years from 7.30am to 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. There were three enclosed outdoor areas. The outdoor spaces were accessible directly from four of the five care rooms.

Staffing

There were twenty-five adults present on the day of inspection. The area manager, the person in charge, the deputy person in charge, the chef, the housekeeper and 20 adults employed to work directly with the children. The person in charge and deputy person in charge was not assigned to any care rooms but were available to provide cover. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 23, 25, 26, 27 and 28; These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 (j)(k) Record in Relation to Pre-School Service.

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 person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)

The registered provider ensured that.

- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
- (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
- (c) There was 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.

(2)

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Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that 23 new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. All new staff members worked directly with the children. In addition, Garda vetting for all staff members whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal was requested for review. The 23 files for new staff were reviewed, and the following information was noted.

- (a) 35 written validated references from past employers for 22 of the adults.
- (b) 11 written validated references from a reputable source for 10 of the adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all adults.
- (d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another state was available for 22 adults who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.

(3)
The procedures specified above in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4)
21 of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement. The remaining two new staff did not require a qualification.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

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Compliance Information

- (1)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (2)
The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were 70 children present in the service being supervised by 20 adults during the inspection.
- (8)
The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises during the hours of operation as evidenced by the roster supplied.

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:*
- (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)
- (i) The staff roster was available on inspection and reflected the staff assigned to each room appropriately.
 - (j) A sample of 13 administration of medication records were reviewed; all records were documented and signed appropriately.
 - (k) A sample of 15 accident and incident records were reviewed; all records were documented and signed appropriately.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The main entrance was found to be secured on arrival preventing unauthorised access or exit from the premises.
- A buzzer system was in operation at the main entrance. Visitors were required to sign in on arrival, any person on the premises was required to be authorised.
- Materials were observed to be in a good state of repair throughout the care rooms. No hazards were identified.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C.
- Cleaning products and cleaning equipment were stored out of the reach of children in separate locked room.
- Highchairs within the baby room were fitted with a 5-point safety harness and were in good state of repair.
- The outdoor areas were secured with tall fencing and bolted gates to partition the areas.

Infection Control:

- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Tables and highchairs were observed to be cleaned prior to and after mealtimes.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available within the service for safe disposal of waste.
- There was adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels. Children were observed to wash their hands with support when required, before meals and after nappy changing.
- Aprons and gloves were available and observed in use by staff when changing of a child was required in accordance with the service policy on nappy changing.

Administration of Medication:

- When discussed, staff were aware of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication. No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

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- The service had a designated sleep room with appropriate cots and bedding available to children. No hazards were observed in the sleep room.
- Staff were aware of safe sleep practices and were observed to carry out and record sleep checks.
- The Sleep room temperature was recorded at 17.5 °C on the day of inspection within acceptable range of 16 °C to 20°C.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed in the cot room and throughout the service.
- Staff were aware of the fire evacuation procedures and were able to demonstrate that regular fire drills are carried out.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. On the day of inspection, a corner of the wall in the outdoor area shared by Bunnies and Jellytots was damaged and sharp as a result, posing as potential risk to children.

Infection Control:

2. A table in the Jellytots room had become worn and could not be effectively cleaned as a result.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

A new table for the Jellytots room was purchased on the evening of the inspection. Checking for wear and tear on furniture has been added to the Monthly Health and safety audit.

Infection Control:

The wall in the Bunnies garden has now been covered to minimize any risk.
The Room Leader will continue to complete their daily garden risk assessment and report any issues to the Manager, the Manager will then contact the Maintenance team to rectify the issue.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photo evidence submitted.
Copy of template for monthly audit submitted.

Infection Control:

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Photo evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider were submitted and deemed adequate by the inspectorate. This regulation is now compliant.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, available to the children at all times while attending the preschool service. There were two adults employed who held in date FAR certificates, with expiry dates ranging from August 2027 to October 2027. A further six staff held in date certificates in paediatric first aid.

(2) (a)(b)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were securely stored, and clearly identifiable, in each care room. The first aid supplies were sufficient to meet the needs of the number of children in attendance. The equipment was readily accessible for use in the event of a medical incident involving a child.

Part VI - Safety

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Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Staff were strategically positioned throughout the indoor environment to ensure continuous visual and auditory supervision, ensuring engagement with children. During mealtimes, staff were seated near or beside the children, fostering a socially enriching atmosphere.

Staff demonstrated good practice in monitoring sleeping children. Regular physical checks were conducted.

Records of these checks were appropriately maintained.

The outdoor play area was arranged to maintain clear lines of sight and sound, supporting effective supervision and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured adequate insurance was in place for the full day care service for 109 children up until 30 April 2026.