

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR078		
Name of Service:	The Park Academy Beacon South Quarter		
Address of Service:	The Cubes, Beacon South Quarter, Sandyford, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D18 YV99		
Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Barrett		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date(s) of Inspection:	21/03/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	85	PM 65
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child & Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Bray Co Wicklow		
Inspection undertaken by:	M Redmond / E Mulhern / L Costello		
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		

Description of service

This private childcare facility was established in 2008. It has been operated by the current registered provider since December 2022 and is one of eight centres operated by the registered provider. Full day care, part-time care and sessional care and education is provided for children aged six months to five and a half years of age; a school-aged childcare service also operates from the premises. The hours of operation are between 7.30am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a purpose-built premises in a mixed-use development complex in an urban area of south county Dublin. Care is delivered across seven rooms and two cot rooms are also available. The Bunnies room caters for the youngest children attending who are aged up to sixteen months, Jellytots caters for children aged one to two years, Rascals and Appledrops cater for children aged up to three years of age and the Owls and ECCE room accommodate the older children attending. Two enclosed outdoor spaces were also available which had impact absorbing coverings and a variety of play materials and equipment provided.

Staffing

There were twenty-nine adults employed including the management team who were not assigned to care rooms but were available to provide assistance when required; the registered provider does not work in the service. Adults employed to work with 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 to be equivalent. One adult who did not have the required qualification had obtained a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY).

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 also 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 16 Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of child

A non-compliance was identified under Regulation 23, and this was also reported.

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 designated person in charge, area director and staff members who facilitated the inspection and children who were present on the day 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.

(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)
- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The named person to deputise was the person in charge on the day of inspection and was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place.

The inspection team were given access to the files for all staff and reviewed the files for twenty adults who had been recruited since the last inspection on the 16 May 2022.

- (2)
- (a) There were written validated references available from previous employers for sixteen adults employed in the service.
 - (b) References from other sources were also available for adults, as appropriate, for example for adults who had no previous employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting was available for twenty adults.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for twenty adults for whom it was required.
- (3) The procedures specified above had been carried out prior to adults' employment in the service.
- (4) Nineteen adults had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement. The qualification for one adult, which did not meet this criterion, had been assessed by the DCEDIY and a letter of qualification recognition had been issued for this adult.

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 twenty-two adults working directly with eighty-five children in the morning and twenty-one adults caring for sixty-five children in the afternoon. The deputising manager was also available.

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.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1) A random selection of records were reviewed for twenty 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) Documentation available supported recording the date on which a child would cease to attend the service.
- (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.

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

(4) The area director was aware that the records referred to above must be retained for a period of two years after the child leaves the service.

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) Details of children’s attendance was accurately recorded in attendance registers in each room and were also recorded electronically on mobile tablet devices.

(i) A staff roster was available and was consistent with adults rostered to work in the service.

(j) Documentation was available to demonstrate that signed parental consent was required prior to administering medication to a child when required, and that administration of medication should be witnessed. Records reviewed indicated that medication administration was witnessed, and parents were informed when their child had received medication.

(k) Details of accidents and incidents were recorded and there was evidence available that parents were informed following an accident or incident involving their child.

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. Food choices were appropriate for children’s 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. Older children were observed to serve themselves “family-style” from large bowls which were placed on the tables from which they were eating. Babies were cradled in a semi-upright position while being bottle-fed and adults maintained good eye contact with babies while feeding; adult chairs were available to facilitate this practice.

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. Care practices by adults reflected families’ preferences and support with personal care. For example, some children had barrier creams applied after nappy changing and others were in the process of being toilet trained in consultation with parents. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently and were encouraged to wash their hands afterwards.

Detailed plans were in place to guide practice for children with additional care requirements, including allergies. Care was given to children’s appearance as bibs were put on younger children before eating and their hands and faces were cleaned afterwards.

Sleep routines were reflective of children’s needs which promoted good habits around sleep. Children attending the Owls and Appledrops rooms came together at rest time to facilitate the different needs of children attending these rooms, some of whom slept. Safe sleep practices were adhered to, and children had heavy clothing and shoes removed before being put down to sleep and rest.

All children (except babies attending the Bunnies room) had regular access to outdoor play and wore appropriate clothing when outside.

Appropriate interactions between adults and children were observed during the inspection.

Adults used effective information sharing processes, such as care plans and a mobile tablet application, which promoted consistency and continuity of care for children attending the service.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

The nappy changing procedures observed were not effective for infection prevention and control. Adults did not remove contaminated gloves before redressing children. The hands of young children were not washed after nappy changing and a foot pedal operated bin was not appropriately used to dispose of contaminated waste during the procedure.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

Further training has been carried out on the nappy changing procedure. A visual guide has been developed to enhance good practice.

Supporting documentation submitted

A visual nappy changing guide was submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated when implemented will address the non-compliance.

The regulatory requirement is deemed to have been met.