

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS147		
Name of Service:	Parkside Childcare		
Address of Service:	20a Fonthill Abbey, Ballyboden Rd, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14.		
Eircode:	D14 XA99		
Name of Registered Provider:	Emma Buckley		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	19/02/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	120	PM 116
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 7 th Floor Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8, D08X01F		
Inspection undertaken by:	L.A Webster, T. Nelson & J.A McKimm		
Title:	Early Years Inspector's		
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

Parkside Childcare is a full day care service that is located Dublin 14, it is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 146 children aged from 0-6 years. The service operates from 7:30am to 6:30pm, Monday to Friday, and provides an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) sessional service from 9.30am to 12.30pm.

The service is located within a converted detached residential premises with two separate buildings onsite. There is a dedicated sleep room which is located on the ground floor and sanitary facilities are available in all buildings. The service has a kitchen in which to prepare food for the children. There are twelve care rooms in operation: the Wobbler 1A, Wobbler 1B, Wobbler 2 and Wobbler 3, Toddler 1, Toddler 2 & Toddler 3, Preschool 1A, Preschool 1B Preschool 1C, and Preschool 2A & Preschool 2B. Additionally, there are two enclosed outdoor areas towards the rear of the property.

Staffing

The registered provider works in a supernumerary position managing the oversight of the service. Along with the registered provider, there are three directors that are involved with the running of the service. The registered provider employs 45 staff members to work within the service. This includes a HR manager, occupancy manager, person in charge, deputy person in charge, three ancillary staff members, and 37 childcare staff.

On the day of inspection there were 34 staff members present, including the person in charge, deputy person in charge, HR manager, 28 staff members working directly with the children, two chefs, and one maintenance worker. Additionally, two students were present within the service on the day of inspection.

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, and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

On the day of inspection, a non-compliance under regulation 29 Premises and Facilities was identified.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under:

- Regulation 19(1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of the Child.
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included Preschool 2A, Preschool 2B, Wobbler 1 and Wobbler 2.

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, HR manager staff 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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) A review of the roster evidenced that either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and this was further evidenced through discussion with staff.

- (2) A review of paperwork and discussion with the person in charged showed that there are currently 45 staff employed by the registered provider to work within the service. The files of eight new staff who had commenced employment following the previous inspection on the 10 March 2025 were reviewed. Garda vetting disclosures were reviewed for four directors and all adults that are currently employed within the service. Additionally, the files of two college placement students were reviewed.
- (a) There were 11 written and validated references available from past employers.
 - (b) There were 9 written and validated references from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 51 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for five adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that all eight adults who worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification that is deemed of equivalence by the minister

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) On the day of inspection, there were 120 children being cared for by 28 adults in morning and 116 children being cared for by 24 adults in afternoon. Additionally, the person in charge was available to provide support in the care rooms as needed.

(2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children within the rooms.

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-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

Compliance Information

Basic Needs:

- Staff were observed to be kind, respectful and caring towards their interactions with the children, which created a calm atmosphere in the service. Both verbal and body language of staff was observed as gentle, approachable and welcoming towards the children.
- Daily routines and activities were displayed to give a sense of structure and comfort for children during the day.
- Staff members supported children with gentle nasal cleansing in a kind and supportive manner.
- Staff we observe to sing with children and use gentle dancing movements with children, who responded positively to these interactions.
- Within the care rooms, it was observed that there were various displays supporting children's belonging, identity, and experiences within the service. This included a 'Birthday Wall', children's artwork, and children captured through different play scenarios within the service. Additionally, displays of children's individual interests were observed.
- Individual cups of water were available to the children.
- Mealtimes were observed to be very interactive, and children were supported by staff to eat independently and offering assistance if required. Children were given time to sit down, eat and digest their food. In discussion with staff, fresh food is prepared on a daily basis and should a child request additional food, it was available.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff were observed to be fully engaged with children throughout the inspection, for example sitting with the children at their level, prompting questioning, offering suggestions to children and repeating what children communicated to validate their understanding and awareness of their environment.
- A key worker system is in place in the service and key groups are displayed within the classrooms. A key worker system allows staff to develop in depth knowledge about the children in their group and fosters nurturing relationships helping children to feel confident.
- Transitions were observed as smooth and considerate during sleep time. Children were gently prepared prior to moving into their cot, with staff removing any outer clothing, and gently placed the children down for sleep.
- Staff were observed to speak respectfully to one another and showcase strong teamwork within the rooms.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The equipment observed were themed and labelled, promoting a sense of spontaneous play for children.
- There were designated areas within the room that invite children to engage in various types of play such as messy/sensory areas, construction area, home corner, and cosy areas that were extensively text rich to support children's recognition and understanding of early literacy.
- Adequately sized tables and chairs were available to the age and developmental stage of children who wished to sit or engage in tabletop activities.
- The children had access to the outdoor play environment throughout the day. This was scheduled but also available to children if they needed. This area had absorbent flooring, slides, climbing frames, wobble boards, giving an array of options to develop gross motor skills. It was observed that the service also brought tables and chairs into the outdoor space providing an area for children to partake in quieter tabletop activities if they chose.

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 entrance to the service was appropriately secured upon the inspector's arrival. The service entrance operated through a buzzer system that allowed entry into the premises. This is adjacent to the main office where staff had clear sight of the main gate, restricting children from leaving the service unsupervised and restrict any unauthorised access to the service. Additionally, the outdoor area was securely fenced and gated.
- The care rooms were in good condition, with no visible hazards or trailing wires observed.
- Blind cords were securely attached to the wall and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely and locked away out of reach of children.
- Shelving units were firmly anchored to the wall to ensure stability and safety.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to children and the door remained closed throughout the inspection.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and wall mounted paper towels were available for appropriate hand-washing practices. Both staff and children were observed to show familiarity with routine handwashing after nappy changing, dinner time and after free play.
- Foot operated pedal bins were in use for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities. These were observed to be in good working order.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in the care rooms, and the windows were open to allow fresh circulation of air.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not given at the time of inspection. Through discussion, staff were familiar with the practices required for the administration of medication to children attending the service.
- Observation showed that medication was stored safely and out of reach of children.
- In discussion with staff, it was evident that they were aware of medical care plans for children and where the emergency medication is stored. In addition to this, staff were aware of the procedures to take in relation to potential anaphylaxis and the administering of emergency treatment if the event occurred.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were noted to be aware of safe sleep practices and children were observed to be monitored while sleeping every 10 minutes. Staff ensured to document this through paper format highlighting the children's breathing, position, and colour of each child.
- An ambient temperature of 16-20°C was maintained for sleeping children under one years of age.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained for sleeping children over two years of age

Fire Safety:

- All fire emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This helped ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. A radiator cover and an adjacent shelving unit within Preschool Room 2A were coated with sticky residue that had accumulated debris and posed a potential infection control risk to the children.
2. Within the two sanitary areas in Preschool Room 2A, it was observed that potty toilet training seats were discarded on the floor within close proximity to the toilets, where the children had direct access. Children's toileting equipment must be safely stored away to mitigate infection control risks.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The radiator covers have been sanded and repainted. All classroom shelving units have likewise been sanded and painted, with a non-stick varnish applied to prevent adhesion of Sellotape residue. Going forward, all shelving units will be treated with a non-stick varnish. In addition, the use of non-adhesive Sellotape has been implemented, alongside a programme of regular sanding and repainting carried out by maintenance
2. A new 'all in one' training toilet seat has been installed thereby rendering the requirement for a second training seat redundant. This also enhances children's safety during use and to mitigate infection control risks. Toilet seats are cleaned by staff members after each use. The new 'All in One' toilet seats will also be fitted in all children's toilets going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic and documentary evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 23.

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 person in charge was trained in First Aid Response (FAR), with an expiry date of March 2027 and was immediately available to the children attending the service. Additionally, the registered provider ensured that seven staff held up to date FAR certification and were immediately available to the children as needed.

(2)

(a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, and unobstructed if needed to be accessed quickly.

(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available throughout the premises at all times to the adults caring for children attending the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The records available demonstrated that fire drills are held monthly within the service, the most recent fire drill taking place on 28 January 2026.
 - (b) A record was available detailing the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm systems in the premises.
 - Records demonstrate that the firefighting equipment had been serviced annually, with the last service taking place on the 16 May 2025.
 - Records demonstrate that the smoke alarms have been serviced on a quarterly bases with the last service taking place on the 2 February 2026.
- (4) A visual notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was consistently displayed around the service.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) The flooring within one sanitary area in Preschool Room 2A was observed to be in a poor state of repair. It was documented at 10:45am and 11:48am that the soft flooring area surrounding the hand basin was wet from handwashing, buckling, and corroding backwards away from the wall This posed a risk of slipping and potential fungal growth. It is important to maintain a safe and hygienic environment for children. It is acknowledged in discussion with the person in charge that this issue has been logged on the maintenance repair list

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A full renovation of the Pre-School 2A toilet has been carried out. New flooring and skirting boards have been installed to prevent buckling and corrosion. In addition, a larger sink has been fitted to minimise water spillage and support a safer environment. The daily risk assessment has been revised to ensure that staff monitor and check the toilet floor throughout the day. Maintenance personnel will conduct frequent inspections of the toilet area, and these areas will be prioritised for any required works

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic and documentary evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 29 (d).