

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK100			
Name of Service:	La Petite Academy Pre-School			
Address of Service:	Templemichael, Caherconlish, Co. Limerick			
Eircode:	V94 VH9W			
Name of Registered Provider:	Sharon Kennedy			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	16/10/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	7
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick			
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan			
Title:	Early Years Inspector			

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 sessional service is located in a rural setting and was established in 2007. It operates a morning session from 08:45 – 11:45 hours and an afternoon session from 12:15 – 15:15 hours Monday – Friday for 38 weeks a year providing a play-based curriculum. The service is operated from the registered providers domestic dwelling and the children have access to a pre-school room, sanitary accommodation area and facilities for outside play.

Staffing

Two staff with childcare qualifications work in the service each day.

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.

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 wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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*

(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) On the day of the inspection the registered provider was the designated person in charge of operating the service and there was a named person available who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of the inspection the person in charge was available at all times. The staff roster indicated that either the registered provider or the deputy manager were always accessible on site for the morning session. The second staff member was contactable nearby for the afternoon session.
- (2)(a) Two written and validated references from past employers were available for both staff.
- (b) References from sources other than past employers were not required.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for both staff employed at the service.
- (d) Police vetting was available for one staff member employed in the service who had worked outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) Both staff working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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

(2) On the day of the inspection there were 7 pre-school children and 2 adults on the premises for the morning sessional service. In the afternoon there were 7 preschool children present with 1 staff. The written staff roster showed that the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times.

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

A sample of 10 records for a preschool child were reviewed on the day.

The following information was available on these records.

- (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.
- (i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child 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-

(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

(1)(a) BASIC NEEDS

Healthy eating was promoted within the service. The snacks and drinks provided were adequate, suitable, nutritious, and varied for each pre-school child attending the service. The children were given sufficient time to eat and enjoy their snacks and drinks without being rushed.

Sanitary accommodation was located close to the playroom in the service and children were observed to toilet independently. A supply of tissues and wipes were accessible to the children. Lidded bins were available for the safe disposal of waste. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their level of independence.

The rest area with comfortable seating and cushions was accessible to all children.

The registered provider responded to the children's cues for assistance in a prompt and sensitive manner. The children were supported as they played individually and as part of a group. The registered provider was observed to be kind and caring in all her interactions with the children. Each child was treated as an individual and had their likes, abilities and natural tendencies understood and respected.

Photographic evidence of activities undertaken and art portfolios were available to share with parents and helped support a sense of working in partnership.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

The room was equipped with open shelving units where children could access play equipment and materials independently. Shelving units were also used effectively to create play spaces, such as the library area, home corner, construction area, small world area, arts, crafts area and tabletop activities area. Sand play and water play activities were available outside. Each of the areas were well resourced with toys and accessories including sensory and natural materials. Good supplies of books were available which helped support language development. The walls of the rooms were decorated with posters and the children's artwork. The children had access to a large outdoor play area at the rear of the facility which were surrounded by walls and gated.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) Each pre-school child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by the registered provider.

This record was available on the attendance register.

(3)(a) The registered provider ensured that no person other than the following were allowed enter the service.

(i) Pre-school child attending the service.

(ii) A person dropping or collecting such a child.

(iii) An employee.

(iv) An unpaid worker can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee.

(b) A record in writing was kept of persons who entered the service on the visitors logbook.

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) There registered provider had up to date training in first aid response for children.

(2) (a) The first aid box was safely stored in easily accessible position in the playroom.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly.

(b)The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms were last serviced in September 2023.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a prominent position at the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was available to cover the number of children who attended.