

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK136
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Name of Service:	Oakleigh Kids Academy
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Address of Service:	Oakleigh Woods, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 W7P3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Helena O Neill
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	14/12/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	25
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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 full day care service is located in an urban setting of Limerick city providing care and education to children aged from 6 months to 6 years, including a sessional service from 09.00 hrs. to 12.00 hrs. for 38 weeks of the year.

The service is operating from a two-storey purpose-built facility from Monday to Friday between 07.45 hrs. and 18.00 hrs.

There are five playrooms in operation for the preschool children. The children have access to sanitary accommodation areas, two sleep rooms and outdoor play facilities are available to the children each day.

A school aged service is available in afternoon in the creche.

Staffing

There were 9 staff working directly with the children in the service. The registered provider and the deputy were available on the premises to assist the staff in the playrooms and an additional staff member works in the kitchen preparing snacks and meals.

All staff working with the preschool children have childcare qualifications that range from QQI Level 5 - QQI Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework document.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 24, 25, and 26; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation in this report.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, deputy, 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 registered provider in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.
- (b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider and the deputy were present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.
- (c) There was a clear management structure that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.
- (2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all staff members employed to work at the service.
- (b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed to work at the service.
- (d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures 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) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

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) At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. On the day of the inspection there were 9 staff working directly with 34 preschool children in the service.

The following were the adult child ratio in the service at the time of the unannounced inspection.

Baby room there was 1 baby and 1 staff,

Wobbler room there were 4 children and 2 staff,

Toddler playgroup there were 5 children and 2 staff,

Pre-school Room 1 there were 12 children and 2 staff,

Pre-school Room 2 there were 12 children and 2 staff.

The adult/child ratio in all areas was correct and there were sufficient relief staff to assist at busy periods and to cover staff break times throughout the day

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:

Healthy eating was promoted throughout the service. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were prepared fresh each day and were served at regular intervals. Food trolleys delivered meals and snacks to each room at the service. Jugs of water and cups were accessible to all children in each of the rooms. Chicken curry was served at dinner time on the day of the inspection and children were all offered extra helpings of dinner if they were hungry. Staff in each room had supplies of snacks if children required more food between mealtimes.

Sanitary accommodation was located next to each room in the service. Nappy changing facilities were provided next to the Baby and Toddler rooms. All toiletries for the children were safely stored and clearly labelled and were located within easy reach of the staff. Nappy changing policies were clearly displayed next to the changing units. Each room had a supply of tissues and wipes within easy reach of the staff while changing. Pedal operated, lidded bins were easily accessible for the safe disposal of waste.

Clearly labelled individual spaces and coat hooks for each child's belongings were available to support organised access and independence for the children.

Sleep rooms were located next to the Baby and Toddler rooms. Partitions separating the areas were in place. There was a sufficient number of standard cots accessible to facilitate children to rest when needed. Children were closely observed during all sleep periods and all sleep checks were documented in writing. The children over 2 years who required a sleep had access to low level beds with sheets and blankets provided.

Rest areas with soft seating, soft floor coverings, cushions and blankets were accessible in each of the rooms at the service. Staff throughout the service encouraged quiet periods during the day to facilitate each child's need for comfort, rest and relaxation.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within each room and in the outdoor play area. The outdoor play space was used at regular intervals throughout the day and supported children's physical development and social interaction.

The children had regular change of environment and they spend long periods of time outdoors.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The physical and the material environment of each room in the service was carefully developed, full of activities which were aimed at developing social, emotional, cognitive, physical and communication skills. The baby room had a calm atmosphere with lots of soft floor space for workers and children to relax and play. Adult seating was available for staff to hold children while feeding and comforting them. Highchairs were accessible for mealtimes. The Wobble and Toddler rooms had more challenging areas for children who had just started walking. Low level tables and chairs were used at mealtimes and for many tabletop activities. Low level climbing frames encouraged children to further challenge their gross motor skills. The preschool rooms had environments that were flexible and responsive to the emerging changing needs, preferences and interests of the children.

Photographs displayed throughout all rooms showed the many activities and events children participated in.

Reading areas with a variety of books was available in all rooms. Toys and equipment were rotated, and internal and external spaces rearranged and redesigned depending on each child's preferences, interests and abilities.

The outdoor space provided ever-changing opportunities for new experiences as the environment changed with the seasons and the weather. Sheltered areas were available outside for storage areas and for tabletop activities.

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:

- Two staff members were observed in the nappy changing facility not to wash their hands prior to commencing nappy changing. This was at variance with the nappy changing policy which stated that 'hands were washed prior to putting on the gloves'.
- The children's hands were not washed after their nappies were changed. This increases the risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The registered provider stated in the corrective action form that:

1. The staff completed a refresher training in the nappy changing policy for the service and they also did a work shop on the management of infection control and preventing cross infection in a preschool setting.
2. The staff will ensure that the babies, wobblers and toddlers have access to hand washing at the appropriate times throughout the day.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 Infection control have been adequately addressed. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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) Staff ensured that each pre-school child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by staff in each room. The service recorded children's entry and exit from the service digitally and also on roll books in each room.

(3)(a) The person in charge had ensured that no person other than the following can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee,

(i) Pre-school child attending the service.

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

(iii) An employee.

(iv) An unpaid worker.

(3)(b) Daily records of the entries to the visitor book were maintained.

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 were 5 staff working in the service who had up to date training in first aid response for children.

(2) (a) The first aid boxes were safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the service.

(b) The first aid boxes were 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 fire fighting 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. The last recorded fire drill was practised on 10/11/2023.

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