

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MH089
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Kiddy Academy
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Academy Square, Academy Street, Navan, Co. Meath
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<b>Eircode:</b>	C15 k266
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Linda Russell
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	29/04/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	59	PM	38
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D.Murray & AM. Cunningham
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

Kiddy Academy is a privately owned service which provides full day, part time and sessional care and education to children from 1 to 6 years. The service operates from 8am to 6pm and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). A school aged service is also provided.

The service is purpose built and is located on the ground floor of an apartment block.

The service consists of 3 care rooms in the main building, an additional care room is located in a separate unit to the rear of the premises, staff room and sanitary facilities.

The rooms in the service are as follows:

The **Bumblebees Room** provides care to children from 1 to 2 years.

The **Ladybirds Room** accommodates children from 2 to 3 years.

The **Caterpillar Room** provides care and education to children from 3 to 4 years.

The **Butterflies Room** also provides care and education to children from 4 to 6 years. This room provides a school aged service in the afternoons.

An outdoor space is located adjacent to the service.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs 2 managers, 9 childcare staff and 1 auxiliary staff member who provided various duties but does not work directly with the children. Present on the day of inspection were 2 managers, 6 childcare staff and 1 auxiliary staff member who prepared and cooked the meals. The registered provider arrived at 11:50am to assist with facilitating the inspection, she does not work directly with the children.

### 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.

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 registered provider, managers, 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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) Thirteen staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a) & (b) Twenty-six validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 13 adults employed by the service. 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 3 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 10 adults employed to work with children, held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(4) The registered provider did not ensure that all staff working directly with the children held an appropriate childcare qualification. One staff member had not fully completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

(4) The staff members now has a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education with their qualification certificate placed in their file. The registered provider will ensure that no staff member is employed in the service without a full childcare qualification.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Qualification certificate.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) On the morning of the inspection there were 2 managers and 6 childcare staff providing care to the 59 children present. An auxiliary staff member was present who prepared and cooked the meals. The registered provider arrived at 11:50am.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity:

The **Bumblebees Room** had 2 staff members with 8 children ranging in age from 1 to 2 years all attending on a full day care basis.

The **Ladybird Room** had 2 staff members with 12 children ranging in age from 2 to 3 years all attending on a full day care basis.

The **Caterpillar Room** had 2 staff members with 19 children ranging in age from 3 to 4 years attending the ECCE programme with 10 children staying on to avail of the full day care.

The **Butterflies Room** had 2 staff members with 20 children ranging in age from 4 to 6 years attending the ECCE programme with 8 children staying on to avail of the full day care.

(8) (a) According to the staff roster 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

## 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.*

#### Non- Compliance Information

(1)(I) A staff roster was not maintained indicating all staff members arrival times on the day of inspection. Nine staff members had not signed in on arrival to the service.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective & Preventive Action

(1)(I) All staff have been told they must sign in as soon as they arrive for work each morning. The manager will ensure that this practice is implemented on a daily basis.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

None required as sign in documentation available on the day of inspection.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

## 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) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

### Basic needs:

- All children requiring sleep were placed to sleep at the service designated sleep time after dinner at 12md. Each child's sleep routine was displayed on the wall in the Bumblebees room.
- Children's nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Staff members were responsive to the children's cues should they need to use the toilet, with discreet supervision provided and assistance given if required.
- Children were observed being allowed to self-direct their own play. Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. The curriculum was child led incorporating the themes of the week which were "The Weather", "Flowers" and "Planets" with the children's displaying artwork to reflect these themes. Staff in the Caterpillar room also helped children recite a poem about flowers.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning. The children were observed enjoying imaginative, energetic outdoor play with both their peers and staff members.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- Transitions were handled smoothly as the children were given ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- The children all sat around in groups at snack time which created a positive atmosphere where children had the opportunity to interact and developing relationships.
- The staff members communicated with parents verbally on a daily basis regarding activities pertaining to their children. Parents were greeted at collection time with friendly conversation overheard. The staff encouraged the children to engage positively with each other by adopting simple social rules such as turn taking, sharing in play activities and resolving minor disputes.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b) The cot room had 5 standard cots for the younger children requiring sleep. The Bumblebees room had sleep mats placed on the floor for the older children requiring sleep. Within the care rooms there were soft furnishings, mats and cushions for children to take a break from activities and rest, if needed.

(3)(a) An outdoor space was located adjacent to the building, which was enclosed with fencing, had an artificial grass surface with 2 secure side gates.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- The care rooms had a range of play materials and equipment that offered stimulation, exploration and imagination. These were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving which nurtured independence, facilitated choices, encouraged curiosity, spontaneous play and movement.
- Equipment in the outdoor space included an activity unit with a slide and climbing wall. A small storage area was also available with additional play equipment such as ride on toys, bouncer balls ,rocker,and building blocks. A large tyre facilitated a fairy garden with planted flowers.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service had a 2-week menu plan for the children attending the full day care service with a variety of dishes ranging from meat and poultry cooked on site. The children in the Bumblebee room had chopped fruit, brown bread and raisins for morning snack. The remainder of the children brought their own snack from home. The main meal of the day was served between 11:30 and 12:00 which consisted of chicken chasseur, vegetables and mash potatoes. Evening tea was served at 15:30 pm which consisted of soup and rolls. Additional snacks were available for the children staying until 6pm if required. Water was the drinks of choice with individual bottles/cups for the children in the care rooms.

### 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The main door to the service was secured and the outdoor space was enclosed and had 2 secure gates. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor space.
- An outdoor risk assessment was conducted on a daily basis.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- All play materials were placed on stable based shelving units. Play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children attending each room.

##### Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times. Liquid soap and hand paper towels were available in the sanitary facilities.
- Items of food in children’s lunch boxes which required refrigeration were stored in a fridge. This reduced the risk of bacterial growth in these food items.
- The premises was in a clean condition with up-to-date documented cleaning schedules available.
- Pedal bins were available in the care rooms.
- The sanitary areas were ventilated.

### Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- Temperature of the sleep room and the Bumblebees room was maintained between 18 to 22<sup>o</sup> C while children were sleeping. Fan were available to reduce the air temperature.
- A sleep log recording the position, colour and breathing pattern was recorded at 10 minutes intervals on all sleeping children.
- All children sleeping on sleep mats were supervised at all times.

### Fire Safety:

The following fire safety measures were observed:

- Fire drills were conducted on a monthly basis.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- The fire assembly point was at the wall in the adjacent car park.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Infection Control:

1. In the sleep room the second cot on the right inside the door and the 4<sup>th</sup> cot had no wipeable protective covering to prevent the foam material from getting soiled.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Infection Control:

1. All mattresses now have a wipeable protective covering. The manager will check all mattresses on a regular basis to ensure that wipeable protective coverings are in place.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of cover on mattresses.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

### 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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

### 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) A record of the fire drills that take place was available. The most recent fire drill was recorded on 10/04/2025.

(b) The annual maintenance certificate for the smoke alarms were dated 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in care rooms which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) A maintenance certificate for the fire extinguishers in the service was not available for inspection.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The fire extinguishers were serviced on 18/06/2025. The next service is due in June 2026. The registered provider will ensure that an up-to-date maintenance record is available for inspection.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

## 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 that the service was adequately insured for 85 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2025 to the 27/03/2026.