

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH089		
Name of Service:	Kiddy Academy		
Address of Service:	Academy Square, Academy Street, Navan, Co. Meath		
Eircode:	C15 k266		
Name of Registered Provider:	Linda Russell		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	21/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM 27
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray & AM. Cunningham		
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

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 2 years 8 months 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, 8 childcare staff and 1 administration staff member. Present on the day of inspection was the manager and 6 childcare staff. The registered provider along with the second manager and 1 staff member were attending the Butterflies Room graduation at a different location. They returned to the service when the graduation was over.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,20,21,22,23,25,26 ,28 and 32. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within 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.

Additional Information

The inspection was carried out following receipt of a feedback and concerns received to the Early Years Inspectorate.

21/06/2023 An Immediate action notice was issued pertaining to Regulation 23: General Safety /Safe Sleep.

22/06/2023 A response was received from the registered provider and immediate actions taken were accepted by the Inspectorate.

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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

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) All staff files were reviewed and the following was noted:

- (a) Fifteen validated written references were available from a past employer.
- (b) Nine validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.

- (c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for all staff.
- (d) Police vetting was available for 4 staff members who had resided outside the state for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Eight childcare staff members had 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Two staff members did not have adequate documentation on file to demonstrate that they had 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.

(7)(a) There was no written evidence available to demonstrate that staff members were appropriately supervised which is contrary to the Supervision Policy which states "Supervision meetings will be held on a quarterly basis, supervision templates will be completed and appraisals will take place at the end of the staff members probationary period and on an annual basis".

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) One staff member has almost completed Level 6 in Early Childhood Care and Education. She will be caring for the school aged children until she has completed this course.

One staff member has enrolled for Level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education and is starting in September 2023. She will be caring for the school aged children until she has completed this course.

When recruiting new staff members the management will ensure that all staff working directly with the pre-school children has a full childcare qualification.

(7)(a) A written record of supervision conducted with the staff members will be kept on file. Supervision meetings will be held on a quarterly basis.

Management will have a meeting in August 2023 to arrange dates for all staff to have a supervision meeting. These dates will be recorded in the service diary. This will ensure supervision meetings are not overlooked.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff roster for week of 31/07/2023

Supervision template.

Summary Comment

The registered providers in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan has addressed the non-compliance for Regulation 9(4) and 7(a) Management and recruitment.

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 was, 1 manager and 6 staff working directly with the 34 children attending the service. The registered provider along with the second manager and 1 staff member were attending the Butterflies Room graduation with 21 children off site. The staff members returned to the service when the graduation was over at approximately 11.15am with 2 children from this room availing of the full day care service.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed on the day of inspection:

The **Bumblebees Room** had 2 staff members with 5 children ranging in age from 1 to 2 years of which 4 were availing of full day care.

The **Ladybird Room** had 2 staff members with 10 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 2 years 8 months to 4 years attending the ECCE programme with 11 children staying on to avail of the full day care. A further 2 children who had been attending their graduation off site joined this room at 12:30pm.

The **Butterflies Room** was not in uses on the day of inspection as 21 children were attending their graduation off site with parents.

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

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

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

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:

- Children's individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required. In the Bumblebees and Ladybirds rooms children who became upset were nurtured and cuddled until they settled. In the Caterpillar room children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.
- Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care.
- The staff members sat and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required whilst encouraging conversation and extending interactions.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning with all children observed enjoying outdoor play with their peers.

- Transitions were handled smoothly with staff members giving the children ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.

Supporting relationships around children:

- A written record was kept in the Bumblebees and Ladybird room of nappy changes, sleep times, meals and issues pertaining to each child as occurred during the day and this information was passed on to parents or guardians when collecting their child at the end of the day.
- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed on 'The Family Wall' in the care rooms.

(3) In the Bumblebees, Ladybirds and Caterpillar Rooms children's behaviour was managed in a positive way, and it was observed that minor problems were handled promptly and appropriately by the adults who were observed to engage respectfully with the children in their care. The children showed confidence around the staff members and an eagerness to engage with them in conversations and play. The children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

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 cots for children under 2 years requiring sleep. The Bumblebees room had sleep mats placed on the floor for the children over 2 years to sleep on. 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

Equipment in the outdoor space included a plastic kitchen with play equipment, an activity unit with a climbing ramp and a slide, push along toys, sand table with play equipment and a play tent. A small storage area was available for additional play equipment.

Non-Compliance Information

1. In the care rooms areas of interest were poorly developed with little supporting equipment and materials to enhance the themed areas. Play equipment and materials were placed on linear shelving and in plastic boxes some of these boxes were out of reach. There was a limited selection of natural materials. Although the manager stated that sand/water trays were available for the care rooms they were not available to the children on the day of inspection.

The physical indoor environment should be stimulating, challenging, diverse, creative and provide an enriching experience for all children to ensure meaningful sustained play.
2. Many of the battery-operated toys were not working which reduces the child's enjoyment and learning experience when operating the toys.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. New play equipment has been purchased and areas of interest have been further developed. All staff are aware of the importance of stimulating a creative environment for the children. Management in collaboration with the staff in each care room will update equipment/ toys when necessary.
2. All battery-operated toys are now working with batteries replaced. Staff have been informed to check battery operated toys regularly and inform management when they need replacing. Extra batteries have been purchases and are available as needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the following:

Additional Wooden equipment consisting of home area, puzzles, dress up rail and small cars with supporting equipment.

A supply of batteries purchased.

Summary Comment

The registered providers in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan have addressed the non-compliance for Regulation 21 Equipment and materials. The response received has been reviewed and accepted however equipment and areas of interest will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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, fish and poultry cooked on site. All children attending the sessional service brought their own lunch. On the day of inspection, the children had toast for breakfast. Morning snack consisted of yogurt, strawberries and rice cakes. The main meal of the day was served between 11:30 and 12:30pm which consisted of potatoes, beans and chicken goujons. Evening tea was served at 15:15pm which consisted of waffles and fish fingers. Additional snacks were available for the children staying until 6pm if required. Water was the drinks of choice.

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:

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The main door to the service was secured with a buzzer system and the outdoor space was enclosed and secured. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- An outdoor risk assessment was conducted on a daily basis.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- Liquid soap, paper hand towel and warm water not exceeding 43⁰ C was available at the sinks in the sanitary facilities. The hand washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.
- Fridges were available for the perishable items in the children's lunch boxes.

Safe Sleep:

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

- A sleep log on each child recording the position, colour and breathing pattern was recorded at 10 minutes intervals.
- Block out blinds were available which created an atmosphere conducive to sleep

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Aprons were not worn by staff members when changing children's nappies.
2. Throughout the service bins were hand operated which increases the risk of cross contamination. All bins including nappy bins must be foot pedal operated to reduce this risk.
3. Three mattresses in the cot room had mesh covering and according to the safety label should have had a wipeable cover for effective cleaning.

Safe Sleep:

4. The following temperatures were recorded in the service, which exceeded the normal ranges:
 - At 12:10pm the temperature of the cot room when children were being settled to sleep was 26.6⁰ C. A staff member was informed and a fan was placed in the room. At 12:30pm the temperature remained high at 26.6⁰ C.
 - At 12:20pm in the Bumblebees room while children were settling to sleep the temperature was 26.5⁰ C. A staff member was informed, the windows were opened but there was no fan available for this room. At 12:50pm and 13:50pm further temperature readings were taken with the temperature remaining high at 25:8⁰ C.
 - At 12:10pm the temperature of the Ladybird care room was 26.9⁰ C windows were opened but there was no fan available for this room. At 12:40pm the temperature had reached 28⁰ C.

An Immediate Action Notice was given with a response received on the 22/06/2023 which was accepted by the Inspectorate.

Fire Safety:

5. Fire Drills were not conducted for the month of May 2023.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. All staff have been informed to use the aprons provided in the nappy changing room. This practice will be supervised by managers on a daily basis.
2. All bins have been replaced with foot pedal operated bins.
3. Waterproof, breathable, washable mattress protectors have been ordered for the three cots that have mesh covering.

Safe Sleep:

4. Additional fans have been purchased for each care room. Temperatures will be checked and recorded daily in the cot room and care rooms and before children are put down to sleep. Fans will be put on if required to regulate the air temperature.

Fire Safety:

5. Fire drills will be conducted on a monthly basis. This practice will be supervised by management.

Supporting documentation submitted

Aprons were available on the day of inspection.

Photographic evidence of pedal operated bins.

Receipt of purchased of mattress covers.

Photographic evidence of fans purchased.

Fire drills conducted for the month of July 2023.

Summary Comment

The registered providers in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan have addressed the non-compliance for Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. The response received has been reviewed and accepted, however all aspects of this regulation will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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 written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 24/04/2023.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fire fighting equipment was last serviced in January 2023. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 16/13/2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the service.

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 for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2023 to 27/03/2024.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)&(c)A Complaints Policy was available for the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)&(b)The Complaints Policy was not implemented in practice as a detailed record in writing was not maintained of a complaint and the steps taken in the complaints process.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A complaints log will now be recorded on every complaint received. The complaints policy will be implemented in practice in the future with all complaints received.

Supporting documentation submitted

Complaints Policy was reviewed at inspection.

Summary Comment

This was a non-compliance on the last inspection on the 12/05/2022.

The registered providers in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan has addressed the non-compliance for Regulation 32 – Complaints. The response received has been reviewed and accepted