

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW169		
Name of Service:	The Park Academy Childcare Eden Gate		
Address of Service:	Eden Gate, Delgany, Co. Wicklow		
Eircode:	A63 NY22		
Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	02/03/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	131	PM 125
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.		
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Condon & O. Quill		
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

This full day care service is located in a residential and business centre on the outskirts of Delgany village, County Wicklow. The service is registered to provide full day-care to pre-school children who are aged between 0-6 years of age. The service is registered to open from Monday to Friday between 07.00 and 18.30 At present eight rooms are in use to care for pre-school children. Each room has access to a designated outdoor area.

Staffing

A total of 36 adults are employed which includes the manager, assistant managers and a chef. On the day of inspection 24 adults provided direct care to the pre-school children. The manager and assistant manager were available to give assistance in the rooms as needed. An area supervisor and cook were also present.

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 wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, area 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
- (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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2) Seventeen new staff were employed since the last inspection. These seventeen staff files were reviewed.
- (a)(b) There were two written and validated references available for each of the seventeen staff members.
- (c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for seventeen new staff members. 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 sixteen staff members who had lived in another state for a period of longer than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Seventeen staff members who were involved in the direct care of children had 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.

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) Throughout the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the pre-school children.

(2) The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection. There were twenty-eight adults providing direct care to 131 pre-school children who were cared for in 8 care rooms. The manager and assistant manager were present to provide assistance in rooms when needed.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises during the inspection and the staff roster indicated that there are at least two adults 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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The inspector observed that staff were attentive to the personal care of the children. The children's nappies were changed routinely and if needed in between. Bibs were provided when eating to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet. Their noses, hands and faces were cleaned when needed. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

Staff sat with the children when eating. They provided them with help when needed whilst supporting their independence. Drinks of water were offered regularly and were always available. Children attending the Bunnies room had individual routines for food and sleep which mirrored their home routines.

All children in the service who were under two years of age slept in cots. Older children who required sleep were provided with sleep mats and slept in their rooms at a designated time. The atmosphere in the rooms while children were sleeping was calm. Children's outer clothing was removed, and blankets were provided. Staff provided the children with reassurance as they were settling to sleep, talking to them gently and sitting next to them. The children who used soothers were offered these.

Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed them by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. The staff comforted the children when they became upset - holding them and talking to them in soft tones.

All children attending the creche spent time in the outdoor area during the day. Staff were observed playing games with them and supervised them while using the toys and equipment provided in the outdoor area. Minor incidences between children were handled well by staff using distraction and re-direction to resolve any issues.

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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.
- Documentary evidence was available that fire drills were being carried out on a monthly basis as per best practice guidelines.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelving and were inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- Emergency medication was readily available for children with specific medical conditions. Detailed care plans were available for these children and staff caring for the children were knowledgeable regarding the steps to be taken in the event of an emergency.

Safe Sleep:

- On the day of inspection, a sleep log was maintained every 10 minutes by staff detailing the physical checks carried out on sleeping children under 2 years of age.
- The temperature of the sleep room and the care rooms where children slept was in the acceptable range.

Infection Control:

- Children were encouraged to wash their hands regularly including before lunch and after using the toilet. Effective hand hygiene practices were observed and in accordance with the services infection control policies and procedures. Pedal operated bins were available in the sanitary areas and in the care rooms.
- During the changing of the children's nappies staff members were observed to adhere to the infection control measures as documented in the nappy changing policy of the service.
- The premises, play equipment, and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Each child's soother was stored in individual containers.

Administration of Medication

Written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. Medication was stored safely. Staff were aware of the procedure to be undertaken should medication be required.

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) Three staff members, who were trained in first aid response (FAR), were available to the children on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible position.

(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school 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 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 in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on 19 February 2026.

(b) Records were available detailing the number, type, and maintenance of fire- fighting equipment and smoke alarms both last dated in March 2025.

(4) Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.