

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:	Louise Barrett
-------------------------------------	----------------

Service type:	Full Day
----------------------	----------

Date(s) of Inspection:	24/04/2023
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	119	PM	103
-----------------------------------	----	-----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	Fiona Carty and Mona Condon
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

The Park Academy Childcare Edengate is one of 8 privately owned childcare services operated by the registered provider. The service provides full time and part time care and education to preschool children from 0 – 6 years. The service operates from 7.00am to 6.30pm, Monday – Friday.

The service is located in a purpose-built facility in a mixed use development in Delgany, Co Wicklow. There are 8 care rooms in operation for the pre-school children, the Butterflies and Bunnies, Jellytots, Rascals, Appledrops, Smarties, Little Owls and Owls. There are two separate sleep rooms and a large outdoor area to the rear of the property which is divided into areas for each age group.

Staffing

There were 35 adults present on the day of inspection including a cook, area manager and centre manager. The registered provider arrived towards the end of the inspection. The service has a designated person in charge that is not assigned to a care room, but is available to assist across the care rooms as required. The deputy person in charge was also present and assisted in all care rooms as required. All staff members working directly with children hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework for Qualifications.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23 and 25; 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

The inspection focussed on the records of five new staff members who had been recruited since the last inspection dated 28th September 2022:

(2)

(a) Ten past employer references were available for inspection in respect of five new employees recruited since the last inspection. Of these references 7 were adequately validated.

(c) Garda vetting records were available for five new staff members.

(d) Police vetting records were available for five staff members who had lived abroad for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(4) Records were available detailing that all new staff members had achieved the required level of qualification at a minimum level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)

There was no evidence that three references for two new staff members had been validated prior to the staff members commencing employment.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Park Academy Childcare will endeavour to have all references verified before a new employee starts with us. The centre manager will do a complete check on the new employee's paperwork prior to the new employee starting in Park Academy Childcare.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 9(3).

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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.

(2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 119 pre-school children attending the service in the morning and 103 in the afternoon being supervised by thirty two adults during the inspection.

(8)(a)
The staff roster demonstrated that two adults were available on the premises 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 29 records were reviewed by the inspectors.

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), (h), of the above Regulation for all of the records reviewed.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- Of the 29 records assessed:
- (c) The registered provider did not ensure that a record in writing was available showing the date the child ceased attending the service in a sample of the documentation inspected.
 - (g) There was no record of the name or telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner in four of the documents the inspectors viewed. Three records did not have the phone number of the child's medical practitioner recorded.
- It is acknowledged that there were three registration forms currently in use by the service and some had all the required information the Regulation required.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)
(c) All children who finish in the service must give 2 months' notice by completing a leaving form with the last day of attendance. A signed copy is attached to the child's file. Each child's full information including leave date is recorded on our CRM system.

(g) We have since received these details for the four children missing GP details and the missing contact number for the GP. This information has been added to the child's file in the office, the child's file in their room and on our CRM system

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the leaver form.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 15.

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

The service had a healthy eating policy. Staff stated a morning snack, hot dinner and evening meal is provided daily by the service.

The inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

The service provided breakfast, snacks, a hot meal, and an afternoon tea to the children. All children were supported to eat independently during meals, and staff provided assistance to children where required. Bibs were worn in younger care rooms to protect the children's clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating. Drinking water was available in the care rooms at all times, and both water and milk were offered to the children with each meal. Staff supported the children to wash their hands and clean their faces at appropriate times throughout the inspection. Regular nappy changing took place throughout the day and staff were observed to engage attentively with children during the procedure. Children were observed using the toilet independently and assistance was offered by staff when required.

The rooms had clearly defined interest areas such as home corner, construction area, art area and book corner, with soft mats and cushions. The service also had materials from the Montessori method of education available for use. Children’s artwork was displayed on the walls together with family photos and educational posters.

The play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led. Children were observed exploring their environment, engaged in activities and playing with each other and the staff. Staff made themselves available to the children to scaffold and extend learning as well as be available should a child require support. The children spent the morning engaging in activities together including building and imaginative play games. An emergent curriculum was evident in the service. Children’s interests were clearly incorporated into the activities and interest areas. Ongoing observations and assessments were documented which informed curriculum planning. Staff offered praise and encouragement to the children throughout the inspection. Staff used respectful language during interactions with the children demonstrating warmth and sensitivity and encouraged positive behaviours, supporting children in finding practical solutions to solve minor conflicts with peers.

Children were encouraged to be independent in their daily routines. They were observed accessing toys and activities of their own choosing together with tidying up after themselves.

Children in the Bunnies and Butterflies rooms had a designated sleep room that could be used whenever a child displayed signs of tiredness. Staff provided comfort to the children when they were settling to sleep, using soft tones and offering reassurance where required. The sleep rooms were relaxed and conducive to sleep. The children attending the Jellytots, Rascals and Appledrops rooms were provided with an opportunity to sleep after their lunch and rest areas were available in all care rooms so children could relax or take time away from the group if required.

The children were all provided with the opportunity to play outdoors. There were five designated outdoor areas which were suitable for the age and stage of development of the children using them. A large area was provided for children attending the Rascals, Smarties and Appledrops rooms which contained ride on toys, sand table, slide and play house. Three smaller areas were available for the children attending the Bunnies, Butterflies and Jellytots rooms which contained activity centres and small push toys.

A large area with a climbing frame and swings, tunnels and building materials was available to the children attending the Little Owls and Owls 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 entrance door into the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.

Cleaning materials were stored out of reach of children. Heavy furniture was secured, and cables were out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal-operated, lidded bins throughout the service. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and before meals. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff were observed to carry out consistent hand washing as appropriate. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance and adequately outlined safe sleep procedures in place in the service during discussions with the inspector. Sleep logs were maintained in all rooms where children slept, cots were provided for all children under the age of 2 years to sleep in and children who were aged 2 years were facilitated to sleep on low level beds.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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)

A person trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was stored in a conspicuous location within the service.

(b) A first aid box was always available to the adults and children in the service.