

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022LK005		
Name of Service:	Oakleigh Kids Academy Crecora Pre-school		
Address of Service:	Ballyshane, Crecora, Co. Limerick		
Eircode:	V94 KH50		
Name of Registered Provider:	Helena O'Neill		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	12/11/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Offices, 2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street. Limerick		
Inspection undertaken by:	S O'Brien & P Magner		
Title:	Early Years Inspector & Inspection & Registration Manager		

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

Oakley Kids Academy Pre-school is a privately owned and managed sessional pre-school service operating in Crecora in Co. Limerick. It operates Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 12.00pm. The service can cater for up to twenty pre-school children at any one time.

The service operates from a large well-resourced room within the parish Community Centre. There is sanitary accommodation next to the pre-school room. A large enclosed outdoor area at the rear of the building is available for outdoor play. A large wooden shed provides a sheltered space for children to use when outdoors in poor weather conditions

Staffing

There was one staff member working directly with the children. The registered provider does not work on site but is available when required. The staff hold the required qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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. 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, 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.

(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 has appointed a person in charge to overlook the day to day running of the service. In the event of the person in charge not being available, the registered provider is available to work directly with the children.

(b) The person in charge is on site at all times as this staff member is single handedly caring for the children during the operation of the service.

(c) The staff member is aware of their roles and responsibilities within the service.

(2) The registered provider and the person in charge files were reviewed.

(a) Three written references were available from a past employer and were validated.

(b) One reference written reference was available from a reputable source and was validated.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána and adhered to the Regulatory Notice on the renewing of Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required for any staff member.

(4) The staff member working directly with the children held a Level 8 major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) There was adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) There were nine children aged between three and four years with one adult which met the minimum ratio of adults to children in a sessional preschool service.

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

(1) All eleven children's files were reviewed. There was a written record in respect of each child attending the service and contained the information from (a) to (i) as outlined above.

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:

- The sanitary area was located next to the care room. Staff were observed supporting the children with toileting and handwashing. Children were encouraged to be independent, and the staff were there to support children when needed.
- Food and drinks were provided by the children's parents and guardians. The staff supported the children with opening their lunches and sat with the children during mealtimes.
- The children were observed playing individually and in small groups within the care room.
- The children had an opportunity for outdoor play during their time in the service.
- There was a quiet corner available to the children to rest if needed. This area allowed for the children to relax and take some time away from the larger group if needed.
- The children seemed to be happy and enjoyed their time in the service.

Supporting Relationships:

- The staff was observed having respectful interactions with the children
- The staff was observed making the environment relaxed during snack times and allowed the children to enjoy their food. This allowed the children to build relationships with the other children and staff.
- During circle time, each child got an opportunity for their voice to be heard, and the staff ensured each child's opinion was listened to. The staff spoke about children's family members and any news the children had from the previous day.
- The children were observed taking part in child led play and the staff supported the children in their learning and development. Children were given choice, and this was respected by the staff.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The care room was observed to be a relaxed environment for the children with calm coloured walls and was well laid out to support the needs of the children and staff.
- The care room had a variety of interest areas available for the children to explore. The resources were stored on child height shelves which allowed the children to access materials easily.
- There was child sized tables and chairs were available for the children to use during snack times and for tabletop activities.
- The children were observed playing with a sensory tray based on the theme of nursery rhymes.
- There were tabletop activities such as jigsaws and coloured counting equipment available to the children to support their thinking and problem-solving skills.
- There was a home corner with a kitchen, which had real life materials and a dress up area for children to partake in role play.
- There was a construction corner with plastic and timber blocks, roll along cars and farm animals.
- The children each had a coat hook for their belongings and were easily identifiable to them by their photo and name.
- Art and craft materials such as an art easel, crayons, paint and drawing paper were freely available to the children.
- The children's art was displayed on the walls and a scrap book was used for sending the artwork home.
- The outdoor area was a large natural grass area with trees. A wooden shed was used to store bikes, trikes, sand pits and water trays. This shed could be used for a sheltered space to play in during bad weather.

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:

- All blind cords and windows were secured and made safe.
- Toys and play equipment observed were safe for the age group of the children and were seen to be in good condition and free from pinch and crush points.
- All cables that were assessed were in good condition and out of reach of children.
- The outdoor area was secured with a gate and fencing to prevent a child exiting the area unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the area.

Infection Control:

- Children were observed handwashing following toileting and before snack time. Warm water, hand soap and paper towel were available to the children and staff. Water temperatures of 46.5°C to 47°C were recorded in the wash hand basins in the sanitary area which facilitated hygienic hand washing.
- There were lidded and pedal operated waste bins in the care room and sanitary areas to prevent the risk of cross infection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The main external door to the service was not appropriately secured when the inspectors arrived at the service. This posed a risk as a child could exit the service unsupervised and unauthorised access to the service was not restricted.
2. Perishable foods such as yogurts, meat and cheese sandwiches from the children's lunches were not placed in a refrigerator. This posed a risk to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A key has been placed beside the external door to the service along with a sign stating the importance of securing the door while the children are attending the service. The staff were refreshed on the policies of the service.

2. A fridge has been purchased for storing perishable items from the children's lunches. The staff have completed refresher training on the storage of perishable foods and food safety.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence of actions taken.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions, and the evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified have been adequately addressed.

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 staff was suitably trained in First Aid Responder training and was available at all times to the children if required.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box that was easily accessible and available to the children when needed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider had adequately insured the service for the number of children attending the service. The certificate was available for review which commenced on the 12.09.2024 and expired on the 27.03.2025.