

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024DR006
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Name of Service:	The Early Years Academy Ltd
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Address of Service:	The Old School House, Kill Lane, Deansgrange, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	A94 FC44
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Name of Registered Provider:	Kim McCarthy
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	31/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Brunel Building Heuston South Quarter Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	J. Mayock
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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 premises is located at ground level in an urban area of Deansgrange south county Dublin. The premises has been purposefully adapted to accommodate a childcare facility. Three care rooms are provided and a kitchen. An enclosed outdoor space is available to the rear of the premises. The service provides part-time day care for children aged two to six years of age. The hours of operation are from 8.30am to 1.30pm for fifty-one weeks of the year.

Staffing

Seven staff are employed to work in the service including a manager, deputy manager and five childcare staff. The registered provider and the general manager were present for the inspection, they do 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 initial inspection was announced and focused on the area of governance and the health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

9(1)(a) -(d), (2) and (4) Management and Recruitment,
11(1), (2), (8)(a) Staffing Levels,
19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,

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 inspector wishes 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

(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.

(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

(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.

(c) There was evidence of a clear management structure which outlined the roles of authority within the service.

(2) The inspection included a review of all staff files. In total seven files were inspected. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b) Of the fourteen references that were required, twelve were available from a past employer and two were available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed in 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 required for six staff members and was available for these staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to staff being allowed contact with children attending the pre-school service.

(4) Records were available evidencing that seven staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or 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.

(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 children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were fourteen children attending the service being supervised by six adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times as per the staff roster.

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

(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

1(a)(b)

The inspector observed appropriate and suitable care practices within the service. Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the morning and were provided to the children from home. Snacks were observed to be a variety of fruits, vegetables crackers and dairy. Mealtime was sociable, staff sat with the children and they enjoyed their meal together. Drinks of water were available within the rooms and were offered when children were eating and were also available for the children throughout the morning. The staff supported the children to manage their personal care. Children were helped to clean their nose in a timely manner. Children's nappies were changed routinely and in between when required. Staff used these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions. Staff practiced good hand hygiene and supported the children with handwashing at appropriate times after outdoor play and prior to eating.

The service had a designated sleep are should a child require some rest. Throughout the inspection staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children with the use of soft and gentle tones.

Care rooms were arranged to include a range of play materials and areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Play equipment and toys were easily accessible to children from low level shelving provided. Each area was adequately resourced with a variety of materials. Cosy areas with matting and sofas were available within the rooms where the children could rest or take a break from activities.

Children were observed to spend time in the outdoor area at a designated time. Staff ensured all children were wearing suitable clothing for the weather conditions on the day. The outdoor area was well resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate equipment.