

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024KE003
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Name of Service:	Oak Park Maap Childcare
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Address of Service:	Oak Park, Naas, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W91 CX3K
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Name of Registered Provider:	Annette Akerlind, Audrey Murray
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	79	PM	54
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Rd, Naas, Co Kildare
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien & R. Phillips
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).

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Description of service

Oak Park Maap Childcare is one of 15 private services operated by the registered providers. The service provides full day, part time and sessional care for children from 0 to 6 years. The service is registered to operate from 07:00 to 18:30, Monday to Friday. Sessional care is provided from 09:00 to 12:00 and from 09:15 to 12:15.

The service operates from a purpose-built two storey premises located beside a private residential housing development in Naas, Co Kildare. There are five care rooms in the service. The Preschool 1 room is located on the first floor. The Wobble room caters for children aged 1 to 2 years. The Toddler room caters for children aged 2 to 3 years. The Preschool 1, Preschool 2 and ECCE rooms cater for children aged 3 to 5 years. The service also has a separate cot room. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 16 staff including a manager and a chef. There were 12 staff working directly with the children during the inspection who were supported by the manager and the deputy manager. The area manager arrived following the inspectors' arrival. The registered providers do not work directly in the service and were not present during the inspection.

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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ records/ health, welfare and development of child and safety. 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)(b),(2)(a)(b)(c)(d),(3),(4) – Management and recruitment,
- 11 (1),(2),(8)(a) – Staffing levels,
- 16 (1)(h)(i)(j)(k) – Record in relation to pre-school service,
- 19 (1)(b) – Health, welfare and development of child,
- 23 – Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child,
- 25 (1),(2) – First Aid.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following regulations.

- 16 (1)(h)(j)(k) – Record in relation to pre-school service,
- 19 (1)(b) – Health, welfare and development of child,
- 23 – Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobble, Toddler and Preschool 2 rooms and the outdoor area.

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.

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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.

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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.*

(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 on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

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The inspection focused on the full recruitment records for five adults employed since the last inspection on 30 September 2025 and the area manager who was present during the inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows.

(a)(b)

Of the 12 validated, written references that were required, 9 were available from a past employer and 3 were available from a reputable source.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the seven adults. 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 and was available for four staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(4)

Evidence of completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent was on file for the six staff members.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)

The registered providers did not take appropriate measures to ensure that all adults were suitable to work in an early years service prior to their commencement as follows. Police vetting available for one adult was dated after the adult commenced employment. The adult commenced employment on 11 February 2026 and police vetting was obtained on 16 February 2026.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Our Recruitment Policy and Procedure is that once the HR has received all of the new staff members files they will upload them to Tots portal and will report this to the Compliance manager to check the staff members file is fully compliant. This did not happen and the notification was sent straight to the service manager. The service

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Manager downloaded the staff's file. Ticking off the items and missed out on the criminal clearance. There were a number of factors that went wrong here and we have communicated this throughout the H.R. department, the service managers and Area Managers. This policy outlines the steps in which to follow so we are compliant in our Recruitment, Staff files and Induction Training paperwork.

The service manager has been given further training surrounding staff file processing and will now report to her area manager before starting a staff member in future.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence was submitted to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered providers.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered providers have been deemed to address this non-compliance.

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.

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)

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The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services were adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 79 children attending the service being supervised by 12 adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(h)

Details of the attendance of each child in the Wobble, Toddler and Preschool 2 rooms were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

(i)

The staff roster was available on the day of inspection and reflected the adults working in the service.

(j)

A sample of 10 medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

(k)

A sample of 10 accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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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

(1)(b)

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and meals were prepared and cooked onsite. Meals were provided at regular intervals. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day. Dinner was served from 11:30. Younger children were given bibs for dinnertime. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported children who needed assistance with their meals.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's noses as required and children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner. Children's nappies were changed regularly, and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care.

An area was provided within the rooms where the children could rest or take a break from activities. There was a designated nap time for children attending the Wobble and Toddler rooms. Suitable cots and beds were provided appropriate to the children's age and stage of development. All children were made comfortable for sleep; staff removed children's shoes and outer clothing; they provided the children with blankets, and they offered soothers to those who used them. The environments were calm and conducive to sleep, with staff soothing the children as needed.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff displayed warmth and sensitivity during all interactions with the children. Children were comforted promptly when they became upset. Staff were observed holding children and speaking to them softly. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour policy.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using an online application detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities. Parents were observed in the service during arrival and collection times.

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A fully enclosed outdoor play area was located to the rear of the premises and had artificial grass surfacing. A range of developmentally appropriate play equipment was provided in the outdoor play area. All children were provided with the opportunity to play outdoors during the inspection and were dressed appropriately to the weather. Staff were observed engaging with children in the outdoor area and supporting them in their play.

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 to 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 appeared in good working order.
- Cleaning agents and medicines were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff and children were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.
- All cot mattresses in use had waterproof covers.
- Individual bed linen was provided for children and was stored separately when not in use. Staff stated that bed linen is laundered weekly or as required.

Administration of Medication:

- There were documented care plans available for children attending the service who required emergency medication. Staff working in the rooms with the children were aware of the treatment plans and demonstrated knowledge of the procedures to follow if the medication was required.

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- Staff demonstrated, through discussion, that they were familiar with the procedures and practices in place for the administration of medication in line with the service policy on medication administration.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were carried out and documented every 10 minutes. Discussion with staff demonstrated that staff were familiar with safe sleep guidelines.
- An adult remained in the room at all times where children were sleeping on low beds.

Fire Safety:

- All fire exits were clear of obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Some nappy changing practices observed during the inspection were inadequate for infection control purposes and at variance with the service's nappy changing procedure. Staff were observed redressing the children and cleaning the changing mat while wearing the same gloves used for nappy changing.

Safe Sleep:

2. It is acknowledged that sleep plans for seven children attending the Wobble room who sleep on suitable floor beds had been completed by parents. However, these plans had not been completed and finalised by the service.

There was no requirement in the safe sleep policy available to complete sleep plans and risk assessments for children which is at variance with current Tusla guidelines on safe sleep.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Training in our nappy change policy and spot checks have been carried out to show staff are compliant with following the procedure listed in our nappy changing policy. Staff training and regular spot checks whilst staff carry out nappy changing will be observed and documented going forward.

Safe Sleep:

2. All sleep plans have been completed by the service and signed off as appropriate. The safe sleep policy has been updated and read by all staff and management and adherence to policy will be spot checked regularly by the service manager and area managers when they carry out pre-Tusla inspections in the services.

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There are now 4 area managers working in the company and each area manager has been assigned her own buildings to carry out pre-Tusla inspections on and support each service. This will entail a much more vigilant team making sure sleep plans and adherence to policy via spot checks in practice will be carried out much more regularly. This support will highlight areas of training and support in services that is required reduce the non-compliances.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Written and photographic evidence was submitted to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered providers.

Safe Sleep:

Written evidence was submitted to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered providers.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered providers have been deemed to address these non-compliances.

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.*

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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) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service.

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