

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW168
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Name of Service:	The Park Academy Childcare Bray
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Address of Service:	Bray Retail Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A98 CK63
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Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	16/07/2026
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Date 2 of Inspection:	17/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	105	PM	105
Day 2	AM	94	PM	94

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke and S. Early O'Brien
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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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).

Description of service

The Park Academy Childcare service was first established in 2006. This full day care service is in the urban setting of Bray Co. Wicklow.

The service is privately owned and is registered to provide care and education for children aged between zero and six years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 07.30 hrs and 18.30 hrs. All children attend on a full-time basis and the Early Childhood and Education Scheme (ECCE) is taken into consideration as part of full day care hours for 38 weeks of the year for eligible children.

This service does not provide an after-school facility. The service operates from a purpose-built single-story premises located in a retail park.

Seven pre-school rooms are provided, and there are three dedicated sleep rooms. Further accommodation includes a kitchen, staff room, and office. All pre-school rooms lead directly to their individual outdoor play areas. Parking is available outside the premises.

Staffing

There were twenty-seven adults present in the service on arrival of the inspectors on the first day of inspection to the premises, this included the full-time chef. The area director arrived a short time after the inspection started. One outside contractor was also present on the first day of inspection.

There were twenty-eight adults present on the second day of inspection, and the area director was on site when the inspectors arrived.

The registered provider does 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:

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- 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1)(a), (b), (c), (2)(a), (b), (c), (d), (3) & (4)

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels. (1) &(2)

Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-school Child

Regulation 16 Record In relation to the Pre-school Service (1)(a), (h)-(k) and (3)

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child General Safety, Infection Control, Administration of Medication and Safe Sleep

Regulation 24 Checking in and out and Record of Attendance.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety

Regulation 27 Supervision

However, on inspection additional non-compliances which posed a risk was identified under

Regulation 29 Premises (d) Premises

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, area director, 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.

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(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.

pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information

Following a discussion with the manager and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that 27 adults are employed full time in the service, this includes two chefs. On the days of inspection 37 files were reviewed. This included 27 fulltime staff, seven relief staff, two outside contractors and one area director, as all adults were present at some point throughout out the two days of inspection.

(1)(a)

The person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived on both days. There was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of 37 adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for 37 adults.

(d)

International police vetting was available for 22 adults working in the service who had lived outside the State for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

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(4)

Thirty-three staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)

Of the 37 files reviewed on the day of inspection, two adults' references were not validated until after their start date in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(3)

HR Recruitment team were alerted to this error. CD trained on not accepting people to start unless their verified References have been uploaded onto the file. HR recruitment have created a checklist for each persons file, and no one will be allowed to start in a centre until references are verified.

Supporting documentation submitted

(3)

No evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The above actions when implemented will address the non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation (9)(3) and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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.

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Compliance Information

- (1)
- Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)
- The correct adult/child ratios were maintained over the two days of inspection. On the first day of inspection there were 25 adults employed to work directly with 105 children, and on the second day 26 adults were employed to work directly with 94 children attending the 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.*
- (3) *A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*

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Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The manager ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service. Twelve records were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(3)(c)

The manager ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (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.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

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Compliance Information

(1)(a), (h)-(k),

The manager ensured that a record in writing was kept of the above information in relation to the service.

A sample of 12 Accident and Incident forms and 12 medicine administration forms were reviewed on the day of inspection, all documentation was completed correctly.

(3)

The manager ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

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 main door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspectors to the service.
- All toys examined were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in each pre-school room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- A foot pedal bin was available in each sanitary area and in the pre-school rooms for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other waste matter.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.
- Hand washing by the adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and outdoor play.

Administration of Medication:

While medication was not observed to be administered on the day of inspection, a review of the service medical records demonstrated that the service records administering medication to children correctly.

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Safe Sleep:

Staff were aware of the key principles required for safe sleep of young children. The sleep room temperature was recorded by the inspector as 18.8°C at 12.10pm, while children were present in the room.

There was written evidence that staff recorded the safe position, colour and breathing of children who are sleeping, at 10-minute intervals.

Cots were well spaced at 50cms apart and all cots had waterproof mattresses. The service had an adequate number of cots to accommodate the age profile of the children who required cots for safe sleep and low-level beds to accommodate the children who no longer slept in cots.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. On the first day of inspection, there were many dried leaves in the garden area attached to the Bunnies room, which could pose a choking risk for small children if ingested. It was noted that this area had been cleaned on day two of inspection.
2. On the first and second day of inspection it was noted that there were wood chippings on the ground of the outdoor area of six of the care rooms. These wood chips posed a choking risk for young children if ingested.
3. On the first day of inspection, it was noted that only four children in the outdoor area were wearing hats as sun protection. Without adequate protection, a child's skin can easily burn. It is noted that all children had sunscreen on applied by the adults in the service.
4. The outdoor area for the service, except for the Bunnies room, did not provide adequate shade for the children on hot or wet days.
5. On the first day of inspection the room temperature in the Smarties room at 12.12pm was 25.4°C. The air-conditioning unit was not working, but there was an industrial cooling fan in place. The staff were advised to turn off the lights and open the doors. The room temperature dropped to 24.8°C at 12.16pm and to 23°C by 1.30pm. All room temperatures were checked on three separate occasions on day two of inspection, and all were found to be within the acceptable temperature range of 18°C - 22°C.

Infection Control:

6. All cabinets surrounding the sinks in the kitchen area of all care rooms were in poor repair and could not be cleaned effectively for infection control purposes.
7. The pedal bin in the Apple drops room had dried foreign matter present and there was no evidence of recent cleaning.

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8. There was visible foreign matter on a wall in the Apple drops room, and no evidence of recent cleaning.
9. There was a large amount of visible debris engrained on a blue chair in the Apple drops room and there was no evidence of recent cleaning.
10. The boxed in area surrounding the base of the toilet in the sanitary area of the Owls room had visible dirt present. There was no evidence of recent cleaning.
11. There was no hot water available in the sanitary area of the Owls room, warm water is required for effective hand washing by both children and adults.
12. There was no hand soap available in both the sanitary and kitchen area of the Smarties room, for effective hand washing to be carried out by both children and adults.
13. The wooden safety gates of all the care rooms were visibly worn and in need of repainting and could not be cleaned effectively for infection control purposes.
14. There was evidence of large amounts of tape residue on the main doors of both the Smarties and Jelly Tots rooms, the doors could not be cleaned effectively for infection control purposes.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- 1: The leaves were removed on the day of inspection. The Garden is checked for leaves each morning before the children go out to play. A leaf blower is onsite.
- 2: The wood chippings were removed from the play area. The wood chippings are confined to the 'messy play area of the garden'. The other gardens are checked each morning for hazards before children go out to play.
- 3: Parents were asked to bring a hat in which can stay in the centre for warmer days. Spare hats are in the centre should any child forget their sun hat.
- 4: Canopies have been purchased to provide shading in the gardens. Canopies are in the garden to provide shade.
- 5: The air con system was not working on the day of inspection in one room. Additional fans were brought into the rooms to lower the temperatures. The air con system was fixed and consistently keeps the temperatures between 18 – 22 degrees.

Infection Control:

- 6: Cabinets were deep cleaned cabinets will be replaced. Currently awaiting on dates for this work to be completed.
- 7: Pedal bin was replaced. Regular spot checks by management to ensure proper post meal cleaning

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8 – 10 : Appledrops room was professionally deep cleaned. These areas are cleaned according to the classroom cleaning checklists and checked by the manager daily. The toilet area will be replaced.

11: The hot water issue was fixed. There is a maintenance system in place which highlights water issues as an urgent job, in order for it to be fixed ASAP.

12: All soap dispensers were re-filled on the day. Soap dispensers checked daily on the manager walk around.

13: Wooden gates were deep cleaned. Wooden gates will be replaced as part of a larger project to update the centre.

14: Tap residue was removed. Notice boards are used for displays, and tape will not be used on doors

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence of cleaned outdoor areas, sunhats and new canopies in the outdoor area plus an extensive quote for repairs and works to be carried out in the service addressing points 1-5 were submitted with the CAPA response.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of new taps, cleaned safety gates, a pedal bin, cleaned doors plus and extensive quote for repairs and works to be carried out in the service addressing points 6-14 were submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The evidence and proposed works when carried out will address the non-compliances found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 23 General Safety and Infection control and will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

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(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

The manager ensured that all children attending the pre-school service were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The manager ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people has access to the pre-school.

(b)

The manager had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the pre-school.

(4)

The manager ensured that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) was retained for a period of one year from the date to which it related.

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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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*
- (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)

There was a record of fire drills having taken place in the pre-school monthly. The last fire drill took place on the 10 June 2026.

(b)

There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and the smoke detection system on the premises dated June 2026 and July 2026 respectively.

(2)(c)

The above records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There were notices of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire, clearly displayed within each care room and in the main corridor of the premises.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The manager was able to demonstrate by the number of adults working directly with the children, that all children attending the pre-school service were adequately supervised throughout their day.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
1. There were ceiling tiles in the main hallway of the service, some were not fitting properly, some had holes present and others showed visible signs of water damage from leaks.
 2. The sanitary area in Owls room needed repainting, deep cleaning and repainting for an unidentifiable black discolouration.
 3. The colour coding on the taps on the sink of the sanitary area of the Owls room were worn completely off and needed replacing. Hot and cold-water taps should be clearly identifiable for safety and infection control purposes.
 4. The walls in all the care rooms and along the main corridor of the service needed maintenance. Some walls had chipped plaster, large cracks and chipped paint. The door surrounds in some care rooms were chipped and needed deep cleaning.
 5. The floor covering in the Little Rascals room was showing visible signs of wear and tear and needed replacement.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d)
- 1: Damaged tiles have been taken down. Tiles will be replaced as part of a larger project to refurbish the centre.
 - 2: The OWLS sanitary area was deep cleaned. The sanitary area in OWLS will be replaced as part of a larger project to refurbish the centre.
 - 3: Taps were replaced, hot and cold is clearly visible on the taps.
 - 4: The centre will be repainted and walls filled where necessary as part of a project to refurbish the centre.
 - 5: The flooring will be replaced in the Rascals room as part of a project to refurbish the centre.
- We are waiting on a contractor quote for the above works.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (d)
- Photographic evidence for points 1, 2 and 3 plus an extensive quote for reparatory works to be carried out in the service was submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

- (d)
- The above actions, along with the list of repairs quoted being carried out will address the non-compliances numbered 1-5 found on the day of inspection and will be reviewed on next inspection.