

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY179		
Name of Service:	Saol Beag Project Creche		
Address of Service:	58 Amiens Street, Dublin 1.		
Eircode:	D01 K253		
Name of Registered Provider:	Catriona Crowe		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	13/01/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM 8
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K		
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Harte		
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

Saol Beag Project Creche is a full day care service located in an urban setting in city centre Dublin. The service operates as non-profit forming part of a wider integrated community services project. The service is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 11 children. The service is open from Monday to Thursday 9.30am-4:00pm and Friday 9:30am-3:00pm.

The service operates out of two adjoining care rooms and sanitary accommodation on the ground floor of a mixed-use building. Management explained that both the Wobbler and Toddler rooms are in use. The Wobbler room is also used as a sleep space and for access to the sanitary facilities.

Staffing

The service currently employs three adults including the designated person in charge. All three adults were present on the day of 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

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety, premises and facilities. 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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of the inspection under Regulation 23, in relation to a non-compliance identified under Regulation 23. A response was received from the registered provider which mitigated the risk identified. See body of report for details.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes 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*

(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

The service had a designated person in charge and two named persons to deputise if required.

A designated person in charge was available on the premises on the day of inspection for the operating hours of the service.

(2) A review of available paperwork and discussion with management confirmed there were two new staff employed since the last inspection. The files of one new staff member and a relief staff member employed by the wider organisation were reviewed. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

One written and validated references were available from past employers.

One written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that one staff member who worked directly with the children held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a)(b) There were no written validated references available for one staff member.

(d) There were no documents available for consideration of one staff member to determine if police vetting was required.

(4) There was no evidence available to show that one staff member who worked directly with the children held 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.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (a)(b) The senior management was reminded of the importance of having personal files set up for all staff members. Management will ensure that written validated references for all staff are available.

(4) Qualified agency workers are being used until another full-time early year's educator is hired. The service has employed a relief worker on a part-time basis until we employ another full-time staff member.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of agency staff bookings.

Documents for relief staff.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances under Regulation 9 have been addressed.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) Only two qualified adults are employed to work directly with the children. This was insufficient to adequately meet the needs of all children attending the service.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratio was not maintained at all times during the inspection. Between 12.10pm to 1.45pm only one qualified staff member was available to 8 children aged between 1 year to 2 years 10 months. Two qualified staff members were required at this time.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) Management will ensure that relief cover is available at all times. In the event that insufficient staff are available in the premises to adequately meet the needs of all children attending the service, the service will only operate for a half day and the parents will be notified of this change in advance.
- (2) At the time of inspection two new full-time educators had been employed and the service was awaiting the return of their Garda Vetting disclosures. Management will ensure that the minimum of adults to supervise, care for and work directly with the children in the service is maintained at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documents for relief staff.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 11 have been addressed. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

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

- (1)
 - (h) Attendance records detailing the daily arrival and departure of the children were maintained and available in the care rooms.
 - (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.
 - (j) Following a review of a sample of three records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for the administration of medication.

- (k) Following a review of a sample of ten records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for accident and incidents.

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
- (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 following practices were observed to be in place to support the children attending:

- Staff were observed to interact with the children in a warm and sensitive manner. They joined children on the floor during play and engaged them in conversation.
- Mealtimes were observed to be social occasions and children were given ample time to enjoy their meal. A three-week service menu was clearly displayed and staff advised that all food is provided by the service and is prepared on the premises daily. The main meal provided on the day of inspection was a pork casserole and the afternoon tea was banana and yogurts. Additional portions were available if required.
- Children wore bibs during their meal and were assisted to clean their faces after eating supporting their comfort.
- Children were invited to have their nappies changed and nappy changing was observed to be frequent and regular.
- Staff were observed to react promptly to a child who fell and gave comfort.
- Staff demonstrated how they completed a daily report sheet on each child detailing meals and sleep to share with families to keep them informed of their child's care.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a) Basic Needs:

1. On the day of the inspection one child's sleep needs were not adequately met. The child displayed a clear need for rest by rubbing their eyes, laying on the floor and laying on a small sofa. Staff were observed to

verbally comment on the child's tiredness and offered comfort by lifting them but were unable to address the need as an adequate sleep facility was unavailable. Staff advised the inspector that once another child woke the child would be brought for sleep.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Management will ensure there is adequate and suitable facilities for preschool children to rest during the day. New cots were purchased.

Supporting documentation submitted

Invoice for cots.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 19 has been addressed. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

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 internal care room doors were secured with a coded lock.
- There was no stacked furniture present in the care rooms while children played.

Infection Control:

- Children's drink beakers were individually labelled.
- A daily cleaning log was displayed and completed up to date.
- Nappy creams were individually labelled, and toilet roll was dispensed supporting hygiene practices.
- Tables were disinfected before and after mealtimes.

Administration of medication:

- Medication was observed stored in its original container out of children's reach.

Fire Safety:

- Attendance records were maintained in a timely manner and a child who arrived later in the morning was promptly signed in. This supports safe evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for one staff member. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. Staff were unclear of a potential medical care need of a child which posed a safety risk.
3. A trailing flex was observed in the Toddler care room accessible to children which posed a potential risk of injury. This non-compliance was observed on the previous inspection in August 2024. The preventive action has not been carried out in line with the information provided to the inspectorate following the last inspection.
4. A cleaning spray was stored on a low-level shelf in the Toddler room accessible to children. This posed a potential risk of accidental poisoning.
5. Staff members personal belonging were accessible to children in the Wobbler room which posed a potential risk of injury.
6. Unstable furniture posed a risk of injury to children. A cot in the care room and a table present in the garden area were both unstable and rocked when touched.

Infection Control:

7. One of the toilet cubicles in the sanitary area was used to store resources this posed an infection control risk.
8. The storage and management of children's soothers posed a potential risk of cross contamination. Soothers were observed to be placed in storage boxes alongside other items and not stored in individually labelled containers. A soother that was removed from one child was observed to be placed in another child's storage box that contained two additional loose soothers.

Safe Sleep:

9. Children sleeping on floor mats were left unsupervised this is not in line with Tusla guidance on safe sleep practices and posed a significant safety risk to children. An immediate action notice was issued.
10. A timely physical check of sleeping children was not conducted every ten minutes in line with Tusla safe sleep guidance. No sleep check was conducted between 12.43pm-12.58pm. The practice and recording of comprehensive and timely physical sleep checks helps provide for children's safety.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Immediate action was taken to renew garda vetting. Management will ensure that all staff have their Garda Vetting up to date and renewed every three years.
2. Management spoke with the child's parents and confirmed the child's medical care needs. The situation will be reviewed regularly and in the event of a diagnosis a care plan will be put in place immediately.
3. Management spoke with staff about the potential risks of having a trailing flex accessible to the children in the classroom. All cables will be kept away from the children's reach at all times. All staff will be reminded regularly about the importance of keeping the children safe when attending the centre.
4. All cleaning agents have been moved to a high up shelf. This shelf is unreachable by the children. All staff will be reminded about the importance of storing the cleaning agents in the high up shelf.
5. The staff members personal belongings were removed from the Wobbler room immediately. High level hooks were made available for all the staff in one of the care rooms. Small handbags and coats will be stored on the hooks. Any heavier bags will be stored in the team leader's office which is located upstairs.
6. New cots were purchased and the unstable furniture was removed. Management will remind staff about the importance of keeping the children safe at all times and removing any unstable furniture that poses a risk of injury to children immediately. We will check all furniture on a regular basis and ensure that it is not rocked or unstable.

Infection Control:

7. Hooks have been installed in the care room and larger items will be kept upstairs in the team leader's office. Management will ensure that the sanitary area is not used for storage from now on.
8. Individual soother cases were purchased in order to prevent potential risk of cross contamination. Management spoke to staff about the storage and management of soothers. Management will ensure that the soothers are not shared among children at any time. All soothers will be placed in individually labelled containers from now on.

Safe Sleep:

9. All staff were informed about the importance of not leaving the children sleeping on floor mats unsupervised as this poses a significant risk to the children. Management will remind staff regularly about the importance of supervising children who sleep on floor mats and not leaving them unattended under any circumstances.

10. Staff were informed immediately about the importance of carrying out sleep checks every 10 minutes. Future staff will be informed of the same. Timely physical checks of sleeping children will be conducted every 10 minutes in line with Tusla safe sleep guidance from now on.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Staff vetting disclosure.
Photographic evidence

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence.

Safe Sleep:

No supporting documents submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been 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) A review of the staff roster, relevant certification and conversation with management confirmed that the registered provider ensured that a staff member trained in first aid response was always available to children during the operating hours of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was not available. A review of the first aid box demonstrated that no burn dressings were available. A suitably equipped and easily accessible to adults first aid box should be available at all times to support the care and safety of children attending the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (a)(b) Burning dressings of different sizes were bought immediately after the inspection. The first aid box will be checked weekly. In order to support the children attending our service we will ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box is available in the premises at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. This non-compliance remains outstanding as the evidence submitted does not include burn dressings. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(e) The premises had adequate sanitary facilities for the number of children attending.

Non-Compliance Information

- (c)
1. Torn cardboard was used at the bottom of the care room doors to prevent draft. Appropriate and suitable draft excluders are required.
- (d)
1. The registered provider did not ensure the service was maintained as required. Paint in the care rooms, door surrounds and skirting was chipped and peeling. This non-compliance was present on the last inspection in August 2024 and works remain outstanding.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (c)
1. Draft excluders were installed in both care rooms. Management will ensure that draft excluders are in working order at all times. Staff will monitor the temperature throughout the day to ensure that it does not fall below 18°C throughout the day.

- (d)
1. Both care rooms, door surrounds and skirting boards were painted. Management will ensure that the children's centre is maintained regularly.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 have been addressed.