

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DY291

Name of Service: Safari Childcare

Address of Service: The Hibernia Building, Heuston Sth Quater, Military Rd, Dublin 8,

Eircode: D08 PX3Y

Name of Registered Provider: Cian Powell, Kevin McGuinness

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 01/07/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	57	PM	56
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Inspectorate
2nd Floor, Unit 4/5
The Nexus Building
Blanchardstown Corporate Park
Ballycoolin
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Inspection undertaken by: C. Kerrigan & C. Harte

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).

Conditions if applicable Not applicable

Description of service

Safari Childcare is a privately run service located in a mixed-use building in South Dublin and is one of eight services operated by the registered providers. The service is registered to operate from 07:30am to 6pm Monday to Friday providing full day, part-time and sessional care and education to children aged 1-5 years. The service has seven care rooms located across two adjacent buildings; six care rooms in the main building included Wobbler 1 room, Wobbler 2 room, Toddler 1 room, Toddler 2 room, Preschool 1 room, and Preschool 2 room. One care room in the adjacent building housed the Preschool 3 and an ECEE/school aged care room. The service also has two separate cot rooms for children in Wobbler room 1 & 2, an office, kitchen and staff room and one secure outdoor area located at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 21 staff to work in the service. Nineteen staff were present on the day of inspection to include the deputy person in charge, 17 early years workers, and one kitchen staff. Two students were also present on the day of inspection. The registered providers do not work in the service.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-school child, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms Wobbler 1, Wobbler 2, Toddler 1 and Toddler 2 only.

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

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise when required.
 - (b) A review of roster and conversations held indicated that a designated person in charge was rostered to be on the premises during the opening hours of the service on the day of inspection.
- (2) A review of paperwork and conversation with management showed that eleven new staff have commenced employment in the service since the last inspection held on the 11 March 2024. The files of all eleven staff were reviewed along with the files of two students who were present on the day of inspection. The garda vetting disclosures of four existing staff members whose Garda Vetting was required to be renewed since the last inspection was also reviewed.

- (a) The registered provider ensured that there were twenty written and validated references were available from a previous employer for the adults working within the service.
 - (b) The registered provider ensured that there were six written and validated references were available from a source other than a previous employer for the adults working within the service.
 - (c) The registered provider ensured that Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for thirteen adults who in their role have access to the children. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years as demonstrated by the re-vetting of four adults working within the service.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for twelve adults who had resided in a country other than Ireland for a period longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) References and Garda vetting procedures were completed prior to the thirteen adults being allowed access or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) The eleven adults who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed, held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualification 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.*
- (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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children attending the preschool service, with nineteen adults available within the service to work directly with fifty-seven children.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the adult to child ratios were maintained within the service on the day of inspection. This was further evidenced in the roster made available on the day of inspection.
- (8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times during the operational hours of the service. This was also evidenced in the roster.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that a written record was kept for children attending the pre-school service. The written records of eighteen children were reviewed and found to be fully completed, they contained the following information.
- (a) The registered provider ensured that name and date of birth was completed in each child's record.
 - (b) The registered provider ensured that the date on which a child first attended the service was recorded.
 - (d) The registered provider ensured that the name, address and telephone number of the parent or guardian along with an emergency contact person for whom could also be contacted was recorded in the child's file.
 - (e) The registered provider ensured that an authorised person for the collection of each child was recorded.
 - (f) The registered provider ensured the details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child relevant to their care within the service was recorded.
 - (g) The registered provider ensured the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner was recorded.
 - (h) The registered provider ensured that a record of vaccinations was kept.
 - (i) The registered provider ensured that written consent was present for children needing appropriate medical treatment in the event of an emergency.
- (3)
- (c) The registered provider ensured that a written record was available for review on the premises by the Inspector.

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,

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider ensured the child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service, for example:

Basic Needs

- Children were provided with regular meals and snacks, food served was reflected in the service menu. This included a hot meal prepared and cooked onsite. On the morning of the inspection children were observed to be served a snack of fruit, cut to differing sizes and a drink of water, with alternative options available if needed. At 11:03am rice, meat and sauce were given for lunch with a hot alternative available for children who did not eat the meal offered. At 2:00pm, an afternoon snack of rice crackers and fruit was served with a hot tea served at 3:30pm. The transition to mealtime was observed to be a timely experience for the children, at a pace suited to their needs. For example, children in the Wobbler 1 room were supported to eat at a pace that suited them, and provided with support if needed, ensuring their nutritional needs were met at mealtimes.
- Toileting and nappy changing were observed to be undertaken on a scheduled basis and as needed across the rooms sampled. Children were observed to have unrestricted access to the toilet with support given as needed. Nappy changing was observed to be a dignified process which was child centred in its approach.
- Staff were observed to pick up on children's cues for support around transitions. A child who did not want to sleep at the scheduled time was brought to a quiet area to play in the presence of an adult, then when they showed signs of tiredness were placed to sleep in a calm and timely manner.
- Children were provided with appropriate clothing and suncream for outdoor play, independence with self-care skills were promoted with children being encouraged to put on hats for outdoors themselves. The service supplied hats for children who did not bring any. This facilitates comfort in play experiences and promotes independence.
- Children were observed to move around the care rooms freely and engage in a variety of activities and play experiences, which were supported by the adults on the day.

Supporting Relationships

- A key worker system was in place in the service and key groups are displayed within the classrooms. A key worker system allows staff to develop in depth knowledge about the children in their group and fosters nurturing relationships helping children to feel confident.
- The adults in the service were observed to interact with the children in a responsive, warm and respectful manner. For example, in the Baby room a child was observed to be upset during a transition period, staff were observed to physically comfort the child, through hugs and soothing tones, whilst guiding the child through activities. Staff were empathetic and child centred in their response.
- Staff were observed to speak to each other in respectful and warm manner.
- Staff completed a daily log for each child, outlining meals, toileting and activities, this log is made available to parents, with daily conversations between families and staff occurring at pick up and drop off times. Ensuring families are connected to the service and their child's.

Physical and Material Environment

- The furniture provided in each care room was low level and appropriate for children attending with toys, equipment and play materials easily accessible and visible to the children on low-level units which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- There was a range of equipment available throughout the service which was in line with the developmental age of the children in each care room, this included, mark making equipment, home corners with associated props to facilitate imaginative play experiences, stacking, building, connecting and threading toys to facilitate creative play, cars and tracks for transporting and books to facilitate language and early literacy, and indoor climbing equipment for younger children, which promotes reciprocity and gross motor skills.
- The children had access to the outdoor play environment throughout the day. This was scheduled but also available to children if and when they needed.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

1. The registered provider did not ensure that each child's learning, development and wellbeing was being facilitated within the outdoor area on the day of inspection through the lack of materials and equipment for the age range of children attending, this is at variance from the service policy on outdoor play. The following was observed:

- There were no alternative play opportunities for children wishing to engage in quieter activities. Two children who did not want to participate in gross motor play were observed to sit quietly on a picnic bench without activities. Later three boys were observed to sit on the windowsills during a group activity. This limits children choice in play and learning.
- Fourteen children observed in the outdoor area had access to 5 scooters, one of which the foot pedal was broken, 2 deflated balls and two goal posts. It is acknowledged that staff attempted to engage the children in group play but there was a lack of choice or materials for all the children using the area.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (a) The registered provider has stated that a section of the garden wall has been converted into a chalk board for children to use. A new mud kitchen has been added to the garden toys. An activity trolley has also been added to the garden toys, comprising of story books, sensory toys, colouring pencils, colouring pages and table games for quieter activities. New outdoor toys have been acquired to enrich children's learning, development and wellbeing and bikes that were stored away are made available for play. The broken scooter has been replaced and the balls inflated. The registered provider has said that they will inspect the outdoor area more regularly and replace broken toys when needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Evidence has been submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have been adequate to address the non-compliance under Regulation. 19.

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 entrance to the service was secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival at the service. Access was granted via doorbell system in which a staff member answered, therefore preventing access to the children from unauthorised persons, this also prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The outdoor area was fully secured and enclosed with a high wall, the gate was secured by a high bolt system.

Infection Control:

- The premises was clean and well maintained throughout the areas sampled. Documented cleaning records were available and displayed
- Pedal bins were in use throughout the rooms sampled ensuring appropriate disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were not observed to have been administered on the day of inspection however staff demonstrated knowledge on the procedure for medication administration if required.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff maintained physical checks of sleeping children every 10 minutes, records outlined position, colour and breathing.
- An ambient temperature between 18-22 °C was maintained in rooms where children over 1 year were sleeping.
- There was a sufficient number of cots and low- level beds to meet the sleep needs of the children within the service.

Fire Safety:

- Staff were knowledgeable of the fire evacuation plan which included the route to take and the location of the assembly point.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Hazardous cleaning material was accessible to children in the sanitary area located next to Toddler room 1 and Wobbler room 2. This posed a safety risk to children if accessed.

Infection Control:

2. Hand towels used for hand drying were not hygienically stored in the sanitary area located next to Toddler 1 and Wobbler 2 rooms. This prevents good hand hygiene practices.

Safe Sleep:

3. The registered provider did not ensure safe sleep practices were in line with the service policy on safe sleep for children aged between 1-2 years. On the day of inspection five children were observed to be asleep with plush teddies which posed a potential safety risk.
4. A child was observed asleep in a cot within reaching distance of an unused cot that contained storage materials unsuitable for safe sleep. This posed a potential safety risk to the child if accessed during sleep.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider has stated that hazardous cleaning materials have been securely stored out of reach of children. Staff have been retrained on the importance of child safety and keeping hazardous items out of reach.

Infection Control:

2. The registered provider of stated that staff have been retrained on the importance of proper hand hygiene practises and instructed to store the handtowels in the dispenser in the wobbler and toddler sanitary areas. Staff have been reminded to store hand tails hygienically.

Safe Sleep:

3. The registered provider has stated that they have updated their sleep policy to state that comfort teddies will be removed from the cot once children fall asleep. Staff have been instructed to do this and are aware of the updated policy going forward.
4. The registered provider has stated that the previously unused cot in Wobbler 2, which had been used for storage, has now been emptied. Staff have been reminded to ensure that all unused cots are kept clear and not used for storage.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Evidence was submitted.

Infection Control:

2. Evidence was submitted.

Safe Sleep:

3. Evidence was submitted.
4. Evidence was submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have been sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 23.

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 fire fighting 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) The registered provider ensured that a record was kept in writing of fire drills within the service. The last recorded fire drill was dated the 6 June 2025.
 - (b) A record was available indicating the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms with records demonstrating they were last serviced in March 2025.
- (2)
- (c) The registered provider ensured that the fire drill and maintenance records were available for review by the inspector.
- (4)
- The registered provider ensured notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous positions throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the premises was insured as a full care service for a maximum number of children registered. The certificate reviewed had an expiry date of the 27 March 2026.